

Cabinet – 2 October 2024

Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update 2023/24

Purpose	For Review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	<p>This report provides an update on progress towards achieving the aims of the Climate Change and Nature Emergency declaration. Updates within this report are aligned to the four adopted programmes of activity – Carbon Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Nature Recovery and Programme Management and cover activities undertaken between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2024.</p> <p>NFDC corporate emissions and utility data is provided and analysed, in addition to New Forest District emissions data, as published by the UK Government.</p> <p>The strategic direction of climate action, working in partnership with its stakeholders, is outlined. A longer-term strategy and action plan is in development and will be informed by a new Member Task and Finish Group.</p>
Recommendation(s)	<p>That the Cabinet: -</p> <p>a) Acknowledges activities undertaken and efforts made by NFDC and its partners between 1 January 2023 and 31st March 2024 in response to the declared Climate Change and Nature Emergency.</p> <p>b) Notes that as local leaders of place, NFDC, through its corporate plan, transformation programme and ongoing approaches to service delivery has made a clear commitment to the climate and nature emergency agenda, recognising UK Government’s legally binding net zero targets.</p> <p>c) Support the ongoing delivery of the approved Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plan (Appendix 2), and by continuing to work with partners and</p>

	<p>the public, the Council will continue to play a key role.</p> <p>d) Continues to support the development of the longer-term Climate Change and Nature Emergency Strategy and Action Plan supported by the Members Climate Change and Nature Emergency Task and Finish Group.</p>
Reasons for recommendation(s)	<p>The new NFDC Corporate Plan 2024-28 re-enforces the Council's commitment to the issues of climate change and sustainability. The activities reported contribute towards a number of corporate plan priorities, however the report itself is most closely aligned with Place Priority 2 – Protecting our climate, coast and natural world.</p> <p>The recommendations support key principles of the Council's Future New Forest Transformation Programme and align to the UK Government's legislative target to achieve net zero CO₂e emissions by 2050.</p>
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Geoffrey Blunden Environment and Sustainability
Strategic Director(s)	James Carpenter Strategic Director – Place, Operations and Sustainability
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Introduction and background

1. This report provides an update on progress towards achieving the aims of the Climate Change and Nature Emergency declaration. As committed in October 2021, an annual report is to be produced which highlights key activities since the previous report and sets out intended activities for the coming year. A report in February 2024 outlined the decision to amend the reporting timetable to align to the financial year as opposed to the calendar year. For this reason, this update covers the 15-month period 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2024, with the Action Plan at Appendix 5 outlining activity undertaken from April 2024.
2. Updates within this report are aligned to the four currently adopted programmes of activity – Carbon Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Nature Recovery and Programme Management. Until such time as new priorities or programmes are developed, all of the work both internal to NFDC and external within the wider district area is mapped to these four programme areas. Working with our partners, our vision is to create a net zero, climate resilient and nature positive New Forest District which provides a safe and prosperous environment now and in the future.
3. As in previous annual updates and consistent with other local authorities in the UK, this report presents an approach for how New Forest District Council (NFDC) can demonstrate climate leadership and safeguard council services and the wider area in response to the declared Climate Change and Nature Emergency. The Council will need to continue to ensure that prioritisation of these objectives is embedded within the delivery of all services and fundamental to all projects and partnerships going forward.
4. Sustainability in its most inclusive sense remains the ultimate goal of NFDC's approach to climate and nature action. Working to reduce greenhouse gasses, adapt to a changing climate and enhance natural environments are aspects of broader, holistic sustainability and should not be considered in isolation. Ensuring that actions align to long-term environmental, social and financial health requires a considered approach to all decisions that balances finances, wellbeing, ecosystem services, cost of living and the needs of future generations.
5. As set out in the Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Report 2023, future climate projections show that the UK is likely to experience hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters, with extreme weather events such as heatwaves and heavy downpours becoming more frequent and more intense. These events are largely driven by increasing global temperatures, but how significant the impacts we experience are will depend on the rate and degree

of temperature rise and the interconnectedness of changes across the globe. More information can be found in sources such as the Government's Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 or the 2024 Progress Report to Parliament by the Committee on Climate Change (CCC).

6. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) reported in July 2024 that despite some progress over the previous year, the pace of emissions reduction was slowing, and key policies had been reversed or delayed. The CCC also stated that the UK is not on track to hit the legally binding reduction target of 68% by 2030 (from 1990 levels). It is not yet known what long-term impact the change in national leadership will have, following the UK General Election in July 2024, however the proposed energy and net zero measures indicate greater investment and policy support which could push progress in the coming years. It is hoped that these initiatives combined with measures under the Environment Act (2021), and new legislation around biodiversity net gain, could lead to significant improvements to the UK environment. Conversely, competing challenges such as increased housing requirements for local authorities, could be detrimental to the achievement of climate targets.
7. Previous Annual Update reports in 2022 and 2023 outline in greater detail the drivers, risks and opportunities associated with the climate change and nature emergency – as these have not changed significantly in the short time since publication, they will not be repeated here. Links to these documents are available at the end of this report.
8. Commencing in the Autumn of 2024, a review of the climate science relating to the New Forest District area will be undertaken, followed by a vulnerability assessment of both the council's services and assets; and the residents, infrastructure and wider environment of the District. This review, alongside the Member Task and Finish Group, will inform the short, medium and long-term activities, priorities and targets (if desired) for New Forest District Council and the wider District area.

Climate Action in Partnership

9. New Forest District Council continues to work with partners in the design, delivery and financing of services and projects that seek to enhance environmental quality and improve resilience to the impacts of climate change. Working collaboratively enables NFDC and its partners to work effectively and efficiently across physical, social and administrative boundaries, prioritising high-quality outputs and maximising value for money. Partnership working is

consistently cited as best practice for local authorities in combatting the Climate Change and Nature Emergency.

10. As highlighted in the previous annual update report in 2023, due to the overlapping geography of the NFDC administrative boundary, the Council works closely with the New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) and Hampshire County Council (HCC), in addition to other neighbouring authorities such as BCP, Test Valley and Southampton City (see map in Appendix 1). This close proximity offers many opportunities such as joint funding and shared resources, but also presents challenges, particularly around delivering effective change across administrative boundaries and managing impacts/benefits without double counting. NFDC will continue to use the national dataset produced by the UK Government to monitor emissions reductions in the NFDC area and communicate with partners to ensure clear and consistent messaging and reduce any duplication of effort.
11. At a county level, projects such as Solar Together and the Greening Campaign continue to be active and successful across the Hampshire. NFDC will continue to work in partnership with Hampshire County Council to ensure that New Forest residents and businesses can benefit from countywide initiatives.
12. The New Forest is one of the most important places for nature in Europe. Nature restoration has been recognised as critical to tackling climate change and the New Forest is uniquely placed to offer greater land-based carbon sequestration whilst expanding and restoring the unique and special habitats that are here. This is demonstrated in the UK Government's Statistical Release Report (June 2024) which identifies New Forest as having the third highest decrease in area emissions since 2005 thanks to its land use and forestry assets. With partners and communities, the New Forest NPA are working to unlock more climate benefits from nature and to support emissions reductions across the National Park, in areas such as energy use, transport and food and drink. The New Forest NPA are acting to reach 'Net Zero with Nature', as set out in the Re:New Forest Partnership Plan 2022-2027, an approach which supports shared environmental benefits for the National Park, NFDC and the wider region.
13. In addition to cultivating local partnerships, NFDC has continued to forge relationships with industry bodies and other networks and organisations. The Council has taken up membership of both APSE (Association of Public Sector Excellence) and APSE Energy, giving access to knowledge and resources that can help NFDC achieve the highest standards across all service and corporate operations, providing insights and best practice guidance particularly across emerging and challenging areas such as

emissions reduction and green fleet transition. The Council is also actively engaged with the Solent Freeport and the Solent Cluster partnerships to ensure that economic development within and surrounding the New Forest District is supported and sustainable over the long-term.

Emissions Data

14. A detailed account of NFDC’s historical and baseline emissions data can be seen in the previous Annual Update 2023. Data detailed in this report is a continuation from these figures, providing an overview of progress to date. Note that previously reported figures have been adjusted by the Government based on updated data and methodology (standard practice).

15. **New Forest District (Area) Emissions:**
 As detailed in Table 1, Government figures published in June 2024 show that emissions from the New Forest District have reduced by approximately 70% from the 1990 baseline – this is above the UK overall reduction rate of 54%. The report notes that this is largely due to changes to ‘Large Industrial Installations’ within the District, which is clearly seen in Graph 2. The report also explains that given the rural nature of the District and designation of the National Park (emissions categorised as LULUCF – Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry), the environment acts as a ‘carbon sink’ reducing the overall emissions significantly. When considering only the non-LULUCF data (i.e. emissions related to human activity), the percentage reduction is much smaller, demonstrating the importance of local environmental protection and the need to encourage greater behaviour change.

	UK (MtCO₂e)	% reduction from 1990	NFDC area (ktCO₂e)	% reduction from 1990
1990	809.1	-	3010.7 (estimated)	-
2005	656.0	14%	2589.2	14%
2019	417.1	44%	1024.3	66%
2020	377.3	53%	923.9	69%
2021	395.9	51%	975.3	68%
2022	375.9	54%	909.1	70%

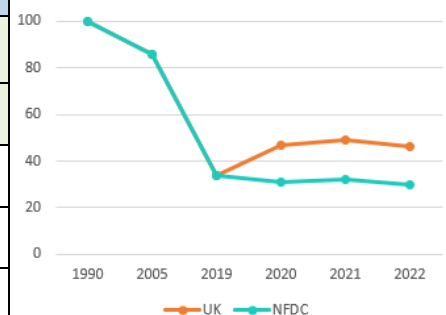
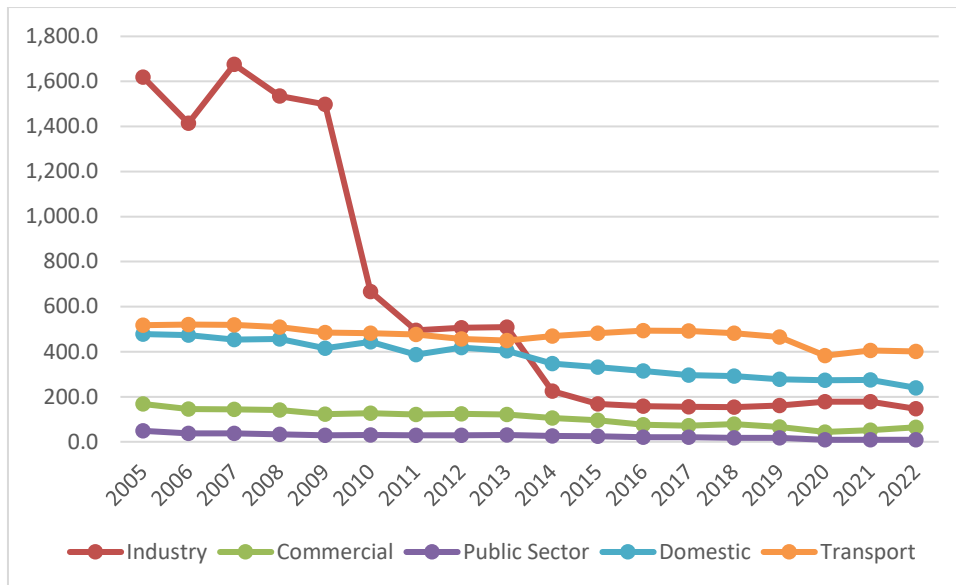
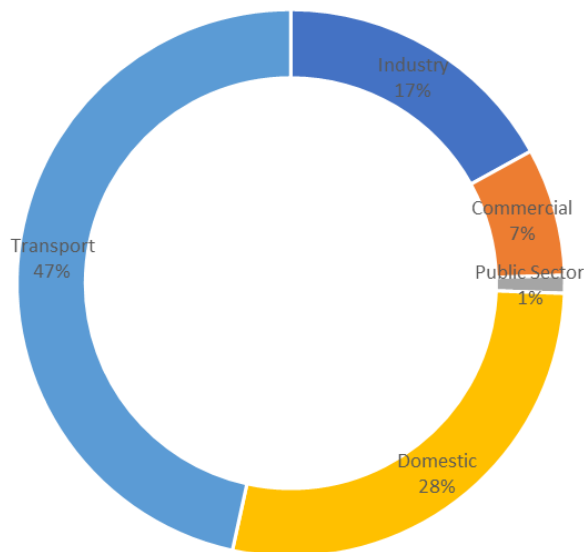


Table 1/Graph 1: UK and NFDC Emissions from 1990 and 2005 Baselines



Graph 2: NFDC Emissions by Sector 2005-2022



Graph 3: NFDC Area Emissions by sector 2022

16. Based on 2022 data, the most significant emissions sectors in the New Forest District Council Area are transport at 47%, domestic at 28% and industry at 17%. This is consistent with the findings of the previous report, however the percentages are marginally different.
17. When compared to the other District Council areas in Hampshire, the New Forest has the highest domestic, industrial and waste emissions, and the second highest transport emissions. As seen in previous years, high emissions in these sectors can be attributed to building type and efficiency (homes and business premises), their distribution across the area (rural with limited connectivity), waste infrastructure and practices (awaiting transformation) and industrial operations in the east of the district.

Net total emissions and subsequent per capita and per km2 rates remain comparatively low due to the high absorption of CO2e through the New Forest land use and forestry (LULUCF), for which New Forest had the best performance of the Hampshire Districts. NFDC Area also ranked highest in public sector emissions.

18. The New Forest District’s assessment via the UK Council Climate Scorecard 2023 (see [Place and Sustainability O&S Panel Report January 2024](#)) showed that the District performed well overall, but with a total score of 41% that there is still a significant amount that can be done. Of note, the New Forest’s lowest performing areas were judged to be Transport and Waste Reduction & Food. The sectors assessed were slightly different to that of the Government data referenced above, but it works to validate the information and focus efforts on those sectors most in need of reform and is being addressed through the transformation of our waste collection service and fleet management.

19. New Forest Council (Corporate) Emissions: Known NFDC Council emissions in 2022/23 and 2023/24 were calculated using the Local Partnerships/LGA Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool for Local Authorities. More information about the methodology, including scope and assumptions, can be found here. Known emissions for the financial year 2022/23 and 2023/24 were calculated as follows in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

Scope	Emissions Type	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage of Total Emissions
Scope 1	Heating	1002.83	29%
	Fugitive Emissions	0	0%
	Authority's Fleet	1719.45	50%
Scope 2	Electricity	549.87	16%
Scope 3	Staff Business Travel	92.58	3%
	Outsourced Fleet	0.78	0%
	Transmission and Distribution Losses	48.68	1%
	Water	18.53	1%
	Material Use	0	0%
	Waste generated from own operations	0	0%
	Outsourced Scope 3	0	0%
Total Emissions		3432.73	100%

Table 2: NFDC Council Emissions 2022/23

Scope	Emissions Type	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage of Total Emissions
Scope 1	Heating	974.49	29%
	Fugitive Emissions	0	0%
	Authority's Fleet	1695.92	50%
Scope 2	Electricity	536.55	16%
Scope 3	Staff Business Travel	91.67	3%
	Outsourced Fleet	0.78	0%
	Transmission and Distribution Losses	47.5	1%
	Water	22.02	1%
	Material Use	0	0%
	Waste generated from own operations	0	0%
	Outsourced Scope 3	0	0%
Total Emissions		3368.93	100%

Table 3: NFDC Council Emissions 2023/24

20. Where values are listed as '0' in Tables 2 and 3, this is because data is not available at this time or at this level. It is also important to note that the figures do not include leased out buildings i.e. housing, leisure, commercial properties where NFDC does not pay the energy bills. Any changes in scope or data will affect the amount emissions that NFDC is committed to eliminating. Taking broader accountability for emissions would increase the practical and financial burden for the Council but would ultimately reduce emissions from assets over which we have significant influence and a social responsibility.

21. It can be seen from Tables 2 and 3 that the percentage of emissions per type is consistent across the two reporting years, which is also almost identical to the emissions levels report in 2021/22. There was a 2% decrease in overall emissions from 21/22 to 22/23 and a 1.8% decrease between 23/24 showing a marginal and slowing pace of emissions reductions.

22. If NFDC is to achieve net zero by 2050 or before, high impact activities will be needed to reduce emissions at the pace and scale required.

23. In addition to calculating the CO₂e emissions associated with NFDC's operations, it is important to monitor the amount of utilities consumed and the cost paid for them. Looking at only one of these factors will not give a true indication of progress, for the following reasons:

- a) Emissions per unit of gas/electric/water will change over time as conversion factors are updated to reflect greening of the grid etc

- b) Unit quantity shows if we are successfully driving down demand and achieving sustainable behaviour change/process improvements
- c) Cost will reflect the impact of unit rates on financial sustainability

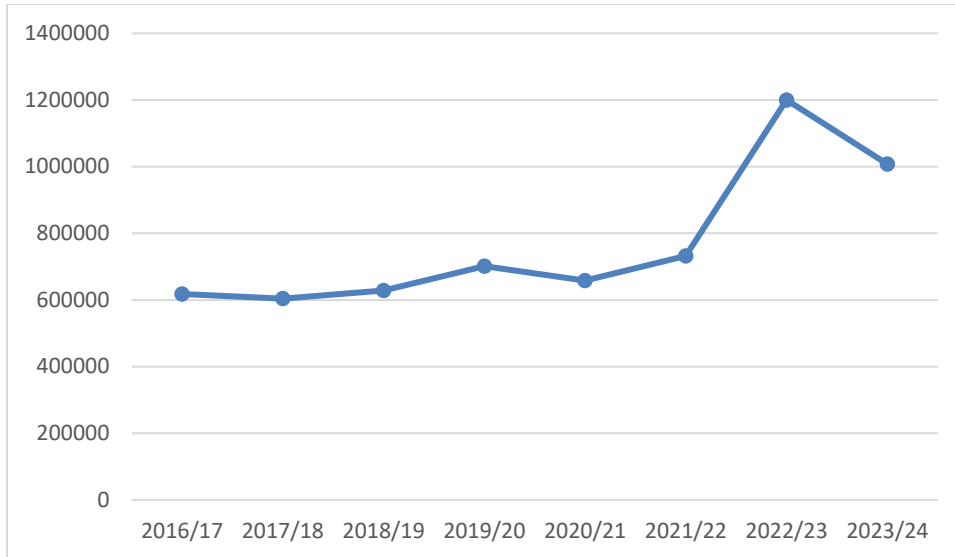
Utility	Annual Unit Quantity	Annual Cost	Average Unit cost
Gas	5,475,185 kWh	£386,629.60	7p/kWh
Electricity	2,389,703 kWh	£691,690.17	29p/kWh
Water	45,489 m ³	£121,986.32	£2.68/m ³
		£1,200,306.09	

Table 4: Utility consumption and costs 2022/23

Utility	Annual Unit Quantity	Annual Cost	Average Unit Cost
Gas	5,320,425 kWh	£278,829.79	5p/kWh
Electricity	2,325,958 kWh	£582,121.77	25p/kWh
Water	54,044 m ³	£147,053.78	£2.72/m ³
		£1,008,005.34	

Table 5: Utility consumption and costs 2023/24

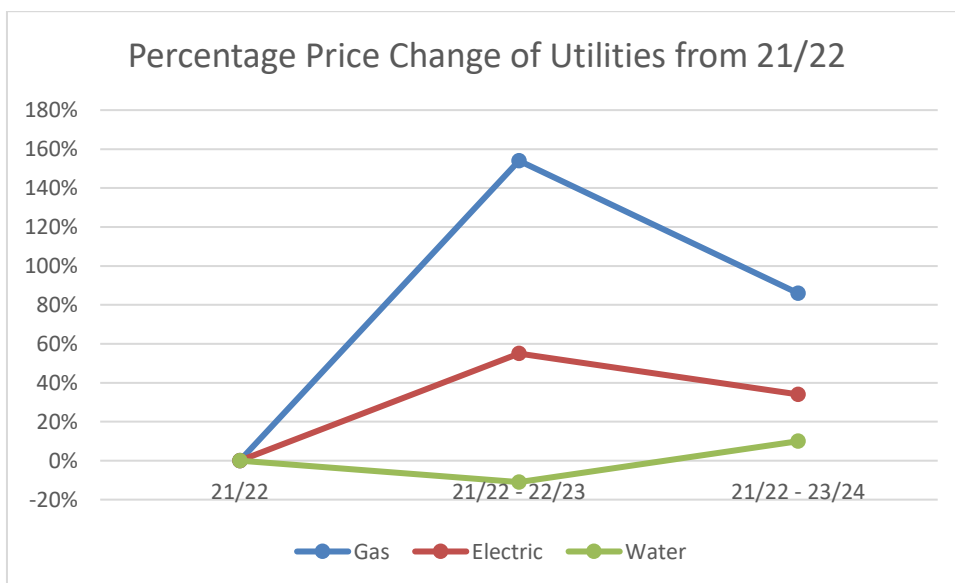
24. The figures in Tables 4 and 5 include all NFDC operated buildings/facilities, excluding council housing and leisure centres. Water consumption includes supply and waste figures. The majority of gas and electric metres are arranged through a consortium contract with LASER, however not all meters are on the same unit rates. The average unit rates include all charges associated with the supply of the utility.
25. Between 22/23 and 23/24, the Council reduced gas and electricity consumption by approximately 2.8% and 2.7%, respectively. Water consumption increased by approximately 18.9%. Actions that could have accounted for these changes include increasing the water pressure in ATC toilets, reopening of showers post-Covid closure, upgrading the boiler efficiency in ATC, reducing heating temperatures, Winter Plan measures, and staff behaviour change e.g. switching off equipment more consistently. The council has invested in new energy data management software to better understand these fluctuations and analyse demand for gas, electricity and water across the estate. This software will help to identify any inefficiencies or leaks and highlight links between, for example, solar PV generation and switching from gas to electrical heating systems.



Graph 4: NFDC Annual Spend on Utilities (£)

26. Graph 4 illustrates the trend in utility spend from 2016/17 to 2023/24. The price fluctuation is caused by a combination of higher net utility consumption and increased average unit rates (as shown in Tables 4 and 5). Using predominantly grid-supplied utilities means that the council is more vulnerable to experience price volatility. Installing independent energy generation systems e.g. solar PV, across the estate would reduce this risk in the future, improving energy security for the organisation.

27. Graph 5 below shows in greater detail the percentage price change of utility units from the price paid in 2021/22. For example, the unit price of gas increased by 154% from 21/22 to 22/23; the unit price then decreased the following year but was still at a rate 86% higher than in 21/22.



Graph 5: Percentage Price Change of Utility Units from 2021/22

Climate Change and Nature Emergency – Strategic Update

28. The first Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update Report to Cabinet on 6 February 2022 identified six strategic actions to address the Climate Change and Nature Emergency. Progress to date against the intended outcomes are detailed below in Table 6.

Strategic Action 1: Define to set targets for the climate change emergency declaration	
<p>Planned Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - De-couple the New Forest District Council estate versus the wider New Forest area and set targets. Scoping what is covered by term estate. - Identifying and working with experts to assess the trajectory for reducing emissions for both estate and wider area. - Assessing what is in and out of scope for the estate emissions. 	<p>Progress by 31st March 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete – differentiation made between corporate and area wide emissions. The net zero target for both is currently 2050 - Trajectory report to be considered/commissioned by the Climate and Nature Task and Finish (T&F) Group - LGA Tool guidance used to date (see 4.5) but will be reviewed by the T&F Group
<p>Outcome intended: A fully defined, evidence-based target with a pathway outlined</p>	<p>Outcome achieved: Work underway</p>
Strategic Action 2: Define the target for the nature emergency declaration	
<p>Planned Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying and working with experts to identify relevant baseline measurements and a trajectory for meeting and measuring progress towards the target. - Assess against the Environment Act to align the target with Central Government. 	<p>Progress by 31st March 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline measurements for meeting net zero by 2050 target complete (see Update Report 2023). This is to be reviewed by the T&F Group. - Alignment to Environment Act and Climate Change Roadmap to be completed in 24/25
<p>Outcome intended: A fully defined, evidence-based target with a pathway outlined</p>	<p>Outcome achieved: Work commenced, to be reviewed by the T&F Group</p>
Strategic Action 3: Collate existing data and conduct area-wide baseline emissions to identify key areas for future focus	
<p>Planned Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Map existing baseline data and carry out a gap analysis - Identifying and working with experts to conduct the area-wide baseline emissions data. - Map baseline data against existing actions to identify gaps and consolidate these into a long-term programme to reach the climate change targets. 	<p>Progress by 31st March 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area-wide emissions known; NFDC emissions gap analysis to be carried out - Complete – to be reviewed by T&F Group - Complete – Climate Change and Nature Emergency Strategy and Action Plan aligns work programmes

	with major emissions/ impact sources. To be reviewed 24/25.
Outcome intended: Data-driven programme on climate change	Outcome achieved: Data-driven programme on climate change
Strategic Action 5: Develop a climate change and nature engagement and communications strategy.	
Planned Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reaching residents, such as through developing webpages to showcase information, including the climate change actions. - Utilising internal communications channels and developing further external channels. - Exploring insights-led, behavioural change communications to engage residents. - Carry out a stakeholder mapping exercise and development an engagement plan. - Capture activities of other stakeholders and target/performance measures. - Continue to work with partners on shared messages to influence behaviours. 	Progress by 31st March 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with Corporate Communications Team to delivery regular comms. - Development of climate comms strategy – to be carried into 24/25. - Internal comms issued, inc. newsletters, staff briefings and social activities. - Working with Behavioural Insights Officer on waste and climate projects. - Climate questions included in residents’ insights survey in 2023. - Engagement with key partners, including HCC and NFNPA. - Engagement with key partners on events and communications.
Outcome intended: Greater transparency and availability of information regarding the work being carried out on climate change/nature.	Outcome achieved: Work commenced, to be carried into 24/25
Strategic Action 6: Maximise partnerships and networks to facilitate the delivery of projects.	
Planned Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximising links with Hampshire County Council, such as through the Hampshire Climate Change Officers Group, to align with and support existing projects, such as community engagement initiatives. - Demonstrate Place Leadership and maximise partnership working with the New Forest National Park Authority and Forestry England. Map existing projects and programmes and identify gaps to inform future actions. - Join new local and national networks to enhance knowledge, alongside becoming more deeply involved in existing networks to amplify the climate and nature agenda. 	Progress by 31st March 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued engagement with HCOG and other professional/community networks. - Close working with the NFNPA on Green Leadership Training, engagement events and communications. Mapping exercise to visualise local partnership undertaken through Green Leadership Training (NFNPA) and NFDC Corporate Leadership Training. - Engagement with new and existing networks e.g. ADEPT, LGA, IEMA, APSE

<p>Outcome intended: Leading the Place with greater partnership working and shared knowledge.</p>	<p>Outcome achieved: Working towards place leadership</p>
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Table 6: Progress against Strategic Actions by 31st March 2024

29. The previously endorsed Climate and Nature Action Plan (Appendix 2) has been extended until such time that the Council adopts an overarching strategy to drive long-term action towards the Council’s committed climate and nature goals. It is intended that this strategy will be developed following the conclusion of the Climate and Nature Task and Finish Group in 2025/26.
30. The actions within the current plan were endorsed in the knowledge that they will:
- a) deliver progress towards net zero, biodiversity net gain and climate resilience goals
 - b) require time and resources well beyond what is available in a 1-year period, meaning that it is reasonable for the delivery timeframe to be extended into 2025/26.
31. Key activities undertaken in 2023/24 to address Council aspects and those in the wider area, are highlighted below in sections 32 and 33 respectively.

Progress 2023/24 – NFDC Council

32. A number of initiatives were carried out between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2024 by NFDC to respond to the Climate Change and Nature Emergency, both in what we do and how we do it (our services and our operations). Some of the key activities are outlined below.

Carbon Reduction

- a) Energy assessment of key corporate/leisure sites to inform (successful) bid for funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS), administered through SALIX
- b) Development of business cases to improve the efficiency of council services e.g. green waste shredder, zero carbon gloves for operational staff, fleet decarbonisation
- c) Commitment to buy renewably generated energy (REGOs) through corporate Laser account for 2024/25
- d) Design and commencement of projects to be delivered through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF), including EV charging infrastructure, shared transport improvements and green skills development

- e) Delivering council housing retrofit energy efficiency measures through delivery of the NFDC Greener Housing Strategy. Through the day-to-day repairs and planned works services the council has improved 353 homes rated EPC D which are now achieving EPC band C or above. The Greener housing annual review was presented in September 2023 and can be viewed [here](#).
- f) The Social Housing Decarbonisation fund (SHDF) 2.1. The council received £545,000 matched funding by DESNZ to improve 70 inefficient homes to Energy Performance Certificate Band C. This two-year programme was completed in 12 months.
- g) Creation of an officer EV Steering Group to align the investment and activities of services with an overarching EV strategy for the district, to include policies for public, fleet, staff and housing
- h) Two electric vehicles for cleaning the public toilets, operating 7 days a week
- i) Solar panels at Lyndhurst Barton Beach & Barton Court Avenue public toilets
- j) Introduction of smart phones across all frontline Street Scene staff to reduce paper and speed up service delivery; and tablets used for inspections reducing paper by supervisors
- k) Recycling used HP print cartridges by staff at Marsh Lane Depot to reduce waste and disposal costs

Climate Adaptation

- l) Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) preparation and consultation
- m) Climate change risk added to the NFDC strategic risk register
- n) New cleaning products reducing the number of chemicals and moving to less environmentally damaging products. Climate reports will be available from the contract going forward. With ongoing assessment of our products to reduce their impact on the environment. COMAX at Ringwood are the new supplier.
- o) Independent collection of POPS waste to reduce forever chemicals from the environment.

Nature Recovery

- p) 'No Mow May' campaign running in the Spring/Summer of 2023 to support biodiversity health and habitat restoration across the District
- q) Met requirements of new Biodiversity Duty to facilitate biodiversity net-gain. A report was produced which highlights the main areas of NFDC's work that help to deliver the 'biodiversity duty' – the report can be read [here](#)
- r) Installation of bird and bat boxes on council housing to deliver biodiversity improvements and facilitate habitat connectivity. Installation of bird nesting and bat roosting features on NFDC new build properties
- s) Habitat restoration projects across NFDC owned land
- t) Recreational Mitigation projects designed and delivered to protect sensitive habitats within the District and support health and wellbeing of residents

Programme Management

- u) Member engagement – Overview & Scrutiny Panel sessions, launch event for Town, Parish and District Councillors (March 23), all Member training (June 23)
- v) Staff engagement – Steering group, staff events, service team meetings
- w) Purchase of Parity Projects software (Cosy Homes New Forest) – housing energy data platform to inform retrofit requirements, resource requirements, training needs, likely cost/climate impacts. This platform continues to provide up to date data on the energy efficiency of the councils housing stock. This information is helping the council track improvements and bid for future waves of funding.
- x) Purchase of i-Tree – measurement and holistic valuation of tree stock, including ecosystem services and carbon sequestration
- y) Understanding local, national, global policy framework, climate predictions and public sector trends
- z) 'Caring for the Climate' stand at the New Forest Show (July 2023)

Progress 2023/24 – NFDC Area:

33. Action to address the Climate and Nature Emergency (outside of NFDC direct operations) is undertaken by residents, businesses, community groups and third sector organisations. NFDC work in partnership to support and deliver many of these activities, some of which are highlighted below.

Carbon Reduction

- a) Launch of the Community Energy New Forest, in partnership with Community Energy South, to support renewable energy generation within the District
- b) Launch of Solar Together (Phase 3) in partnership with Hampshire County Council to support residents with the purchase of solar PV/battery storage technology at group discount rates
- c) Public requests for water stations in the New Forest led to the reduction in the use of plastic water bottles by the public and staff. We currently have 11 water stations linked to the public toilets. This led to positive comments from all areas with a water station, with further requests from the areas without them to have more
- d) In March 2024 a new round of the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) was released with an increase to the amount of funding available for homeowners and rented homes

Climate Adaptation

- e) Working with partner organisations through the Local Resilience Forum to ensure that the New Forest area is resilient and prepared for emergency situations
- f) Cosy homes new forest - The council launched this retrofit tool with advice on basic home energy improvements and technology. The website attracts approximately 100 new users each month
- g) Working with neighbouring authorities and partner organisations on local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategies – engagements events held throughout 2023/24 on the options for key New Forest management strategies

Nature Recovery

- h) Extension of the 'Greening Campaign' into New Forest District, in partnership with Hampshire and Isle of White Wildlife Trust

- i) Working with partners to protect and enhance wildlife corridors across administrative and water catchment boundaries
- j) Establishment of orchard habitats at Sweatford Meadow and Heatherstone Orchards

Programme Management

- k) Supporting green/eco community groups within the New Forest District and the wider County to raise awareness of environmental and climate friendly activities
- l) Working with external stakeholders and partners to align key strategies and identify funding opportunities where possible
- m) Posting NFDC content and sharing the external communications of partners on climate, nature and sustainability topics
- n) Attending local events such as the Brockenhurst Community Event to give energy advice to the public, raising awareness of available funding like the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) through government run schemes like ECO 4 and HUG.

34. Case Study: Behavioural Insights Programme

Litter in the New Forest has been a public issue over many years. A co-funded research program led by the LGA and Social Engine resulted in the publication of a paper on litter in the New Forest. During the Covid 19 pandemic, this research was used in a coastal campaign which reduced litter and created significant cost savings. A 2-year program of work is now underway, with multiple delivery strands, including: a coastal litter #Crabby campaign, A35 highway litter program, urban trail, and an art sculpture to link strands and educate stakeholders across a breadth of levels. This programme of projects is encouraging a reduction in waste, protecting the local environment from further pollution, and it is hoped that long-term cost savings and ongoing positive behaviour change will be achieved. The early success of the programme led it to become a finalist in the National MJ Awards.



Behavioural Insights Litter Programme

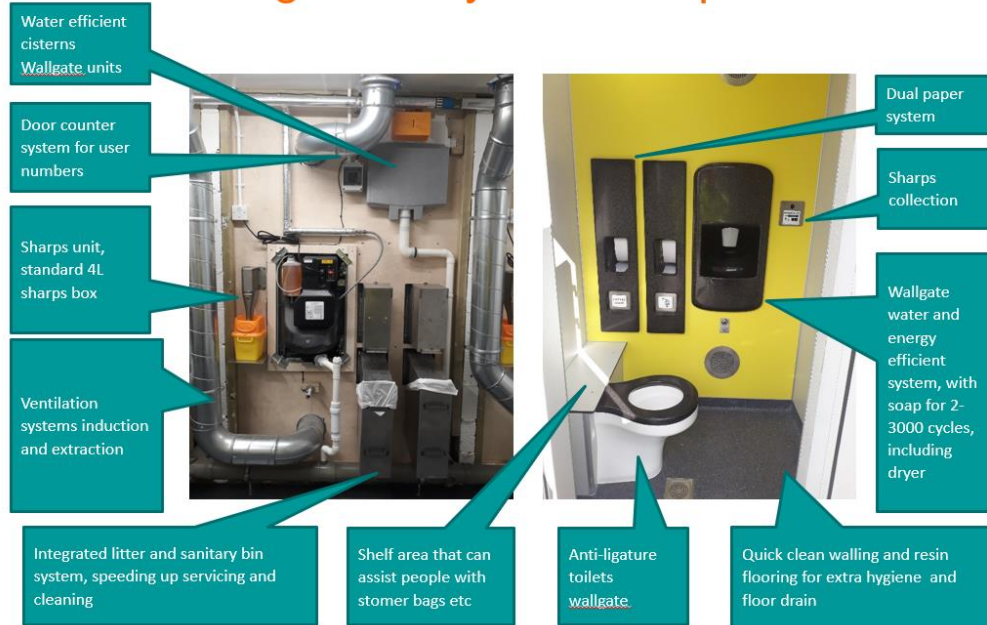
35. Case Study: Replacement public toilet building at Barton Beach

Great efforts were made to ensure that the replacement toilets facilities installed at Barton Beach were of the highest sustainability standards. 'Green' features of the facilities include: solar panels to supply energy to the building, water efficient hand wash units, air sterile system to reduce chemical use, modern fit for purpose building, upgraded consumer units requiring less servicing (reducing staff mileage to site), self-locking functionality to reduce staff millage and vehicle use at the beginning/end of each day, Haloceen water softener to reduce lime scale and ongoing maintenance costs, local build, and a water bottle refill station. The project has been highly commended by Members and the public, with multiple news articles and local accolades.



Barton Beach Public Toilets

Efficient design built by local companies



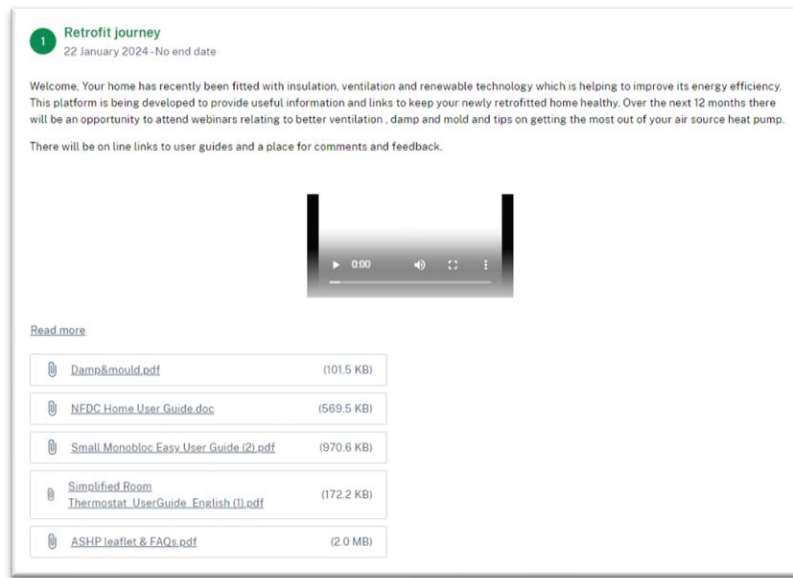
36. **Case Study: Community Energy New Forest**
 CENF was formed by communities in the New Forest to take positive action on the climate crisis. The vision of the group is to provide sustainable and renewable energy solution which positively impact comminates in the New Forest. They are partnering with well-established community energy organisation Schools Energy Coop, which has delivered more than 90 community owned solar rooftop projects across England. CENF is currently developing a pipeline of community owned projects in the District.



37. **Case Study: Citizens Lab (now Go Vocal)**
 Piloted and then launched by NFDC, this new digital resident platform is another way the council can communicate with residents and the wider districts to set up new projects, ask for feedback and ideas allowing people to give direct feedback, make suggestions and track progress on a range of items like improving a residents journey through retrofit, local plans or complete a survey. The platform reduces the carbon and resource impacts of more traditional means of communication (post, visits) and has been used to support residents in making their homes as comfortable, low

carbon and low cost as possible. The platform allows videos, easy user guides and webinars which is helping the council improve resident knowledge of the technology and home improvements which help keep repairs and repeat home visits by our contractors to a minimum.

Using Citizen lab we asked residents with an air source heat pump to give us their feedback. The results were very positive, and their feedback is helping to improve access and help for heating controls.



Community engagement via Citizens Lab

38. Case Study: Fawley Fields

The original green field site is now planted as woodland and Meadow with footpaths and over 200 new saplings. An independent ecologist site survey and pre-site assessment baseline was undertaken, followed up this year with a site resurvey to determine increased biodiversity, showing that the number of species present has increased significantly.



Meadows at Fawley Fields

39. **Case Study: Swift box installations**
Provision of swift nest boxes as part of the retrofit programme in collaboration with Hampshire Swifts and NFDC Housing Services. Budget was released for the purchase and installation of 70 swift bricks which were included as part of the retrofit programme on properties with suitable elevations.



Swift Box Installations at NFDC Property

Climate Change and Nature Emergency – Strategic Direction

40. The new NFDC Corporate Plan 2024-28 re-enforced the Council’s commitment to the issues of climate change and sustainability. A Climate Change and Nature Emergency Strategy is being drafted and will be informed by a Member Task and Finish Group. This Group which will explore the climate change and nature issues, data and opportunities over a 12-month period, commencing in Autumn 2024.
41. The Resident Insights Survey carried out in Spring 2023 demonstrated the public support for climate action across the District, with three quarters of the population stating that they felt worried about the impacts of climate change. This should give the Council and other stakeholders confidence to adapt and invest in measures to reduce local climate risk; it also supports the priority areas for action identified within the Climate and Nature Programmes (below).
42. Resident feelings were echoed by NFDC staff during engagement exercises undertaken in the development of the new Corporate Plan. As a result, operating sustainably and taking steps to reduce our environmental impact and improve resilience to climate change are key themes within the New Forest District Council’s Corporate Plan 2024-28, in particular, Place Priority 2 – Protecting our climate, coast and natural world.

43. The Future New Forest Transformation Programme was approved for implementation in April 2024 and within this programme, 'climate and sustainability' is identified as one of four key challenges to be addressed. The Transformation Programme identifies the following ways in which this subject can be addressed through corporate transformation:
- a) We will need to redesign services to be delivered in ways that promote positive environmental impacts
 - b) We will need to upskill staff to be climate aware and to develop solutions for their service
 - c) We will need to invest in building and other assets to reduce CO2 emissions and ensure long-term sustainability
 - d) We will ensure a clear strategic focus on the future environmental sustainability of the council
44. Achieving the above outcomes will undoubtedly reduce the carbon footprint of the Council and result in more cost-effective, efficient and beneficial service delivery, however successful implementation will require a continued investment of time, resources and effort. Recognising that behaviour changes may be uncomfortable or impractical at first, this must be achieved if the state which NFDC transforms into (the new 'business as usual') is to be sustainable in the long-term.
45. It is encouraging to see local commitments and policy drivers supporting national and international trends towards low-emission and high-sustainability; however the level of delivery needs to meet the level of ambition. The extent to which changes in climate performance will result from the election of a new UK Government is currently unknown, but indications that initiatives such as localised energy companies, large scale renewable installations, improved provisions for biodiversity and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are coming will set a clear direction for local authorities to follow.
46. Since January 2023, NFDC's climate action has been aligned to four main programmes of work – Carbon Reduction, Climate Adaptation, Nature Recovery and Programme Management. Priority areas for action and indicative projects can be seen in the tables below. Information on the rationale behind why these programmes were created can be found in the Annual Update Report 2023. These programme areas will be reviewed by the Climate and Nature Task and Finish Group and retained, amended or replaced accordingly.

CARBON REDUCTION					
INTERNAL PRIORITIES			EXTERNAL PRIORITIES		
Fleet	Gas	Electric	Industry	Road Transport	Homes
Depot electrification	Building fabric / insulation	LED lighting in buildings	Solent Cluster	LTP4 / LCWIP	Community Energy South
EV fleet replacement	BMS systems	Street lighting	Industry engagement	EV charging network	Retrofit / Greener Housing
Service delivery optimisation	Boiler replacement	Renewable energy	Carbon capture & storage	Public transport improvements	Local Plan
BUSINESS AS USUAL IMPROVEMENTS					
Sustainable policies, plans, services & procurement			Net zero infrastructure, investment & engagement		

Table 7: NFDC Council and Area Carbon Reduction Programme

CLIMATE ADAPTATION					
INTERNAL PRIORITIES			EXTERNAL PRIORITIES		
Buildings	Assets	Staff	Flooding	Coastal Erosion	Heatwaves
Location risk assessment	Natural assets e.g. open space	Climate Champions	Built infrastructure	Christchurch Bay / Harbour FCERM	NHS / Public Health
Temperature adaptation	Fixed assets e.g. bins	Emergency preparedness	Natural infrastructure	Hurst Spit to Lymington FCERM	Community Resilience Plans
Storm resilience	Vehicles e.g. fleet / grey	Business continuity	Catchment partnerships	Durlston to Hurst SRM Programme	Water conservation
BUSINESS AS USUAL IMPROVEMENTS					
Service risk assessment, adaptation plans & comms			Area risk assessment, adaptation plans & comms		

Table 8: NFDC Council and Area Climate Adaptation Programme

NATURE RECOVERY					
INTERNAL PRIORITIES			EXTERNAL PRIORITIES		
Biodiversity	Connectivity	Stewardship	Biodiversity	Connectivity	Stewardship
NFDC land studies	Nature corridors / Habitat banking	Local Plan / SPDs / GI strategy	Environmental surveys / data	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Environment Act / regulations
Habitat protection	Ecology infrastructure	Maintenance / upkeep	Habitat protection	Connectivity of strategic sites	BNG Credits / Habitat banking
Habitat creation	Local partnerships	Staff volunteering	Habitat creation	Active travel / accessibility	Ecology without boundaries
BUSINESS AS USUAL IMPROVEMENTS					
Nature Recovery in policies, strategies & decisions			Nature protection, enhancement & partnerships		

Table 9: NFDC Council and Area Nature Recovery Programme

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT					
INTERNAL PRIORITIES			EXTERNAL PRIORITIES		
Communications	Governance	Funding	Communications	Data	Partnerships
Newsletters / updates	CC&NE Steering Group	NFDC internal budget	Social media	Carbon / Climate / nature data	Hampshire County Council
Staff / member training	Portfolio Holder	Central Government	External webpages	Public Reporting	New Forest National Park
Forest Net Resources	Decision making	Private investment	Public events	External verification	Professional organisations
BUSINESS AS USUAL IMPROVEMENTS					
CC&NE principles embedded in NFDC culture & services			Residents, businesses, visitors support CC&NE principles		

Table 10: NFDC Climate Change and Nature Emergency Programme Management

Governance

47. It is widely communicated that reducing emissions, protecting our environment and improving resilience to climate change is the responsibility of every single officer and Member across the Council, not just the job of one person or team, however there are certain individuals and groups that play a key role in ensuring the quality of NFDC’s Climate Change and Nature Emergency response.
48. The Climate and Sustainability Manager is responsible for coordinating climate action across the council and externally with partners, with operational governance provided through direct supervision from the Strategic Director for Place, Operations and Sustainability. This is supplemented by oversight from the Climate and Nature Steering Group – membership of which is Council officers representing services with a pivotal role in delivering environmental improvements. Activities requiring corporate approval will progress through NFDC decision-making boards as required e.g. Executive Management Team or Capital and Change Board, ensuring that the appropriate level of consideration and oversight has been given to each initiative.
49. Political Governance is provided by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability. Regular Portfolio Holder Briefings provide the opportunity for progress updates and discussion of increasing or emerging risks/opportunities. Further political oversight is provided primarily by the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel, with key decisions escalating to Cabinet and Council as required. The creation of a Member Task and Finish Group to support the further development of the strategic direction and long-term priorities for the Council’s climate action is to be launched in Autumn 2024 and will meet regularly over the course of the following 12 months.

50. As the budget associated with climate action cuts across all council services, an internal Terms of Reference (ToR) has been agreed which sets out the criteria for spending from the £250k annual Sustainability Budget. These ToR are based on the priority areas for action, as set out in Section 7 above, and provide a clear and objective view of what does and doesn't qualify for funding. Spend on a single initiative costing more than £25k is reviewed by the Capital and Change Board before progressing.

Corporate plan priorities

51. The new NFDC Corporate Plan 2024-28 re-enforces the Council's commitment to the issues of climate change and sustainability. The activities reported contribute towards a number of corporate plan priorities, however the report itself is most closely aligned with Place Priority 2 – Protecting our climate, coast and natural world.

Options appraisal

52. As committed in October 2021, an annual update is to be produced which highlights key activities since the previous report and sets out intended activities for the coming year. The recommendations are to note the content of this report and continue to operate in the context of the Climate Change and Nature Emergency.

Consultation undertaken

53. This report has been produced in consultation with NFDC officers across all service areas, with the support of the Climate and Nature Steering Group. Officers in estates, housing and operational teams have provided data and case studies. New Forest National Park Authority as also provided content.
54. Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability has provided input and oversight, in addition to Strategic Director – Place, Operations and Sustainability.

Financial and resource implications

55. NFDC has made an ongoing financial commitment of £250,000 per year to directly address the Climate Change and Nature Emergency. All items of spend will be subject to an assessment of financial viability and a wider sustainability appraisal.
56. It is expected that the cost of all the projects within the Action Plan would exceed that budget and therefore projects will be prioritised, and funding further supplemented on a case-by-case basis where clear invest-to-save projections are attached. Sources of external funding will also be maximised through the delivery of

the action plan, to include central government grants (e.g. Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme), match-funding (e.g. SALIX recycling fund), public investment (e.g. community bonds) and private investment (e.g. commercial entities, landowners etc).

57. Due to the large number, scale and complexity of actions within the Action Plan, factors such as officer time, technology, resource availability, procurement, legal and planning considerations will need to be considered and effectively managed. Some projects will be relatively quick and straightforward to deliver with short-term returns on investment e.g. LED lighting replacement; but others will take months or years to deliver, requiring acceptance of longer-term benefit realisation e.g. large-scale renewable energy installations. Anticipated timescales, resource implications and funding requirements over a time-period greater than one year will be reflected in the Climate Change and Nature Emergency Strategy, when this comes to fruition.
58. It should be noted that any change in activity scope could impact the financial risk for NFDC. The severity of climate change experienced will also affect the pace and degree to which we will need to act, having knock on financial implications to ensure appropriate resourcing of activities and effective mitigation of risk.
59. There are no direct resource impacts or actions for approval resulting from this update report.

Legal implications

60. There are no direct legal impacts resulting from this update report.

Risk assessment

61. There are no direct risks or impacts resulting from this update report or its recommendations.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

62. There are no direct environmental implications resulting from the publication of this report, however the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan (at Appendix 2) is intended to bring about significant environmental benefits upon delivery of each of the constituent projects. Each one will be assessed fully as they are brought forward to ensure that maximum sustainable benefits are achieved.
63. It is hoped that through the Council's role as a community leader, this report will inspire the stakeholders of New Forest

District Council area to take positive action to address the Climate Change and Nature Emergency in their own ways.

Equalities implications

64. Action Plan includes actions which are likely have both positive and potentially negative impacts on persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic. These include, but are not limited to, social justice in terms of carbon and climate resilience and fuel poverty. A key strand of developing the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will be to fully assess the potential impacts of the actions and incorporate mitigation measures as necessary.

Crime and disorder implications

65. Identify any crime and disorder implications arising from the recommendations.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

66. Identify any implications arising from the recommendations.

New Forest National Park implications

67. New Forest National Park Authority colleagues were engaged in the creation of this report. Activities undertaken to date and the strategic direction proposed align to the objectives of the NFNPA's Re:New Partnership Plan.

Conclusion

68. NFDC and its stakeholders and partners engaged in a wide range of activities between 1 January 2023 to 31st March 2024 in response to the Climate Change and Nature Emergency. These activities demonstrate commitment to the local, national and international drive towards net zero and will in addition have delivered substantial co-benefits such as health and wellbeing, biodiversity improvements, upskilling our workforce and enhancing the local economy.
69. Delivery of the Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plan will continue, alongside the formation of a Member Task and Finish Group which will assess the climate projections, risk assessments and opportunities for improvement of the programme, to determine a clear and coordinated way forward and support the development of the strategy.

Appendices

List appendices here:-

Appendix 1 – Boundaries of Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park

Appendix 2 – Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plans

Background Papers:

[NFDC Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update 2022](#)

[NFDC Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update 2023](#)

[NFDC Climate Change and Nature Emergency Update January 2024](#)

[NFDC Corporate Plan 2024-28](#)

[NFDC Greener Housing Strategy](#)

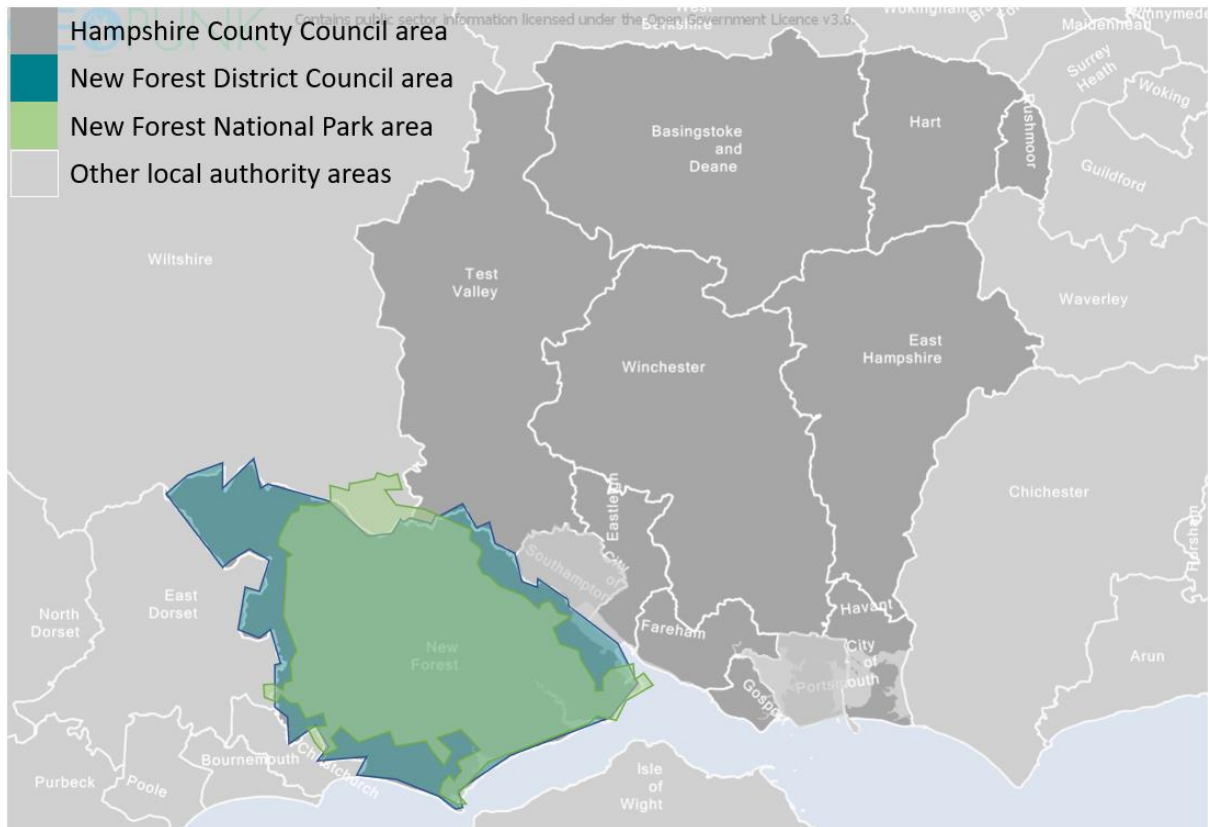
[NFDC Future New Forest Transformation Plan](#)

[NFNPA Re:New Forest Partnership Plan](#)

[UK Government Local Authority GHG Emissions statistical Release Report 2024](#)

APPENDIX 1

Boundaries of Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park Authority



APPENDIX 2

Climate Change And Nature Emergency – Internal Council Action Plan 2023 Continued Into 2024/25:

CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAMME			
Activity	Priority Area	Objective	Co-benefits
Sustainable policies, plans, services and procurements	BAU	Embed carbon reduction as a priority within all council activities - what we do and how we do it - including reduced travel, only essential procurement, waste reduction e.g. paperless working, online archiving	Efficient/shared resource use
Depot electrification	Fleet	Carry out building and infrastructure upgrades to facilitate transition to EV fleet and other electrical requirements	Reduced CO2e emissions from fleet and staff commuting; electricity resilience to protect service delivery
Sustainable fleet replacement	Fleet	Ensure that vehicle replacement programme prioritises more sustainable fuel types e.g. EV/hydrogen/ULEV/active travel. This includes all vehicle types - cars/vans/RCVs	Reduced CO2e emissions from fleet; climate leadership; reduced fossil fuel dependency; improved fuel security; improved air and water quality; reduced carbon offset liability; uptake of active travel schemes e.g. Cycle to Work
Service delivery optimisation	Fleet	Evaluate and adapt routes/operational practices to deliver lower emissions through reduced mileage, optimised vehicles etc	CO2e, fuel and time savings; minimal investment required
Building Fabric / insulation	Gas	Assess all corporately owned buildings and improve building fabric (particularly roof and wall insulation, doors and windows) to retain heat and reduce energy bills	Lower energy bills; reduced CO2e; climate leadership; improved building conditions; prolonged building life; opportunities for building use optimisation
Building Management Systems	Gas	Installation of BMS systems and supporting equipment to reduce energy wastage and optimise building conditions	Stable internal climate; less dependency on heating/cooling /ventilation;

Boiler replacement	Gas	Assess and replace inefficient boilers in NDFC occupied and leased properties where required - gas/oil to be replaced with heat pumps, destratification technology etc where appropriate	Reduced CO2e emissions; fuel efficiency; use of green technology
LED lighting in buildings	Electric	Replacement of lighting (bulbs and fittings) to new LEDs throughout corporate estate	Reduced CO2e emissions; reduced energy demand; better lighting conditions and controls; fast payback on investment
Street lighting	Electric	Replacement of NFDC-owned street lighting (bulbs and fittings) to new LEDs - in conjunction with HCC if appropriate	Reduced CO2e emissions; reduced energy demand; better lighting conditions and controls; fast payback on investment
Renewable energy - installed	Electric	Installation of renewable energy on NFDC owned land or in partnership with landowner	Reduced CO2e emissions; improved energy security; biodiversity opportunities around installation; possibility for community investment/stewardship
Renewable energy - purchased	Electric	Investigate opportunities for PPA contract to purchase renewable energy direct from a local supplier	Reputational benefits of purchasing locally generated energy; long term fixed electricity rates; support local green economy; future training/education on site

CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROGRAMME

Activity	Priority Area	Objective	Co-benefits
Service risk assessment, adaptation plans and comms	BAU	Understand and communicate climate risks to services and develop effective adaptation plans to secure safety and service delivery	Upskilling staff; improved emergency preparedness; reduced health and safety/financial/legal/ reputational risk from climate change impacts

Location risk assessment	Buildings	Undertake risk assessments of all existing corporate buildings in regard to the location/situation of buildings and the expected impacts of climate change e.g. flooding, coastal erosion, storm exposure	Reduce risk of service impacts; safeguard assets and staff; identify opportunities for building fabric/use improvements; positive deflection of risks e.g. water gardens
Temperature adaptation	Buildings	Understand the ability of buildings and their inhabitants to adapt to extremely hot and cold temperatures e.g. over heating, natural shading, passive ventilation, insulation	Reduce risk of service impacts; safeguard assets and staff; identify opportunities for building fabric/use improvements; positive deflection of risks e.g. food growing, cold storage
Storm resilience	Buildings	Assess ability of buildings to withstand storm damage from direct (e.g. wind) and indirect (e.g. tree fall) sources, including appropriate SUDs	Reduce financial/insurance/legal liability from pre-existing risks
Natural assets e.g. open space	Assets	Assess risk climate change impacts pose to natural assets e.g. tree/plant health, water retention, soil composition, water quality, agricultural potential, community access and use	Protection of ecosystem services; habitat protection
Fixed assets e.g. bins	Assets	Assess ability of fixed assets to withstand climate change impacts e.g. melting point of materials, strength of fixings, maintenance of moving parts	Reduced maintenance and replacement costs; reduced waste; health and safety
Vehicles e.g. fleet / grey	Assets	Ensure vehicles (existing and planned upgrades) are able to withstand extreme weather conditions or that emergency provisions are in place for short-term conditions e.g. snow/ice, temperature control, flooding	Reduced maintenance and replacement costs; reduced waste; health and safety
Climate Champions	Staff	Upskill staff and use champions network to identify climate risks and develop solutions that are appropriate for the area/service	Staff engagement/upskilling/ retention; better support for initiatives
Emergency preparedness	Staff	Ensure staff are aware of how to act in emergency situations related to climate impacts e.g. snow, flooding, heatwaves	Health and wellbeing of staff; increased resilience of service delivery; expedited resolution of emergency situation

Business continuity	Staff	Ensure business continuity plans provide a robust solution for all anticipated climate change impacts, over multiple intensity/duration scenarios e.g. minor/major flooding for 1day/7days; 25°C for 3 days or 40°C for 18 days	Effective service delivery to residents; coordination of effort/ activity between NFDC/NFNPA/ HCC; efficient resource use; reduced stress for all stakeholders
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NATURE RECOVERY PROGRAMME			
Activity	Priority Area	Objective	Co-benefits
Nature recovery in policies, strategies and decisions	BAU	Understand full implications of council activities on the natural environment and biodiversity	Safeguard ecosystem services; limit environmental damage and subsequent reparation; maximise carbon sequestration; reduce objections to plans/decisions
NFDC land studies	Biodiversity	Assess the size, variety and quality of natural space/habitats/ biodiversity on NFDC owned land, in addition to opportunities to deliver biodiversity net gain projects	Informed land use decisions; environmental protection and enhancement; potential for staff/public involvement in surveys
Habitat protection	Biodiversity	Create plans to safeguard existing habitats and areas of natural value e.g. maintenance, access, improvements, security	Environmental protection and enhancement; opportunities for biodiversity net gain; education and engagement
Habitat creation	Biodiversity	Actively create new habitats where conditions are favourable to encourage biodiversity net gain and/or connectivity or segregated habitats	Environmental protection and enhancement; opportunities for biodiversity net gain/species introduction; education and engagement for staff and public
Nature corridors / habitat banking	Connectivity	Explore opportunities for the creation of 'nature corridors' to facilitate the safe movement of biodiversity across physical or administrative boundaries. This could include initiatives such as 'habitat banking' to secure and invest in pockets of land for the purpose of connectivity and environmental improvement	Environmental protection and enhancement; opportunities for biodiversity net gain/species introduction; education and engagement for staff and public; external financial investment through habitat banking

Ecology infrastructure	Connectivity	Design and delivery of physical infrastructure to support habitats and biodiversity e.g. green bridges/tunnels for safe movement of animals across roads/built environments	Reduced roadkill; improved environmental quality; enhanced landscape character/aesthetics; education and engagement
Local partnerships	Connectivity	Continued engagement in local partnerships to ensure that natural habitats and movement of species are actively supported and not restricted by administrative boundaries	Shared responsibility; shared resources; broader engagement; access to a variety of funding streams; improved knowledge and understanding of the area
Local Plan / SPDs / Green Infrastructure Strategy	Stewardship	Adoption of a new Local Plan that prioritises sustainable land use and promotes ecological protection and enhancement. To be supported by, for example: Biodiversity SPD, Green Infrastructure Strategy, mandatory swift boxes, Climate Change SPD, nitrate and phosphate abatement	Improved natural environments; biodiversity net gain; enhanced ecosystem services; demonstration of climate leadership by planning authority
Maintenance / upkeep	Stewardship	Ensure maintenance policies and practices prioritise net environmental gain e.g. grass cutting schedule, electric equipment, long term plans, regular monitoring	Improved carbon sequestration; demonstration of climate leadership; improved air quality from electric equipment
Staff volunteering	Stewardship	Support and encourage staff to engage in nature projects	Improved health and wellbeing of staff; upskilling of staff; raised awareness of projects and outcomes; education of family and friends

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Activity	Priority Area	Objective	Co-benefits
CC&NE principles embedded in NFDC culture and services	BAU	All activity to be sustainable by design and a prioritised deliverable for all services e.g. through corporate/service risk registers, service trajectories to net zero, new build corporate/ housing designed to be low carbon and climate resilient, delivering biodiversity net gain as standard e.g. Testwood Club, SUDs	Demonstration of climate leadership; shared responsibility across services; shared resources; reduced negative impact for future mitigation

Newsletters/updates	Communications	Keep staff and NFDC stakeholders informed of climate and nature information and activities	Staff/public education and engagement; greater uptake/support for projects; evidence log of activities; demonstration of climate leadership; recognition of services/ individuals for commitment to climate action
Staff/member training	Communications	Increase knowledge and understanding of carbon reduction, climate adaptation and nature recovery to ensure effective action and embedding of principles across council services	Staff engagement; staff retention; upskilling and improved effectiveness/efficiency of work
ForestNet resources	Communications	Create repository of climate and nature resources for use by staff and members e.g. technical information, guidance notes, impact assessment tool	Shared resources reduce dependency on Climate Change Manager; staff can improve knowledge and embed principles at convenient times
CCandNE Steering Group	Governance	Continued meeting of the Climate Change and Nature Steering Group to ensure robust governance of activities and provide support to services/officers in delivery services/projects sustainably. Governance framework to be reviewed annually.	Support/advice/guidance for staff; opportunity to raise awareness of issues/opportunities; improved communication and collaborative working
Portfolio Holder	Governance	Continued engagement with Portfolio Holder on climate, nature and sustainability issues/opportunities	Raise awareness of topics; provide information/support for public/member scrutiny
Decision making	Governance	Embed climate change, nature and sustainability principles in all decision-making processes of NFDC, including report templates, overview and scrutiny, impact assessments, procurement decisions etc	All activities are contributing to direct or indirect carbon reduction/climate adaptation/ nature recovery; improved transparency of long-term impacts of NFDC decisions
NFDC internal budget	Funding	Continued revenue budget for the delivery of actions to positively address the Climate Change and Nature Emergency	Funding for projects available when needed, avoiding short term or competitive funding streams

Central Government funding	Funding	Awareness and uptake of government funding streams where aligned to NFDC priority actions around climate, nature and sustainability	Reduced local funding requirement; recognition of support for Central Government initiatives
Private investment	Funding	Awareness of alternative external funding sources, including private investors, community investment and income generating initiatives	Reduced local funding requirement; recognition as a local partner for climate action; joint bid opportunities

Climate Change And Nature Emergency – External Area Action Plan 2023 Continued Into 2024/25:

CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAMME			
Activity	Priority Area	Objective	Co-benefits
Net zero infrastructure, investment and engagement	BAU	Demonstrate commitment to net zero carbon in the design and delivery of area-wide initiatives e.g. electrical infrastructure improvements, and support partners in understanding impacts and reducing emissions as a priority in all activities	Partnership working; demonstration of climate leadership; reduced carbon burden for future mitigation; progress against national and local targets; improved air quality and natural environments; contribution to reducing climate change
Solent Cluster	Industry	Engage with newly formed Solent Cluster partnership and support efforts to make the area a leading centre for low-carbon investment	Partnership working; local economic growth; protection of skilled jobs; creation of new employment opportunities; investment into carbon reduction technologies and initiatives
Industry engagement	Industry	Engage with businesses to facilitate carbon reduction, including manufacturing, energy generation and large marine companies	Partnership working; local economic growth; protection of skilled jobs; creation of new employment opportunities; investment into carbon reduction technologies and initiatives
Carbon capture and storage	Industry	Investigate opportunities for carbon capture and storage in and/or from the New Forest district area	Reduced area-wide carbon emissions; improved environmental quality; contribution to reducing climate change; job creation; investment into low-carbon technologies; recognition as a climate leader in the public sector
LTPS/LCWIP	Road Transport	Reduce travel through remote working and increase uptake of sustainable and active travel options where travelling to sites is unavoidable e.g. EV/ hydrogen/ULEV/walking/cycling/ public transport. Creation of sustainable travel plans and installation of bike racks and other sustainable travel infrastructure as part of ongoing building maintenance and investment plans	Health and wellbeing; resident/ visitor/business/staff engagement; congestion reduction; air quality improvement; water quality improvement; reduced roadkill; Reduced CO2e; reduced road congestion; improved health and wellbeing; increased patronage of local facilities including leisure; support for local green economy

EV charging network	Road Transport	Build network of EV chargers throughout NFDC area to increase uptake of electric travel to/through New Forest. Phase 2 of EV charger installations to be delivered in 2023, including electrical capacity	Reduce range anxiety; support residents in switching to EV; visitors supporting local businesses while charging
Public transport improvements	Road Transport	Partnership working with public and shared transport providers to increase uptake and efficiency of services e.g. ferries, busses, trains, taxis, community car schemes	Reduced CO2e; reduced road congestion; improved health and wellbeing; increased patronage of public transport services; support for local economy
Community Energy South	Homes	Establish a successful Community Energy Pathways Programme for the New Forest District Council area	Awareness and understanding of local energy issues; community engagement; community investment in renewable energy; increased renewable energy for NFDC area; upskilling of local residents
Retrofit / Greener Housing	Homes	Delivery of Greener Housing Strategy to improve energy efficiency, energy security, climate change resilience and reduced emissions of all homes within the NFDC district	Cost of living benefits for residents; improved living conditions/health and wellbeing; reduced fuel poverty; support of local green economy; reduced CO2e emissions; increased renewable energy generation/energy resilience; uptake of EVs; access to external funding; reputational benefits to NFDC
Local Plan	Homes	Work with developers to achieve schemes that maximise the ability for residents to access facilities/ employment/recreation by walking/ cycling, as well as enforcing sustainable construction and operation standards e.g. low carbon, local supply chain. New schemes should also include measure to promote good waste management e.g. appropriate space for segregated bins, RCV access	Improved health and wellbeing; reduced congestion; reduced CO2e; improved air quality

CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROGRAMME

Activity		Objective	Co-benefits
Area risk assessment, adaptation plans and communications	BAU	Understand and communicate climate risks to residents, businesses and visitors and develop effective adaptation plans to ensure health and safety, particularly during extreme weather events	Upskilling staff; improved emergency preparedness; reduced health and safety/financial/legal/ reputational risk from climate change impacts
Built infrastructure	Flooding	Assess flooding risks (coastal/ river/surface water) to built infrastructure including buildings and roads. Ensure Local Plan requires new developments and those requesting permission for improvements to be resilient to climate change impact e.g. appropriate SUDs	Protect assets from physical damage; safeguard users of the built infrastructure; reduce legal/financial/ reputational risks from flooding; implementation of non-emergency adaptation measures; more efficient and cost-effective adaptation solutions
Natural infrastructure	Flooding	Assess flooding risks (coastal/ river/surface water) to natural infrastructure including trees and protected habitats	Biodiversity protection; implementation of non-emergency adaptation measures
Catchment partnerships	Flooding	Work with partners to ensure effective water and flooding management to reduce likelihood and severity of flooding incidents	Biodiversity protection; implementation of non-emergency adaptation measures; shared resources; join bids for external funding
Christchurch Bay / Harbour FCERM	Coastal Erosion	Continued delivery of projects within the Christchurch Bay / Harbour FCERM Strategy	Reduced risk; stakeholder engagement; identification of funding and resource requirements; protection of ecosystem services
North Solent SMP	Coastal Erosion	Continued delivery of projects within the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan	Reduced risk; stakeholder engagement; identification of funding and resource requirements; protection of ecosystem services
Durlston to Hurst SRM Programme	Coastal Erosion	Continued delivery replenishment projects within the Durlston to Hurst SRM Programme	Reduced risk; stakeholder engagement; identification of funding and resource requirements; protection of ecosystem services
NHS / Public Health	Heatwaves	Ensure that advice and guidance is available and appropriate to reduce to impacts of extreme heat on human health	Reduced risk to health and wellbeing; stakeholder engagement; identification of funding and resource requirements

Community Resilience Plans	Heatwaves	Work with health and community partners to ensure that robust plans are in place for residents, businesses and visitors to manage prolonged heatwaves effectively	Reduced risk to health and wellbeing; management of cost and availability of emergency measures; stakeholder engagement; identification of funding and resource requirements
Water Conservation	Heatwaves	Understand freshwater capacity and pressures for the NFDC area and create a proactive procedure for managing risk in the event of prolonged heatwaves	Reduced risk of water scarcity; stakeholder engagement; identification of funding and resource requirements

NATURE RECOVERY PROGRAMME			
Activity		Objective	Co-benefits
Nature protection, enhancement and partnerships	BAU	Understand full implications of activities in the New Forest District area on the natural environment and biodiversity	Safeguard ecosystem services; limit environmental damage and subsequent reparation; maximise carbon sequestration; reduce objections to plans/decisions; leverage external funding
Environmental surveys / data	Biodiversity	Assess the size, variety and quality of natural space/habitats/ biodiversity on non-NFDC owned land, in addition to opportunities to deliver biodiversity net gain projects	Informed land use decisions; environmental protection and enhancement; potential for staff/public involvement in surveys
Habitat protection	Biodiversity	Creation of, for example, Recreational Mitigation Strategies to reduce impact of new development on the natural environment	Environmental protection and enhancement; opportunities for biodiversity net gain; education and engagement
Habitat creation	Biodiversity	Actively support partners in the creation of new habitats where conditions are favourable to encourage biodiversity net gain and/or connectivity or segregated habitats	Environmental protection and enhancement; opportunities for biodiversity net gain/species introduction; education and engagement for staff and public

Local Nature Recovery Strategies	Connectivity	Work with others to establish key locations within the district for nature recovery projects. Input into the LNRS seeking to agree priorities for nature's recovery, map the most valuable existing areas for nature and map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals	Safeguarding of ecosystem services across administrative boundaries; partnership working; access to external funding opportunities
Connectivity of strategic sites	Connectivity	Ensure the connectivity of strategic sites to ensure that biodiversity net gain and movement of species across and between areas is facilitated	Safeguarding of ecosystem services across administrative boundaries; partnership working; access to external funding opportunities; enhanced value of strategic sites to the local environment
Active travel/accessibility	Connectivity	Work with local transport partners, landowners and other stakeholders to improve access to/through green spaces via sustainable transport modes e.g. walking, cycling, EV	Connectivity and expansion of active travel routes; greater uptake of sustainable travel modes; support for local economy e.g. bike shops, cafes; reduced environmental impact of vehicular transport; improved air and water quality
Environment Act / regulations	Stewardship	Ensure plans/strategies/projects align with national, regional and local environmental regulations and objectives	Legislative compliance; access to government funding; demonstration of climate leadership; consistency with public sector peers
BNG Credits / habitat banking	Stewardship	Investigate opportunities for financial investment and associated benefits through the introduction of schemes such as Biodiversity Net Gain credits and habitat banking	Reduced local funding requirement; recognition of support for Central Government initiatives
Ecology without boundaries	Stewardship	Working with partners to ensure that conservation efforts are not hampered by administrative boundaries e.g. working with Bird Aware and partners in the Solent Water area to prioritise biodiversity across land in multiple ownership	Environmental protection and enhancement; opportunities for biodiversity net gain; education and engagement

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

Activity	Priority Area	Objective	Co-benefits
Residents, businesses, visitors support CC&NE principles	BAU	Increase local action on carbon reduction, climate change resilience and nature recovery, supporting sustainable behaviour change in communities and businesses.	Shared responsibility; partnership working; shared resources; reduced negative impact for future mitigation; environmental improvements
Social/online/print media	Communications	Provide climate and nature information to residents, businesses and visitors through online channels, traditional media. Ensure messaging is consistent with insights from Residents Survey 2022	Public education and engagement; greater uptake/support of projects; evidence log of activities for reporting; promotion of local action
External webpages	Communications	Ensure NFDC website provides up to date information and guidance on responding to the Climate Change and Nature Emergency - what the Council is doing and what residents/businesses/visitors can do	Public education and engagement; greater uptake/support of projects; partnership working; promotion of local action
Public events	Communications	Creation of new events and/or attendance at non-NFDC climate and nature events to raise awareness, gather feedback and provide information and guidance	Public education and engagement; greater uptake/support of projects; partnership working; promotion of local action
Carbon/climate/nature data	Data	Seek to improve the quality and accuracy of data used to monitor and communicate climate action	More accurate monitoring and reporting; possibility of external validation; better transparency of true impacts (positive and negative)
Public reporting	Data	Explore the use of public reporting platforms to communicate NFDC Council/Area actions to address the Climate Change and Nature Emergency	Raised awareness of NFDC Council/Area activities; reputational benefits; potential access to alternative funding sources

External verification	Data	External validation of NFDC Council/Area performance data	Raised awareness of NFDC Council/Area activities; reputational benefits; confidence in progress to date, awareness of underlying problems with data gaps/sources/ assumptions
Hampshire County Council	Partnerships	Continued work with HCC to maximise carbon reduction, climate adaptation and nature recovery in the New Forest, particularly around unitary services delivered by HCC in or on behalf of the NFDC area e.g. transport infrastructure, waste disposal etc. Alignment of activities and support for county-wide climate initiatives such as Retrofit and Pathways	Carbon reduction; climate resilience; consistent public messaging; complimentary programme development and delivery
New Forest National Park Authority	Partnerships	Continued work with the NFNPA to maximise carbon reduction, climate adaptation and nature recovery in the New Forest. Alignment and support for delivery of the Re:New Partnership Plan	Carbon reduction; climate resilience; consistent public messaging; complimentary programme development and delivery
Professional Organisations	Partnerships	Membership of professional networks/organisations such as IEMA, LGA, HCOG to maintain up to date industry knowledge and maximise partnership working opportunities	Raised awareness of NFDC Council/Area activities; reputational benefits; potential access to alternative funding sources