



Council of the  
ISLES OF SCILLY

# Climate Change Action Plan

2022

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# Foreword

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## Councillor Robert Francis

Chairman of the Council

This Climate Change Action Plan is dedicated to protecting the Isles of Scilly for generations to come.

In March 2019, I was honoured to meet the children of Five Islands Academy on their Climate March to the Town Hall on St Marys. 150 local children hand delivered a petition to the Council calling for real action in the way we tackle climate change. At the time I told them we would take their concerns seriously as we believed the issue was hugely important, not just here on Scilly, but around the world. I stood by my word.

Following their Climate March, I was hugely proud the Council voted unanimously and joined many Local Authorities and other organisations across the Country to declare a Climate Emergency. As a result of our declaration, we as a Council have committed to bring about wide ranging action, and we continue to honour our declaration through our Corporate Plan and our daily service delivery.

This Climate Change Action Plan celebrates what we have already achieved since our last Action Plan in 2011, but also sets out the magnitude of the work we need to do moving forward to achieve our 2030 net zero carbon ambition.

I look forward to seeing the actions set out in this plan realised and encourage everyone across our island community to get involved.



## Councillor Steve Watt

Lead Member for Energy, Climate Change and Environment

Our climate is already changing, you only have to experience one of our extreme storm events or look at how low our fresh water levels are to realise we are already experiencing the effects of the changing climate here.

The Council has recognised the importance of this global issue and how it can impact our community. As a response, we declared a Climate Emergency in April 2019 to reaffirm our concerns and push for solutions to the challenges we face. Our ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030 followed, and has been embedded within our Corporate Plan. This ambition will only be realised if the council and the community respond by revolutionising the ways to tackle climate emergency through practical local plans of action. The council cannot do this alone, but it can set the pace and establish good practice.

Many achievements are already underway such as embedding our climate emergency in strategic documents such as the Local Plan and the Corporate Plan, retro-fitting our council properties to make them more energy efficient, the installation of electric vehicle charging points around the islands and more recently the Climate Adaptation Scilly Project.

This new Action Plan will move the determination still further and place the Council as a leader by example in protecting the islands for future generations.



# Executive Summary

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**Climate change is the greatest global health threat of the 21st century, but it is also the greatest opportunity.**

In August 2021, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reaffirmed climate change is real, present and lasting and set out unequivocal evidence that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land to an unprecedented degree, with effects almost certain to worsen in the coming decades.

This, our second Climate Change Action Plan builds on the Council's plan published in 2011 and is a call to arms to our islanders, our visitors, our businesses and all who consider the Isles of Scilly special.

Our response to climate change today, the conversations we need to have and the actions we need to take will impact the lives of our children and our children's children and will help our future generations adapt to our changing climate here on Scilly.

It is important we have these local conversations with those who will be impacted by our changing climate in their life time. This plan has been developed in consultation with them and for them, to ensure our community remains resilient to the impacts of climate change through both climate mitigation and adaptation measures.

This Climate Change Action Plan celebrates the steps the Council, with our local partners and the community have taken over the last ten years, the investment into our critical infrastructure, the move away from fossil fuels, the installation of our electric vehicle charging points and how we have been working to protect our marine and terrestrial habitats and species.

These milestones are welcomed, and were further strengthened by the Council's recent declaration of a climate emergency in April 2019, our commitment to be net zero carbon by 2030 in our Corporate Plan and our switch away from fossil fuel powered energy to a renewable energy supplier. Whilst all these actions should be celebrated, this is only the start, there is much more to do.

This action plan sets out what the Council will be doing to combat our carbon emissions over the coming years focussing on what we can control (through the direct control of sites and services), what we can influence (working with our community and local businesses) and how we will work with our local partners and national stakeholders to ensure we can achieve our ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030.

The plan recognises we cannot achieve this alone and collaboration and community engagement is essential to delivering our ambition.

Given the scale, complexity and urgency required to respond to climate change, this action plan will adopt an iterative approach.

Whilst setting out the 2030 net zero carbon ambition, it will require regular updates to ensure any rapid progress or significant changes are captured.

This approach will ensure the action plan reflects the rapidly changing landscape in both a national and international context.

# Our key objectives

We will ensure our net zero carbon ambition is at the heart of everything we do

1

We will stop using fossil fuels, ensuring our buildings are zero carbon and energy efficient where possible

2

We will ensure all new development across our islands is low carbon, embracing sustainable design and development, protecting our natural resources and conserving our unique habitats

3

We will ensure our transport infrastructure supports clean safe methods of travel, promoting active travel wherever possible

4

We will work with our colleagues and partners to protect and enhance our natural environment, safeguarding our marine life and coastline landscapes to support nature recovery

5

We will reduce our waste and maximise recycling and reuse through our Waste Reduction Strategy

6

We will adapt to our changing climate, protecting our homes, our livelihoods and our critical infrastructure from future flood risk and the wider impacts of climate change

7

We will support our partners, stakeholders and local community on their journeys to carbon reduction

8

We will engage, communicate and share our progress with our local community

9

We will work with our regional and national policy makers to support our carbon ambitions

10



# What does climate change mean for Scilly?

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## **Our climate is already changing.**

The Met Office 'State of the UK Climate' (2021) reported temperature, rainfall and sunshine for 2020 all ranked within the top ten highest on record in the UK, the first time this has ever happened in a single year since records began.

During 2020, the UK experienced the wettest February on record with Storms Ciara and Dennis bringing heavy rain and high winds, the sunniest (driest) May on record, followed by several extreme heatwaves in July. There were no major snow events in the UK and an obvious decline in both air and ground frosts across the country.

Here on Scilly we have a unique temperate oceanic climate which borders a humid sub tropical climate which means we generally do not experience the hot and cold temperature extremes seen across the rest of the UK. However, we have experienced greater intensity storms and changes in our rainfall patterns throughout the year.

These changes bring with them the biggest challenge the Isles of Scilly will face in the future, that of coastal flooding. Initially coastal flooding could contaminate our fresh water supplies with saline water, affecting not only our vital drinking water supplies, but also our freshwater habitats.

High intensity storms risk damaging our critical infrastructure such as property, highways, telecommunications and our lifeline transport links and supply chains we rely on.

Our changing climate will also bring about physical changes to our natural environment, both marine and terrestrial. High intensity storms can damage our delicate ecosystems, negatively impacting on our internationally recognised habitats and species, which along with the islands stunning landscape supports our local tourism economy.

Changes in our rainfall patterns will be felt by farmers and land managers trying to maintain their crops and feeding their livestock. These changes are already happening, with some local farmers reporting recent challenges over the last 18 months.

Predicted shifts in temperature may see an increase in pests and diseases and associated increased invasive flora and fauna negatively impacting landscapes and seascapes.

There is no doubt climate change is going to affect us all, it's how we work together to address it moving forward.



# Climate mitigation and adaptation

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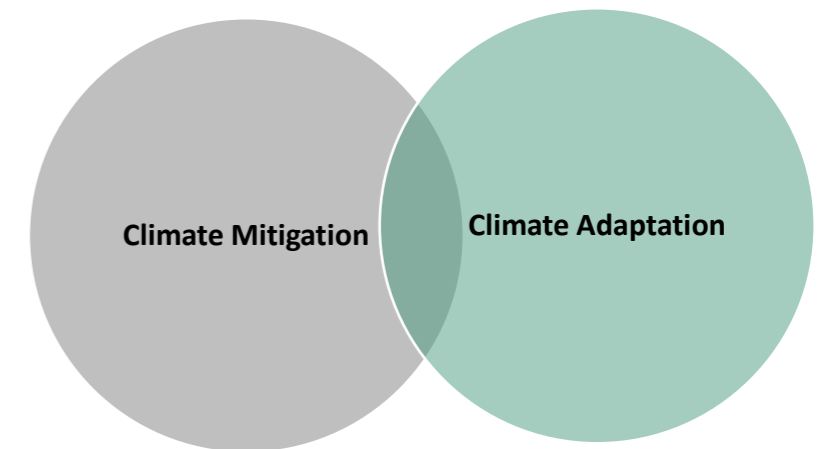
**Addressing climate change requires a dual approach; climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation.**

**Climate change mitigation** focusses on reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, which include carbon and methane, and the activities which contribute to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This Climate Change Action Plan looks at what we have done and what we still need to do to reduce our emissions as part of our journey to net zero carbon. It also sets out the importance of safeguarding our natural carbon sinks which play such a vital role capturing carbon from the atmosphere and locking it away.

**Climate change adaptation** works in tandem with climate change mitigation measures. Although reducing carbon emissions is important, it will take many decades for emission reductions to reverse climate changes to which we're already committed. This is why we need to adapt to the inevitable physical impacts of climate change such as sea level rise, flooding and changes in rainfall as soon as possible.

In essence, climate change mitigation actions deal with the climate driven changes which will affect our children and grandchildren while climate change adaptation actions deal with the climate driven changes that are affecting us now.

This Climate Change Action Plan sets out our work programme in dealing with both mitigation and adaptation, identifying actions to reduce our carbon emissions in the future, but also what we need to do to adapt to climate change now.





# The health impacts of our changing climate

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## **Climate change can have serious implications on our health and wellbeing.**

The physical impacts of climate change on our natural environment such as changes in temperature and in the frequency and strength of storms, floods, droughts, and heatwaves will bring about physical and mental health consequences (The Lancet, 2017)

Some of the key health impacts of climate change are listed below

- Increasing temperatures can exacerbate existing health problems and introduce new health threats (including cardiovascular disease and chronic kidney disease)
- Impacts of extreme heat include heat stress and heat stroke, to exacerbations of pre-existing heart failure, and even an increased incidence of acute kidney injury from dehydration in vulnerable people
- The increase of aeroallergens and ground level ozone will likely increase the numbers of respiratory conditions amongst the population
- The effects of flooding on mental health and well-being are thought to be significant

- Public Health England reports the projected increases in temperature in the UK due to climate change are likely to encourage changes in behaviour that lead to more time spent outdoors. It is recognised that this may bring direct benefits, such as physical exercise, mental health benefits and possibly increased vitamin D production, however may also see an increase in skin cancers
- Changes to the climate are likely to change the distribution of vector, food and water borne diseases. There is uncertainty over which pathogens will pose the greatest risk to human health in the future with climate change, however it is thought that incidences of Lyme Disease are likely to increase, along with norovirus, food poisoning and legionella due to changes in temperatures.

The prevention of avoidable illness and the promotion of health, wellbeing and community resilience are all fundamental to ensuring we have a healthy community, ready to respond to the challenges of our changing climate for generations to come.





# Our journey to net zero carbon

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**The emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases such as methane into the earth's atmosphere is the major contributing factor to global warming and our changing climate.**

The Council's continued use of fossil fuels continues to drive these carbon emissions up. However, since the publication of our Climate Change Action plan in 2011, the Council has taken significant steps to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and reduce our contribution to this global crisis.

This document sets out how far we have come since then, showcasing the innovative and pioneering work carried out in 2015 around smart energy generation and celebrating the widespread achievements to date.

Our journey to reducing our carbon emissions was further strengthened in April 2019, when the Council unanimously agreed a motion to declare a Climate Emergency, joining many other Local Authorities throughout the UK to commit to reversing the effects of climate change.

The Council committed to a 2030 net zero carbon ambition, which has since been embedded within the Corporate Plan.

In order to fully understand our carbon journey and the magnitude of our carbon reduction ambition, we must first understand where our carbon emissions come from, so we are able to prioritise where we need to focus our time and resource.

This Climate Change Action Plan specifically focuses on the operational carbon emissions associated with the Council's day to day activities and services over which it has direct control and influence.

Whilst the Council recognises the carbon emissions associated with its outsourced activities and those generated from our partners and stakeholders across the island might be far greater than its own, this action plan recognises the importance of working together to begin to capture this data and working with our community to monitor emissions and supporting our collective journey to carbon reduction over the years to come .

This year is the first time the Council has published its carbon footprint. The dataset will improve over the coming years as data collection improves and carbon monitoring is standardised and embedded within our corporate contracts.

# Our carbon footprint

Using the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool, developed for the Local Government Association, the Council has calculated its carbon emissions\* using this standardised and consistent approach for the first time.

The tool uses the Government’s carbon factors which are updated and published annually and applies them to the Council’s operational activities. These are divided into three categories, or “scopes”.

Scope 1 includes our direct emissions, from the activities we have under our direct control, such as our fossil fuel heating (oil and gas) and our petrol and diesel powered fleet vehicles and equipment.

Scope 2 focusses on our emissions specifically from electricity consumption from our buildings and street lights.

Scope 3 includes the other “indirect” emissions such as water consumption and business travel.

Scope 3 includes emissions from other indirect activities which the Council does not control such as the volume of waste and recycling produced across the islands and other outsourced contracted activities. This dataset is in the early stages of development, and therefore cannot be included in this years carbon calculation.

The carbon emissions shown below date back to 2019/2020, when the Council declared a Climate Emergency.

As you can see from the data, the carbon emissions for the year 2019/20 are significantly higher than reported in 2020/21. There are several reasons for this dramatic reduction which are explained below.

During 2019/2020 the Council was responsible for the management of St Mary’s water and sewerage provision. The electricity consumption associated with the operation of the desalination plant on St Mary’s along side the electricity required to power

\* The Council has adopted the definition of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) which encompasses the following greenhouse gases in addition to carbon dioxide: methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride and nitrogen trifluoride.

Scope	Emissions Type	Annual Emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e) 2019/2020	Annual Emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e) 2020/2021
Scope 1	Fossil fuel heating (oil & gas)	64.56	47.03
	Fossil fuel powered fleet vehicles	24.42	7.91
Scope 2	Fossil fuel electricity supply	270.30	55.53
Scope 3	Staff travel (Car hire, Scillonian III, boating, Skybus)	3.64	1.05
	Water supply	0.76	0.76
<b>Total Operational Emissions</b>		<b>363.68</b>	<b>112.28</b>

# Our carbon footprint continued...

numerous sewerage pumps was not insignificant. The transfer of the water and sewerage services to South West Water took place in April 2020, and therefore the immediate reduction in electricity consumption is reflected within the Council's carbon footprint.

The second point to note is the impact of the Covid pandemic in 2020/2021, which significantly restricted the Council's operational activities. As an organisation, we used less fossil fuels to heat and power our buildings, less petrol and diesel to power our vehicles, plant and equipment, less electricity to run the airport, swimming pool and offices and our staff were prevented from travelling far due to the national travel restrictions.

Although the data set reflects some significant changes over the last few years, we expect our carbon emissions to increase as the restrictions associated with the Covid pandemic are lifted. The challenge for the Council is how we keep them down.

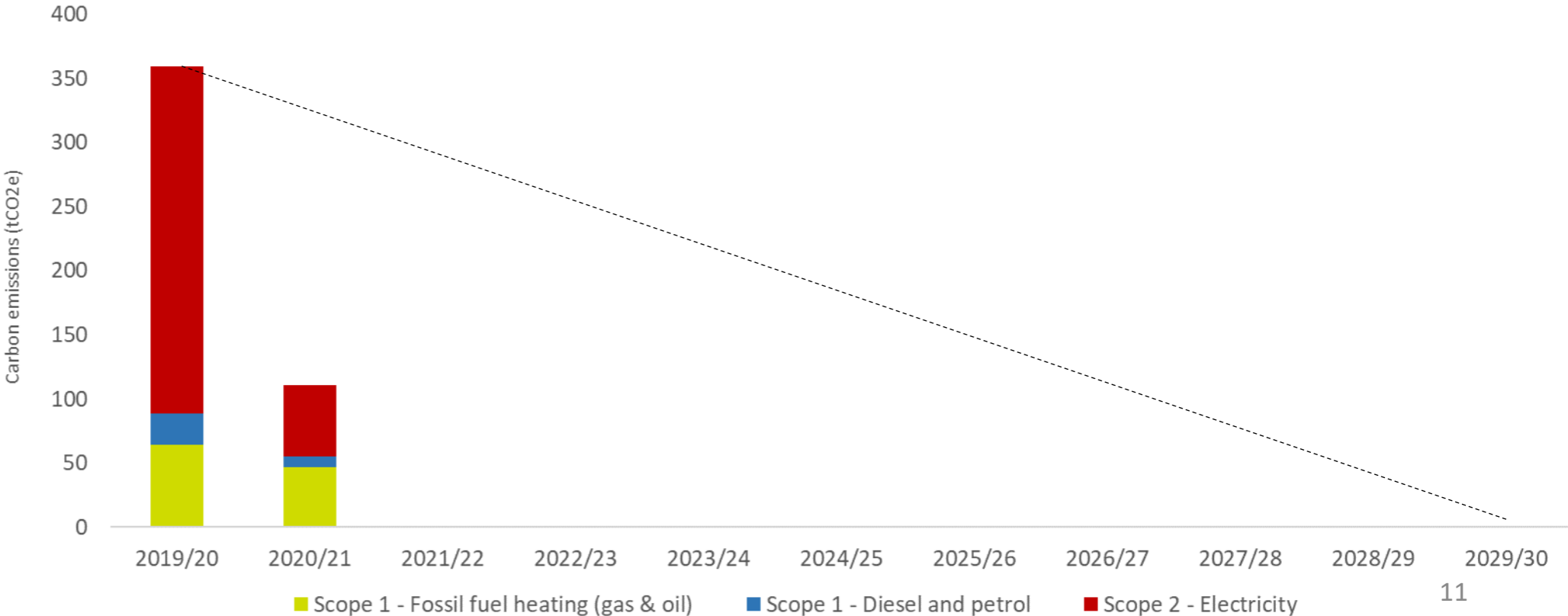
As we move towards 2030, the Council will need to make some significant decisions

about how it heats and powers its buildings, offices and the airport and what type of vehicles it should be running (e.g. petrol, diesel or electric).

These decisions are reflected within the ten objectives set out within this Climate Change Action Plan as we move further away from

fossil fuels towards renewable energy provision across the islands.

By 2026, the Council aims to reduce its direct carbon emissions (scope 1 and scope 2) by 75% against the 2019 baseline, a significant step towards achieving net zero carbon by 2030.





# Our carbon emissions from our key suppliers

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**Carbon emissions from our key suppliers are known as outsourced carbon emissions and are often the largest share of any carbon footprint.**

The outsourced carbon emissions arising from the Council's key suppliers sit within scope 3 of our carbon reporting, however this data set is at an early stage of development and therefore not yet included within this carbon footprint.

One of the Council's largest suppliers is the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group. The company undertakes air, land and marine freight haulage and passenger transport between the islands and the UK mainland. The Council has been working with the Steamship Group to begin to capture and analyse the carbon emissions associated with the service provided.

Another key supplier is the Council's mainland waste and recycling contractor. In order to fully understand the carbon emissions associated with the islands waste and recycling, the Council is working with WRAP, the Government's waste advisor to review the current baseline carbon emissions associated with some of our waste streams to inform our choices of waste management moving forward.

This data will allow us to fully assess the options available to us in order to successfully deliver our Waste Reduction Strategy.

The Council will be working with these key suppliers and others to ensure the carbon emissions associated with the delivery of these services are monitored and reported through the Council's Responsible Procurement Policy.



# Our approach so far

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**Our ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030 is challenging and we cannot achieve this alone.**

We need a community response encouraging our friends, neighbours, local businesses, employees, and our visitors to come together to deliver our approach.

To succeed we will need to change our behaviours, invest in our critical services and monitor and protect our natural environmental assets which are critical to helping us capture and store carbon.

The Council is best placed to lead and facilitate this work, using our existing partnerships and networks to enable action and bring about change.

This reflects on and celebrates the progress we have made since our last Climate Change Action Plan published in 2011, but also sets out our key actions for the next few years, outlining how we can support and influence others and the local, regional and national conversations we need to have to make sure the Isles of Scilly reaches our collective journey to net zero carbon.

Before we move forward, it is important to reflect and celebrate what has been achieved over the last ten years. The next section of this plan showcases some of the major successes we have had.



# Moving away from fossil fuels

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**The Council has been working to make the move away from fossil fuels through a series of significant work programmes towards decarbonisation.**

Decarbonisation is the reduction in the amount of gaseous carbon emitted into the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels from our use of gas, oil, petrol and diesel.

In 2015, the European Regional Development Fund part-funded £10.8 million to support the islands transition to a low carbon sustainable community through the Smart Islands Programme.

The programme helped deliver innovative building management technologies across the Councils corporate estate through the installation of rooftop solar photovoltaics (PV) and domestic air source heat pumps on social housing across St Marys.

The programme successfully installed 9.7kWp of solar photovoltaics at St Mary's Fire Station, 280 solar panels generating 85.4kWp at Porthmellon Household Waste & Recycling Centre.

The programme also oversaw the installation of 17.08kWp at St Mary's airport fire station powering the runway lights and 11.78kWp on the terminal building itself.

The St Mary's airport solar garden installation of 48.8kWp produces an estimated 44,000 kWh of renewable energy a year to the national grid, as well as supporting the electric vehicle charging points at the airport.

Since the programme finished, the Council has made further progress towards decarbonisation. In April 2021, the Council switched away from an electricity supply powered by fossil fuels and moved to a clean renewable energy tariff for all Council properties.

In September 2021, the Council unanimously agreed to undertake a corporate estate rationalization process, ensuring that the buildings the Council retains will meet the 2030 net zero carbon ambition.

Crucially, the Council also unanimously agreed to support the development of a decarbonisation plan for all Council properties that are to be retained following the estate rationalization.

The decarbonisation plan will set out the long-term strategy for to reduce our carbon emissions, in this case focusing on buildings. It will look at what the buildings are used for, what insulation measures can be retrofitted, where the buildings energy comes from and how it is heated/cooled.



# Improving our energy efficiency

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**The Council has been making significant progress to improve energy efficiency across the islands.**

During 2020, the Council, in partnership with Cornwall Council was successful in the Green Homes Grant application, which enabled the installation of £268,000 of energy efficiency improvements to our Council housing on St Marys.

Improvements included the installation of air source heat pumps and energy efficiency measures for properties which were found to be at or below an E rating of their Energy Performance Certificates (EPC).

The local business community was helped to reduce their carbon emissions through the Business Energy Efficiency Scheme (BEES). The scheme was funded by the Central Government Growth Deal to the value of £390,596 and administered by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership.

The scheme cross the islands through match funding for capital projects aimed at reducing carbon emissions, generating renewable energy and improving energy efficiency.

The projects have delivered an increase in renewable energy generation capacity by 194kw (97% of the target) across the islands and reduced carbon emissions by 221,418kg over three years.

The program has contributed to change in behaviour and attitude towards renewable energy production on the islands and will continue to monitor and collate successes from local businesses and to seek further funding opportunities that support improved energy efficiency measures and activities as and when they arise.

## **Case Study: Churchtown Farm, St Martins.**

*Church Town Farm on St Martins accessed the BEES funding to install has a 24kW solar array in February 2021,. As a result of their project, they have generated 20.7MWh energy, saving £3315 in fuel bills with a 5300 kg CO2 emission saving.*



# Building more sustainably

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**In March 2021, the Council adopted the new Local Plan (2015-2030).**

The aims and policies set out in the Local Plan are designed to ensure sustainable development is embedded within all future planning applications and construction across the islands.

New planning policies have been developed to include the principles of sustainable development, sustainable quality design and place making, the re-use of buildings, water and waste water management, flood avoidance, coastal erosion, energy and travel and transport.

Additional policies to protect and enhance the landscape and seascape, enhance biodiversity and prevent pollution have also been included in the new Local Plan.

The plan will ensure any future Council developments will be low carbon contributing towards our net zero carbon ambition, whilst also helping reduce carbon emissions from wider construction and development projects across the islands.

The Local Plan will also shape new and existing development to support the islands' resilience to a changing climate and to tackle climate change locally.





# Moving to electric vehicles

## **The use of fossil fuel combustion vehicles is contributing to climate change.**

As part of the Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030, the Council has been working with the Energy Saving Trust to undertake a complete fleet review of all Council vehicles.

The review has considered the current vehicles owned by the Council, the mileage undertaken and the alternative electric and hybrid options available moving forward in line with the 2030 net zero carbon ambition. The recommendations will be rolled out as part of the vehicle replacement programme within the capital programme as we move towards 2030.

The purchase of electric vehicles has already begun, starting with a new part grant funded specialist vehicle within the waste service. The new vehicle arrived in summer 2021 and is dedicated to the delivery of a kerbside electrical waste collection service for the community of St Marys.

To further support the move away from fossil fuel combustion vehicles, Hitachi, our Smarts Islands Programme partner supported the

delivery of the Islands Go EV Community Car Share project through the Community Venture.

The project which is now nearing completion has successfully installed 33 electric vehicle charging points across St Mary's and the off islands and provided a fleet of ten electric vehicles available for hire to the community and businesses through a local Car Share scheme.

The Council's Operational Services team have been using the Go EV vans for the delivery of their critical front-line services maintaining our highways and open spaces and undertaking maintenance and repairs.



# Helping our community to reduce waste, increase recycling and reuse



**The Isles of Scilly has undergone a major step change in how it manages its waste and recycling in recent years, reducing the carbon associated with waste disposal.**

Historically, the island's waste was managed at an incinerator plant on the Porthmellon Waste Site on St Mary's which accepted waste from the off islands with very little being actively recycled.

In 2014, through £3.6million funding received from Defra, the Council worked to redevelop the Porthmellon Waste Site into a modern waste management facility, capable of receiving, managing, storing and recycling materials ready for onward use on the mainland.

In 2019 the Council rolled out kerbside recycling through the introduction of dry mixed recycling collections for residents and businesses.

This move immediately reduced the volume of residual waste being sent for incineration and instead enabled the Isles of Scilly to start recycling.

In 2020, the Council adopted its first Waste Reduction Strategy which committed to working with residents, businesses and organisations to reduce the volume of waste across the islands, increase reuse, recycling and improve communication and engagement on how residents and businesses can reduce the amount of waste they create.

Since the Waste Reduction Strategy was launched the Council has made significant strides in reusing materials on-island (mixed glass and green garden waste), increasing recycling rates through battery recycling, clothes and textile collection and reuse and introduced new initiatives such as the dedicated kerbside collection service for small and large electrical items in our new electric vehicle.

In addition to expanding the number of recyclates on the island, the Council has also changed the way we transport our recycling to the mainland, opting to compact and bale our dry mixed recycling and shipping it on pallets, rather than in much heavier skips, which do not transport as great a volume, therefore reducing costs and carbon emissions each time.



# Safeguarding our coastline

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**Safeguarding our coastline is fundamental to the future of Scilly, both economically and ecologically, but also from a climate change perspective.**

Our coastline plays a vital role in natural carbon capture and storage, whilst also being fundamental to our culture, our livelihoods and our tourism economy, it is therefore critical we protect it.

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Environmental Growth Strategy was adopted by the Council in July 2021. The strategic vision is for nature to be diverse, beautiful and healthy, supporting a thriving society, prosperous economy and an abundance of wildlife by 2065.

The Strategy was developed by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership, of which the Council is a member in its role as Secretariat for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, but also as host to the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA).

IFCA was established in 2011 to help protect our coastline which is amongst the best in the UK. IFCA's role is to ensure our Marine Protected Areas (MPA) are in good condition and not impacted by fishing activities locally.

There are three kinds of MPA here on Scilly which IFCA manage including the Special Protection Areas (SPA) established to protect our nesting seabirds such as the storm petrel and lesser black backed gulls, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designed to protect the coastal and intertidal marine habitats around the islands such as our critically important seagrass beds and Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), designed to protect our intertidal marine habitats and reefs.

Over the years IFCA has played a fundamental role in researching and monitoring these habitats, particularly our critical seagrass beds found in the shallow sandy areas around the islands.

The seagrass beds also play a critical role in the fight against climate change, acting as natural carbon sinks, capturing unwanted greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and locking them away in storage for hundreds of years, therefore reducing the effects of climate change.

Through ongoing investigative research and monitoring undertaken by IFCA, we know we have approximately 195 hectares of seagrass, concentrated in the channel between St Mary's and Tresco and around St Martins.



# Protecting our coastal landscapes

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**Our terrestrial landscapes also play a critical role in capturing and storing carbon. Our soils, hedgerows, heathlands and woodlands all act as natural carbon sinks, locking up atmospheric carbon and safeguarding our future.**

The Isles of Scilly is designated as a nationally important protected landscape under the designation of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Council and local partners have played a key role in protecting and restoring our AONB which is fundamental to sustainable land and coastal management across the islands.

The Council has a statutory duty to prepare and deliver the AONB Management Plan, which is overseen by the AONB Partnership. The partnership is chaired by the Duchy of Cornwall and includes the Council, the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, Tresco Estate, South West Water, the Environment Agency, Historic England, RSPB, Natural England and a local farmer and growers representative.

The Management Plan is updated every five years, most recently in July 2021. The Plan recognises the abundance of habitats and species here on Scilly and understands their importance, committing to conserve and manage them to maximise the best possible outcome for our natural environment adopting an ecosystem approach.

The Management Plan is accompanied by an annual Delivery Plan which is delivered through the local Wildlife Trust here on Scilly.

Over recent years the AONB has supported many nature recovery projects across the islands, through the AONB Delivery Plan which have been overseen by the Wildlife Trust and other partners including the RSPB.

Habitat restoration and management focusing on our wetlands and coastal grass and heathland management have been crucial, seeing increased variation of habitats and species as a result of better management, including the Bog Pimpernel which last recorded at Higher Moors in 1952!

The internationally renowned work on biosecurity and the complete eradication of rats on St Agnes through the Seabird Recovery Project should also be celebrated. The collaborative project was delivered as a result of the Isles of Scilly Seabird Conservation Strategy and has seen huge increases in Manx Shearwaters following the rat removal on the island.

Biosecurity is a real risk moving forwards, managing non native invasive flora and fauna as a result of our changing climate.

The Environmental Growth Strategy recognises the scale of the challenge we face in nature recovery and that it requires collaboration with local partners, wildlife trusts and others and will dovetail with the forthcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategy which the Council will be required to deliver over the coming years.



# Adapting to the impacts of our changing climate

**As an island community, we must adapt to the impacts of climate change. Flood risk is the greatest risk to the Isles of Scilly and therefore flood risk management is fundamental to the island's future.**

The current Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) was adopted in 2011 and identifies the potential future flood risk of the islands over the next 100 years. The SMP presents a framework to address these flood risks to people and the natural environment in a sustainable way.

The two most important aims of the SMP are:

- To reduce the threat of flooding and coastal erosion to people and their property
- To deliver the greatest environmental, social and economic benefit, consistent with the Government's sustainable development principles

To support the Shoreline Management Plan, the Council prepared a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in 2017, which is currently being reviewed and updated.

The plan sets out the latest flood risk modelling, identifying the flood risks posed to the islands, how we manage these flood risks and how we respond to flood events should they

happen. Over the years, the Council has undertaken flood defence improvement works to reduce the risk of coastal flooding in Hugh Town protecting critical infrastructure or as a result of a significant storm event which resulted in major damage.

As a response to the flood risk modelling set out in the local flood risk strategy, the Council sought and successfully secured funding from the European Regional Development Fund and the Environment Agency to fund the Climate Adaptation Scilly project which was launched in March 2021.

The project will see flood defence improvement works on St Marys and the off islands, protecting our homes, habitats, critical infrastructure and our water supplies.

The project will also involve the development of a Climate Adaptation Action Plan for the islands, outlining what the Isles of Scilly need to do to prepare for the impacts of climate change.

Climate Adaptation Scilly is just the start. As an island community we need to robustly defend our homes and our critical infrastructure to ensure our children and our children's children can remain here on Scilly into the future.



# Our new action plan

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**The Council is committed to making significant changes to how it operates in line with its commitment to be net zero carbon by 2030.**

The Council has developed ten overarching objectives and subsequent actions setting out the key work needed to reduce its carbon emissions.

These changes will be seen across the organisation through its governance, strategy and policy development, decision making, procurement, daily operational activities, and most importantly, how the whole of the Council works together and with local partners cohesively towards one shared net zero carbon ambition.

These actions are set out in the following pages.



# 1. How we will work better together

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1. We will ensure our strategies, policies and operational practices are aligned with our Corporate Plan objectives to be net zero carbon by 2030 where relevant
2. We will ensure the Council's decision-making process is undertaken with climate change in mind
3. We will ensure the Council's procurement process is undertaken with climate change in mind through our Responsible Procurement Policy
4. We will invest in our information technology (IT) support services, moving towards a digital by default system, reducing the need to travel, reducing the amount of paper we use through printing and enabling electronic communications where possible both internally and externally to the Council
5. We will report annually on our own direct carbon emissions (scope 1 and scope 2) and work with our partners and stakeholders to assist and support them with the reduction in their carbon emissions (scope 3) in line with the Local Government Association's carbon reporting methodology
6. We will report annually on our wider climate indicators including energy, water, fuel, waste and recycling, nature recovery and wider Environmental Growth Strategy indicators
7. We will work with our community to understand our carbon footprint across the islands

We will ensure our net zero carbon ambition is at the heart of everything we do



1



## 2. How we will heat and power things

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1. We will review our corporate estate, considering which buildings, sites and offices we want to keep in line with our 2030 net zero carbon ambition
2. We will prepare a decarbonisation plan for the buildings we keep, making sure they do not rely on fossil fuels and sourcing alternative low carbon heating systems
3. We will ensure our corporate estate is energy efficient, reducing our energy demand through improvements to heating, lighting and insulation
4. We will seek funding to upgrade the energy efficiency of our Council housing stock
5. We will encourage and support renewable energy initiatives across the islands
6. We will undertake a renewable capacity study to inform future plans for renewable energy

We will stop using fossil fuels, ensuring our buildings are zero carbon and energy efficient where possible





## 3. How we will build our new homes

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1. We will encourage more sustainable development and construction through planning conditions and low carbon sustainable design guides within the planning process
2. We will ensure new housing promotes sustainable design and construction such as rainwater and greywater harvesting, energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions where possible
3. We will ensure all planning applications are assessed for potential flood risk impacts
4. We will ensure all planning applications seek to deliver biodiversity enhancements
5. We will ensure a Site Waste Management Plan for all new homes

We will ensure all new development across our islands is low carbon, embracing sustainable design and development, protecting our natural resources and conserving our unique habitats



## 4. How we will move around

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1. We will encourage our staff to travel less, and where they do have to travel, we will encourage them to walk, cycle or use public transport
2. We will make it safer for people to walk and cycle around St Mary's by bringing improvements to the highways infrastructure
3. We will install additional cycle parking bays in Hugh Town encouraging people to cycle more and leave the car at home
4. We will replace end of life diesel vehicles within our fleet with electric, wherever possible

We will ensure our transport infrastructure supports clean safe methods of travel, promoting active travel wherever possible



## 5. How we will protect our natural environment

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1. We will prepare a Local Nature Recovery Strategy to protect and enhance our natural environment and safeguarding our natural carbon sinks
2. We will prepare a Biodiversity Policy which commits the Council to managing our public realm and open spaces in a way which supports carbon sequestration and promotes nature recovery
3. We will seek to encourage regenerative land management to maximise carbon sequestration, through the delivery of our AONB Management Plan
4. We will work with our local farming community and land managers to deliver the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme to encourage actions which mitigate and adapt to Climate Change
5. We will seek to better understand the quality of our local environment (marine and terrestrial), which will inform the preparation of a State of Nature Report to help us monitor our progress
6. We will seek to ensure all planning applications consider what biodiversity improvements could be made to help support carbon sequestration and biodiversity on the islands in line with the Local Plan
7. We will seek alternatives to the use of pesticides across the Council Estate

We will work with our colleagues and partners to protect and enhance our natural environment, safeguarding our marine life and coastline landscapes to support nature recovery



## 6. How we will reduce waste, increase recycling and reuse

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1. We will review our Waste Reduction Strategy in line with the Government's forthcoming legislative changes and our 2030 net zero-carbon ambition
2. We will begin to measure the carbon footprint of our waste and recycling practices based on the recommended waste and recycling carbon reporting developed by WRAP, the Government's waste advisor
3. We will reduce our carbon emissions associated from the collection, storage, marine haulage, transportation and final disposal of residual (black bag) waste through the introduction of increased recycling and reuse opportunities on the islands
4. We will establish a kerbside food waste collection service, removing food waste from the residual waste stream
5. We will install new recycling bins on St Mary's to encourage people to recycle when out and about
6. We will help our community recycle more through the development of clear guidance in line with national branding

We will reduce our waste and maximise recycling and reuse through our Waste Reduction Strategy



## 7. How we will adapt for the future

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1. We will produce a Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan in consultation with the community to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change
2. We will work with the Environment Agency and local stakeholders to refresh the Isles of Scilly Shoreline Management Plan ready for the next 100 years
3. We will update our Local Flood Risk Management Plan with the latest flood risk modelling data from the Environment Agency
4. We will work with stakeholders to maintain our flood risk asset register, undertaking annual inspections and identifying any assets at risk of failure
5. We will seek external funding to maintain and install new flood defence assets, both natural and manmade, enhancing nature recovery where possible
6. We will promote and encourage the adoption of practical flood risk measures for home and business owners at risk of flooding
7. We will deliver the ERDF and Environment Agency funded Climate Adaptation Scilly programme of flood defence installations and upgrades across the islands
8. We will part fund local businesses to install rainwater harvesting systems, reducing the demand on our drinking water supplies

We will adapt to our changing climate, protecting our homes, our livelihoods and our critical infrastructure from future flood risk and the wider impacts of climate change





## 8. How we will support our local community

1. We will work with the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group and other local transport providers to support the delivery of low carbon sustainable travel for the islands
2. We will work with the Islands Partnership to develop a “Scilly Pledge” providing a way for visitors to offset their carbon emissions and support local nature recovery projects
3. We will work with South West Water, the Duchy of Cornwall and Tresco Estate to support sustainable sewage treatment across the islands
4. We will work with our health and care colleagues to support them in their ambition to be net carbon zero through the development of a new low carbon integrated community care facility for the islands
5. We will work with Five Islands Academy to support the education of our children about the local and global effects of climate change through Eco Schools
6. We will provide opportunities for our community to learn new skills such as upcycling, refurbishing and reusing materials on island, supporting local businesses and developing a circular economy
7. We will work with event organisers to encourage and shape sustainable event management practices across the islands through the Safety Advisory Group
8. We will work with local farmers and growers to promote and encourage local food initiatives
9. We will work with our local businesses to help them reduce their waste, increase their recycling and reuse
10. We will seek additional support and funding for private homeowners to make energy efficiency and carbon reduction improvements for their properties

We will support our partners, stakeholders and local community on their journeys to carbon reduction



## 9. Local community engagement

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1. We will establish and coordinate an island wide collaborative working group with all major stakeholders, residents and businesses on Climate Change to promote joint working on carbon reduction
2. We want to support our community, residents and businesses in understanding how they can respond and adapt to climate change, to do this we will, develop a communication and engagement strategy
3. We will work together to identify ten simple things we can all do to make a difference, both at work and at home
4. We will develop climate change training for our staff and Councillors
5. We will celebrate our island successes, share ideas, and promote funding opportunities to help raise awareness and deliver real change on the ground

We will engage,  
communicate and share  
our progress with our  
local community





## 10. Regional and national conversations

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1. We will work with other Local Government authorities across the south west peninsula, including Cornwall Council, strengthening learning, identifying funding opportunities and sharing best practice
2. We will work with our local and national stakeholders who will support us in the delivery of our climate actions
3. We will engage with national policy makers in Government to help the Isles of Scilly achieve our net zero carbon ambitions

We will work with our regional and national policy makers to support our carbon ambitions





# How will we deliver our action plan?

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This report is a mark in the sand, celebrating the Council's achievements to date, but also identifying what we still need to do as an organisation and setting out how we can support our wider community and stakeholders through collaborative working. In order to achieve this, it needs to be a joint effort.

The resource implications are not insignificant. The costs associated with the delivery of these actions will continue to be an evolving process as our planning continues and as we work with our partners and stakeholders to identify carbon reduction projects and funding opportunities, grants, and government funded schemes on the horizon.

A significant proportion of the actions identified have already been identified within the Capital Programme, and where they have not, business cases will be prepared or external funding will be sought to achieve our carbon reduction ambitions.

The Council's newly formed Environment Service will be leading the coordination of this work, monitoring progress against the action plan and reporting to full Council on an annual basis.

The Environment Services will work with the Climate Change Working Group and the Lead Member on Climate Change and the Environment to drive action forward, reporting to Full Council on a regular basis.

# Next steps

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This action plan sets out the scale of the challenge we are faced with.

Much work needs to be done to better understand what the challenges and hurdles we must overcome in the coming years.

The next steps for this action plan;

- ❖ We will align our Action Plans with our Medium Term Financial Plan and identify future funding streams for delivery as carbon reduction programmes are developed
- ❖ We will work in collaboration with our local partners, stakeholders, businesses, residents and visitors
- ❖ We will review progress against our Climate Change Action Plan on an annual basis

# Climate change action plan

1. How we will work better together		Timescale
1.1	We will ensure our strategies, policies and operational practices are aligned with our Corporate Plan objectives to be net zero carbon by 2030 where relevant	2022 onwards
1.2	We will ensure the Council's decision-making process is undertaken with climate change in mind	2022/23
1.3	We will ensure the Council's procurement process is undertaken with climate change in mind through our Responsible Procurement Policy	2022 onwards
1.4	We will invest in our information technology (IT) support services, moving towards a digital by default system, reducing the need to travel, reducing the amount of paper we use through printing, and enabling electronic communications where possible both internally and externally to the Council	2022 onwards
1.5	We will report annually on our own direct carbon emissions (scope 1 and scope 2) and work with our partners and stakeholders to assist and support them with the reduction in their carbon emissions (scope 3) in line with the Local Government Association's carbon reporting methodology	2022 onwards
1.6	We will report annually on our wider climate indicators including energy, water, fuel, waste and recycling, nature recovery and wider Environmental Growth Strategy indicators	2022 onwards
1.7	We will work with our community to understand our carbon footprint across the islands	2023 onwards

2. How we will heat and power things		Timescale
2.1	We will review our corporate estate, considering which buildings, sites and offices we want to keep in line with our net zero carbon ambition	2022
2.2	We will prepare a decarbonisation plan for the buildings we keep, making sure they do not rely on fossil fuels and sourcing alternative low carbon heating systems	2022
2.3	We will ensure our corporate estate is energy efficient, reducing our energy demand through improvements to heating, lighting and insulation	2022

# Climate change action plan

2. How we will heat and power things		Timescale
2.4	We will seek funding to upgrade the energy efficiency of our council housing stock	2022
2.5	We will encourage and support renewable energy initiatives across the islands	2022
2.6	We will undertake a renewable capacity study to inform future plans for renewable energy	2023

3. How we will build our new homes		Timescale
3.1	We will encourage more sustainable development and construction through planning conditions and low carbon sustainable design guides within the planning process	2023
3.2	We will ensure new housing promotes sustainable design and construction such as rainwater and greywater harvesting, energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions where possible	2022
3.3	We will ensure all developments are assessed for potential flood risk impacts	2022
3.4	We will ensure all developments seek to deliver biodiversity enhancements	2022
3.5	We will ensure a Site Waste Management Plan for all new homes	2022

# Climate change action plan

4. How we will move around		Timescale
4.1	We will encourage our staff to travel less, and where they do have to travel, we will encourage them to walk, cycle or use public transport	2022
4.2	We will make it safer for people to walk and cycle around St Mary's by bringing improvements to the highways infrastructure	2022-26
4.3	We will install additional cycle parking bays in Hugh Town encouraging people to cycle more and leave the car at home	Completed
4.4	We will replace end of life diesel vehicles within our fleet with electric, wherever possible	By 2030

5. How we will protect our natural environment		Timescale
5.1	We will prepare a Local Nature Recovery Strategy to protect and enhance our natural environment and safeguarding our natural carbon sinks	2022 onwards
5.2	We will prepare a Biodiversity Policy which commits the Council to managing our public realm and open spaces in a way which supports carbon sequestration and promotes nature recovery	2022
5.3	We will seek to encourage regenerative land management to maximise carbon sequestration, through the delivery of our AONB Management Plan	2021-2025
5.4	We will work with our local farming community and land managers to deliver the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme to encourage actions which mitigate and adapt to Climate Change	2022

# Climate change action plan

5. How we will protect our natural environment (continued)		Timescale
5.5	We will seek to better understand the quality of our local environment (marine and terrestrial), which will inform the preparation of a State of Nature Report to help us monitor our progress	2023
5.6	We will seek to ensure all planning applications consider what biodiversity improvements could be made to help support carbon sequestration and biodiversity on the islands in line with the Local Plan	2022
5.7	We will seek alternatives to the use of pesticides across the Council Estate	2022

6. How we will reduce waste and increase recycling and reuse		Timescale
6.1	We will review our Waste Reduction Strategy in line with the Government's forthcoming legislative changes and our 2030 net zero carbon ambition	2022
6.2	We will begin to measure the carbon footprint of our waste and recycling practices based on the recommended waste and recycling carbon reporting methodology developed by WRAP, the Government's waste advisor	2000
6.3	We will reduce our carbon emissions associated from the collection, storage, marine haulage, transportation and final disposal of residual (black bag) waste through the introduction of increased recycling and reuse opportunities on the islands	2025
6.4	We will install new recycling bins on St Mary's to encourage people to recycle when out and about	2022
6.5	We will help our community recycle more through the development of clear guidance in line with national branding	2022

# Climate change action plan

7. How we will adapt for the future		Timescale
7.1	We will produce a Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan in consultation with the community to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change	2023
7.2	We will work with the Environment Agency and local stakeholders to refresh the Isles of Scilly Shoreline Management Plan ready for the next 100 years	2022
7.3	We will update our Local Flood Risk Management Plan with the latest flood risk modelling data from the Environment Agency	2022
7.4	We will work with stakeholders to maintain our flood risk asset register, undertaking annual inspections and identifying any assets at risk of failure	2022
7.5	We will seek external funding to maintain and install new flood defence assets, both natural and manmade, enhancing nature recovery where possible	2022
7.6	We will promote and encourage the adoption of practical flood risk measures for home and business owners at risk of flooding	2023
7.7	We will deliver the ERDF and Environment Agency funded Climate Adaptation Scilly programme of flood defense installations and upgrades across the island	2022
7.8	We will part fund local businesses to install rainwater harvesting systems, reducing the demand on our drinking water supplies	2023

8. How we will support our local community		Timescale
8.1	We will work with the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group and other local transport providers to support the delivery of low carbon sustainable travel for the islands	2022
8.2	We will work with the Islands Partnership to develop a “Scilly Pledge” providing a way for visitors to offset their carbon emissions and support local nature recovery projects	2023

# Climate change action plan

8. How we will support our local community (continued)		Timescale
8.3	We will work with South West Water, the Duchy of Cornwall and Tresco Estate to support sustainable sewage treatment across the islands	2030
8.4	We will work with our health and care colleagues to support them in their ambition to be net carbon zero through the development of a new low carbon integrated community care facility for the islands	2025
8.5	We will work with Five Islands Academy to support the education of our children about the local and global effects of climate change through Eco Schools	2022
8.6	We will provide opportunities for our community to learn new skills such as upcycling, refurbishing and reusing materials on island, supporting local businesses and developing a circular economy	2022
8.7	We will work with event organisers to encourage and shape sustainable event management practices across the islands through the Safety Advisory Group	2021
8.8	We will work with local farmers and growers to promote and encourage local food initiatives	2022
8.9	We will work with our local businesses to reduce their waste, increase recycling and reuse	2022

9. Community engagement		Timescale
9.1	We will establish and coordinate an island wide collaborative working group with all major stakeholders, residents and businesses on Climate Change to promote joint working on carbon reduction	2022
9.2	We want to support our community, residents and businesses in understanding how they can respond and adapt to climate change, to do this we will, develop a communication and engagement strategy	2022
9.3	We will work together to identify ten simple things we can all do to make a difference, both at work and at home	2022
9.4	We will develop climate change training for our staff and Councillors	2022
9.5	We will celebrate our island successes, share ideas, and promote funding opportunities to bring about real change on the ground	2022



# Climate change action plan

10. National conversations		Timescale
10.1	We will work with other Local Government authorities across the south west peninsula, including Cornwall Council, strengthening learning, identifying funding opportunities and sharing best practice	2022
10.2	We will work with our local and national stakeholders who will support us in the delivery of our climate actions	2022
10.3	We will engage with national policy makers in Government to help the Isles of Scilly achieve our zero carbon ambitions	2022

11. Next steps		Timescale
11.1	We will align our Action Plans with our Medium Term Financial Plan and identify future funding streams for delivery	2022
11.2	We will work in collaboration with our local partners, stakeholders, businesses, residents and visitors	2022
11.3	We will review progress against the Climate Change Action Plan on an annual basis	2022