



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

2024/25 Climate Change Annual Report and Action Plan update

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Foreword

Ribble Valley Borough Council is committed to producing an annual climate change report and an update to its associated action plan. This annual report provides an opportunity to communicate the Council's emissions and progress in delivering its Climate Change Strategy, and wider related activities in the borough.

The report covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, representing the first annual summary of the Council's progress against our climate change action plan. The information in this report seeks to summarise the activities of Ribble Valley Borough Council towards mitigating the impacts of climate change during the last financial year.

The report includes improvements and achievements over the last year, including:

- A summary of the Council's emissions during 2023/24 compared with the baseline taken in 2019/20
- Highlights of the things we are proud of that we have delivered as part of the Climate change action plan
- A RAG (Red-Amber-Green) rated scorecard showing delivery of the Council's climate change action plan 2024/25, which sits under the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030.

National vs local context

National legislation means the UK is legally obliged to reach net zero by 2050 and reduce emissions by 78% compared to 1990 levels by 2035. Progress towards these national targets and on adapting to the effects of climate change are prepared by the Climate Change Committee (CCC), an independent statutory body which reports to Parliament.

National government has recently relaxed a number of key targets in specific areas - notably around the speed of phasing out diesel and petrol fuelled vehicles and the pace at which gas boilers are to be phased out. Following last year's general election on 4 July 2024, and the change of government, it is likely that there will be further changes to current national policy.

Local authorities and the carbon budget

The sixth carbon budget in the UK covers the period from 2033 to 2037. This budget was recommended by the CCC to align with the UK's commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2050, as well as the goal to limit global temperature increase to below 2°C by 2050, as set out in the 2015 Paris Agreement. The budget acknowledges the critical role of local authorities in driving down emissions and advancing climate action across the UK. The budget itself primarily sets national targets and strategies but seeks to empower local governments to devise customised solutions and foster community engagement, thereby catalysing efforts to reduce emissions and facilitate the transition towards a low-carbon economy.

As outlined in the sixth carbon budget, local authorities are positioned to:

- have influence over urban planning and development decisions
- where applicable, have a role in transportation planning and infrastructure development
- be responsible for climate conscious waste management
- foster community engagement, partnerships and collaboration

Climate Emergency UK - 2025 Council Climate Scorecards

Climate Emergency UK (CEUK) is a British Community Interest Company (CIC) funded entirely by charitable donations and founded to accelerate climate action across UK local authorities. CEUKs services include creating Council Climate Action Scorecards which are an assessment of all UK councils on the actions they've taken towards net zero. The Scorecard assessment consists of approx. 93 questions, depending on council type, across seven different sections, each council is then marked against criteria for each question. Responding to the CEUK Right of Reply is not mandatory and is therefore completely voluntary.

The first round of scorecards were created and published in 2019, with a second round in 2023. In 2019, RVBC scored 0%, this increased to 14% in 2023, as we responded to a number of FOIs / EIRs from CEUK covering 11 areas of climate action, from housing and transport to staffing and carbon literacy training, at that time the Council decided not to respond through the right of reply. Out of 388 UK councils, 186 district councils responded to the 2023 Right of Reply, the average score for all councils was 32%. 60 councils scored less than 20%, with only 41 councils in the UK scoring 50% or more.

In December 2024, the council responded to all 93 questions included in the 2024 Right of Reply, and on the 17 June 2025 CEUK launched the 2025 Council Climate Action Scorecards. On average council scores increased by 6 percentage points – RVBC's score increased by 5 percentage points from 14% to 19%.

The results for all UK councils on the actions they have taken towards achieving net zero can be found here [Scorecards](#)

The scorecards focus on actions that CEUK would like Councils to undertake, but within this, there are some actions that have a bigger and more direct impact on reducing emissions. The limited average 6 percentage point council score increase shows that although some councils across the UK, like RVBC, have increased and are progressing their climate action, they are unable to meet the right of reply question criteria and therefore are not achieving higher scores.

It should be noted that the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) and the Economic Development Committee agree that the main indicator of success is the reduction of carbon emissions from the Councils Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and not through completion of the CEUK Climate Action Scorecard assessments.

Strategy summary

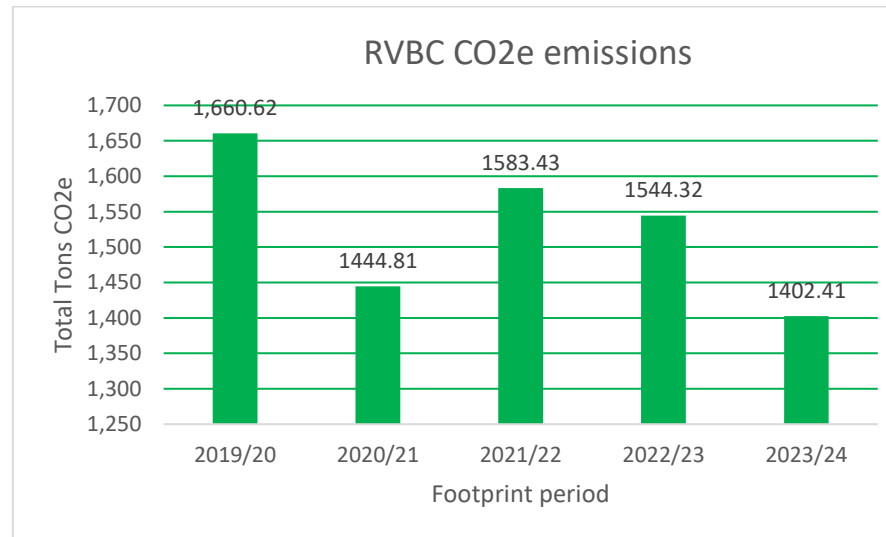
The Council's current [Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030](#) was adopted by Policy and Finance Committee and was subsequently published in September 2021, setting out the Council's initial framework towards reaching our then-stated Corporate Objective in the 2019-2023 Corporate Strategy '*to aspire to be a carbon neutral borough by 2030*'.

In November 2023, the Climate Change Working Group carried out a review and update of the Climate Change Action Plan for 2024/2025, the action plan sets out a framework for collective action on climate change and aligns with the terms of reference established by the Economic Development Committee aiming to be a major step in achieving the Council's [Corporate Plan 2023-2027](#) objective of '*aspiring to be a carbon neutral Council by 2030*'.

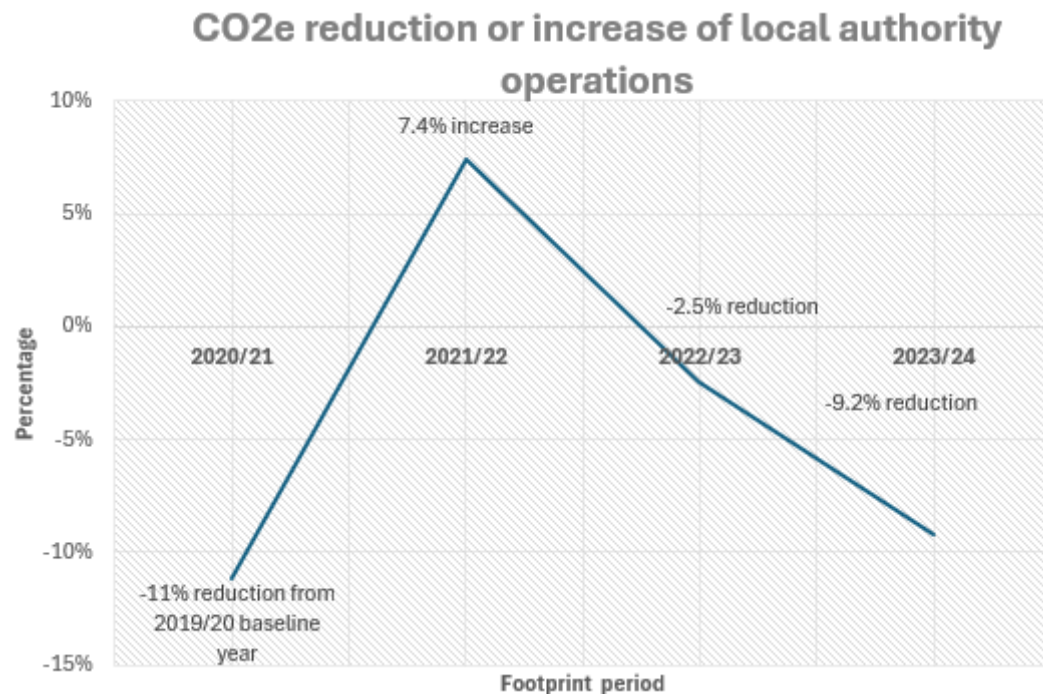
Headline metrics

The Council's own emissions

Ribble Valley Borough Council has commissioned One Carbon World to calculate and analyse emissions data in Scopes 1 to 3 of the Green House Gas (GHG) Protocol Corporate Standard since April 2019. Emissions are reported on a calendar year basis (1 April to 31 March). The data for 2021/22 and 2022/23 was re-calculated as part of the 2023/24 data capture exercise, updating the numbers to consistently apply the council-based approach we are now taking. Following this re-calculation the council's historical scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions footprints are outlined in the graph below:



Of particular note is that RVBC has seen a year on year reduction of CO₂e from Council operations except in 2021/22 where there was an increase of 7.4%, this is the same for all Lancashire authorities that recorded per capita/ resident rises over the same twelve-month period, and it is likely due to increased transport emissions most probably affected by the Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020 being lifted (Covid-19 lockdown restrictions from March 2020 through to January 2022), but in all cases the rates are still lower in 2021/22 (1,583.43 tons CO₂e) than they were in 2019/20 (1,660.62 tons CO₂e), and only slightly higher than the baseline year 2008/09 (1,523 tonnes of CO₂e).



On 31 March 2024, for the third year in a row, RVBC achieved the One Carbon World Carbon Neutral International Status by measuring, reducing, and balancing our carbon footprint for the period: 01/04/23 to 31/03/2024.

Data is presently being collated by the Principal Policy & Performance Officer for analysis of scope 1, 2 and 3 Council emissions by OCW for the 2025/26 iteration of the Carbon Neutral International Standard Carbon Footprint Report.

Things we are proud of that we have delivered ...

Electric Vehicle Charging Points  14 electric vehicle charging points installed on five RVBC car parks	RVBC CO2e Emissions  CO2e from Council operations reduced by 9.2% in year	Local Air Quality Status  Our Local Air Quality Status annual report for 2024 fulfils the requirements of DEFRA's Local Air Quality Management Process.
Miyawaki Micro-forests planted  Two Miyawaki micro-forests planted	Redwood Trees Planted  20 Redwood trees planted	Re-wilding Schemes REWILDING Rewilding / biodiversity restoration completed at two sites
Communications campaigns  Communications channels such as events, social media, leaflets and Ribble Valley news used to encourage residents to recycle more, generate less waste and contaminate less	Carbon Literacy Training  Carbon Literacy Training completed by Members in November 2024 and Environmental Awareness training available for Staff on the ME Learning Portal	Working with partners and businesses  Continued engagement and information sharing with partners, businesses and our Parish Councils

Climate Change Action Plan 2024/2025 – Performance update

Stage 1 Focusing on Council Emissions

Objective / Goals	Actions	Owner / lead officer	Project cost / funding in place	Progress review	Target / Milestone / CO ₂ Impact / Carbon Saving potential (High, Medium, Low)	2024/2025 RAG rating
Understanding Council Emissions	Undertake Annual One Carbon World (OCW) Assessment	JH	February 2023 – OCW 50% grant funding awarded.	2023/24 RFI completed. OCW Carbon Neutral Standard Report received 25/03/25	April 2025 Low	2023/24 9.2% carbon reduction achieved compared to 2022/23
Performance framework	Establish a performance and targeting framework to demonstrate tangible reductions in Carbon Emissions.	AA	Officer time	See Reduced Carbon Emissions graph on page 5	Post April 2025 Low	In progress – see also Corporate Plan Technical Appendix 2025/26 – See PI ES6 (NI 185) CO ₂ reduction from local authority operations.
Governance	Consideration of a Council declaration on climate change impact	AA/JH	Officer time	For discussion by Climate Change Working Group (14/03/24)	April 2024 Low	Ongoing discussion by Climate Change Working Group
Engagement and Policy Change	Lobby Government for external funding and support	AA/JH	Councillor and officer time		Pre April 2025 Medium	Ongoing – Engagement with and lobbying Government is in conjunction with other Lancashire Councils through the Lancashire Climate Change Officer Group.

Sharing progress with all Councillors / staff	Annual Report to Economic Development Committee detailing reductions in emissions and proposed actions for the coming year	AA/JH	Officer time – Use 2023/24 OCW Annual report and Climate Change Action Plan to monitor and report RVBC's corporate emissions performance each year		Economic Development Committee April 2024 Low	Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators are reported to Economic Development Committee. 2024/25 Annual report to be taken to Economic Development in Autumn 2025
Training and awareness raising	Engage and keep staff informed - promote good housekeeping	AA/JH/TS/HB/AG / Backchat	Officer time		Pre April 2025 Medium	Member training: Carbon Literacy Training – November 2024 Staff training: Environmental Awareness module has been made available to all staff on the ME Learning portal.
Establish best practice across Lancashire	Work with other Lancashire local authorities that demonstrate best practice in tackling climate change. Work with Ribble Valley Town and Parish Councils to enable collective action on climate change	JH	Officer time		Pre April 2025 Medium	Member of Lancashire Climate Change Officers Group. Regular contact with RV Town and Parish Councils enabling collective action on climate change (Tree Planting - RVBC50 Redwoods / Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points / LEVI Funding – cable tray and off-street EV Charging).
Understanding Lancashire wide emissions	Engage Lancashire County Council (LCC) in sharing their Lancashire Wide Data and whole borough data.	JH	Officer time - JH attends LCC Climate Change Officers Group		Low	Data shared via Lancashire Climate Change Officers Group

Lancashire County Council, Climate funding and best practice	Work in partnership with LCC to install EV charging points at domestic premises through LEVI Funding	JH	Officer time - JH attends LCC Districts EV Working Group (LEVI Funding)		Assessment complete by Autumn. Installation 2025 High	17/03/25 RVBC LEVI site mapping workshop Ongoing site identification for cable tray and off-street parking
Revise procurement requirements to ensure environmental impact is part of social value	Review the Procurement Policy to influence behaviours and activities of new and existing suppliers to reduce their CO2 emissions via the Council's procurement and commissioning activity	LO	Officer time – part of the Procurement Policy review		December 2024 Low	Awaiting publication of the Governments National Procurement Policy Statement prior to reviewing the RVBC Procurement Policy – once complete the policy will be taken to P&F Committee for agreement and adoption.
Embed cost saving environmental practices with staff and Councillors	Launch a “Good Housekeeping” initiative for staff and Councillors to reduce energy and waste	AA/ JH/ TS / HB /AG	Officer time - minimum cost (Comms / Good housekeeping campaigns e.g. design and print posters)		June 2024 High	Regular reminder emails sent to staff by Waste Management Officer to reduce, reuse and recycle.
	Continue to reduce paper consumption / newspapers / improve use of IT	All staff	Officer time - minimum cost (Comms / Good housekeeping campaign)		Pre April 2025 High	Ongoing
Eliminate single-use plastics at Council venues, events on Council land and festivals	Encourage Single Use Plastics minimisation by staff and at events and festivals held across the borough e.g. Food Festival	AA/ JH/ TS	Officer time - minimum cost (Comms / Good housekeeping campaign)		Staff – June 2024 Events – 2025 Low	Encouraged as part of the promotion of the food festival.

Theme 2 – Minimising the Council's Emissions

Objective / Goals	Actions	Owner / lead officer	Project cost or funding in place	Progress review	Target / Milestone / CO ₂ Impact / Carbon Saving potential (High, Medium, Low)	2024/2025 RAG rating
Reduce emissions from our Council Office building and other Council owned buildings	Install Solar panels on Council Offices	WR	Project design in development. Scheme agreed in principle by Policy and Finance Committee in March 2023. 2024/25 £95K (based on quotes) to be funded from Invest to Save Earmarked Reserve agreed February 2024	Once funding approved – expected installation during summer 2024 and completion by end of September 2024	End of September 2024 High	March 2025: Additional funding was agreed at Policy and Finance Committee on 21/01/25. Contracts for the work have now been 04/04/25. Work is anticipated to start and be completed by the end of May 2025
	Ensure all lighting in Council Offices is Low Energy LED	WR	Council Offices LED Lighting upgrade.	Upgrade nearing completion March 2024	April 2024 High	Completed March 2024 Savings identified and quantified as part of the project feasibility process
	Mains upgrade in Council Offices	WR	Council Offices mains upgrade. Budget moved to 2024/25 £90K	2024/25 due to the complexity of programming 'power-down' time to all the offices, particularly the IT	High	Completed May 2025
Reduce emissions from Ribblesdale Swimming Pool	Significantly reduce energy consumption at the Pool as part of any refurbishment/redesign	MB	Ribblesdale Pool Feasibility Study – Capital Programme 2023/24	Review when feasibility study has been received.	Post April 2025 High	Savings will be identified and quantified as part of pool refurbishment

			£32,610 approved for feasibility study.			
			Proposal due March 24			
	Electric pool cover	MB	£25K Sport England Funding		High	Installed July 2024
	Update Control system at the Pool to reduce gas consumption	MB		2023/24	High	Completed 2023/24
Reduce emissions from refuse vehicle fleet/operations	Replacement of diesel vehicles – Evaluate / review the use of Electric or Hydrogen refuse vehicles.	WR	See Capital Programme for year 2023/24 to 2027/28 for diesel vehicle replacement. No additional funding agreed for increased cost of e-vehicles or recharging infrastructure.	Diesel fleet vehicles includes 12 x refuse collection vehicles, 2 x car park enforcement vans, 3 x general vans, 1 x Ford Pickup, 1 x Iveco Tail Lift, 3 x Ford Transit vans, 2 x Ford Rangers, 3 x Flat-Back Wagons, 1 x Tractor, 1 x JCB, 6 x mowing machines. All run on diesel.	2 x dog warden vans are fully electric Other vehicles post April 2025 High	Ongoing – diesel fleet vehicles are evaluated / reviewed for replacement by electric or other cleaner carbon reduction vehicles.
	Replacement of petrol powered hand tools and blowers with battery powered units.	MB / WR	Approved Five-year Capital programme - Replacement of petrol powered hand tools and blowers with battery powered units - £56K (2027/28)		Replacement programme – could be brought forward Medium	Ongoing – approved as part of the five-year Capital programme

Reduce emissions through delivery of our services in the community	Promote and / support the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points on Council owned car parks	NH/AA/WR	£50K UKSPF Funding for installation of EV charging points on 4 Council owned car parks agreed by P&F Committee (September 23)	Year 1 (2022/23) UKSPF - EV charging points in villages feasibility study-complete	A fully electric car could save 2 tonnes of CO2 per year. High	Commenced and ongoing. 2024/25: 14 Charging points installed on Council owned car park. (2 x Slaidburn, 2 x Sabden, 2 x Chipping and 2 x Ribchester, 6 Barclay Road, Longridge).
Encourage uptake of low emission vehicles	e-bike charging	NH/AA/WR		Feasibility study required	Medium	Feasibility study required
Invest in tree planting and woodland management	Identify Council and private land for tree planting - develop a tree planting scheme that engages the community and local land owners	DH/AS/ AA/ JH/ RS/ MB / partners	Funded via external funding		Planting season November 2024 to March 2025 Medium Tree planting 2.25 tonnes CO2 per ha	Council land: 11 x RVBC50 Redwood trees planted and 2 x Micro forests /Miyawaki forest planted at Longridge and Edisford. Private land: 9 x Redwood trees planted.
	Use offsetting practices e.g. tree planting as an educational opportunity for local residents and schools about the issues we face and the available solutions		Work with partners LCC Treescapes Team Funded via external funding		Planting season November 2024 to March 2025 Medium	2 x Micro forests /Miyawaki forests planted at Longridge and Edisford. (Planted on Council land - funded by DEFRA, planting & funding managed by LCC Treescapes Team).
Examine areas for re-wilding schemes	Re-wilding schemes (biodiversity restoration)	MB / RS	No cost / minimum cost if seed plugs are required	Re-wilding completed at two sites Edisford and Clitheroe Castle	Low	Ongoing – Identification of additional sites on Council land is ongoing. 2 x site - former pitch and putt site in Edisford and a patch of parkland at Clitheroe Castle

Promote sustainable travel	Bike and e-bike salary sacrifice scheme	HR Team	Feasibility study required for any schemes identified Year 2 (2023/24) UKSPF Funding allocation Cycle Routes - Five circular self-guided cycle routes £2K		Low	Ongoing - feasibility study required for schemes identified
	Council e-pooled cars				Low	Feasibility study required
Change the Electricity contract if financially viable to all renewable in 2027 or earlier if possible	Electricity contract is 47% renewable at the moment	LO / Finance Procurement teams	Officer time - unknown cost to renewing the contract		Pre 2027 if possible OCW report – CO2 reduction from electricity High	Electricity contract - national procurement framework ending 31/03/27. Feasibility study required to ascertain cost to renewing the contract to all renewable before end of March 2027.
Public convenience refurbishment	Installation of waterless urinals resulting in lower water consumption	WR	See Capital Programme for year 2023/24 to 2027/28		Low	Commenced and ongoing as part of the 2023/24 to 2027/28 Capital Programme

Preparing for Stage 2

Theme 3 – Minimising carbon reduction through Business / Partnerships						
Objective / Goals	Actions	Owner / lead officer	Project cost or funding in place	Progress review	Target / Milestone / CO ₂ Impact / Carbon Saving potential (High, Medium, Low)	2024/2025 RAG rating

To engage partners that can help make a tangible difference	Identify key partners and develop a business and partnership engagement plan.	Parent Committee Health & Housing	Investment Programmes / grant funding	Meet every six months	Pre April 2025 High	Engage with The Ribblesdale Liaison Group (attendees include RVBC, parish councils (Chatburn, Worston and West Bradford), LCC, LCC planning and the Environment Agency.
	Chamber Low Carbon (East Lancs Chamber of Commerce and Industry in partnership with N&W Lancs Chamber of Commerce and BOOST)	NH	UK Government supported programmes – providing fully funded services		Medium	Commenced and ongoing
Understanding our biggest emitters and actions planned	Continue engagement with Heidelberg Materials Cement and support projects to reduce their carbon emissions by lobbying government to attract funding	CCWG / Hanson Cement Liaison Committee / AD	Officer time (RH-Democratic Services & Complaints Officer - Hanson Cement Liaison Committee Meeting administration / notes taker)		High	Ongoing - next quarterly meeting is scheduled for 24/04/25
Publicise and share information on available grants to make homes more energy-efficient	Press releases / e-newsletters / Council website updates on grants for heating system upgrades, insulation, and household carbon emission reduction.	TS	For example, EC04 scheme April 22 to March 26 (qualifying benefits required) include Affordable Warmth Scheme Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) programme		Medium	On going - publicised via Press releases / e-newsletters / Council website Ribble Valley Energy Saving Week (04/11/24 – 08/11/24) 07/11/24 AM Longridge-energy event at Longridge Civic Hall Market Place & PM Clitheroe Energy advice event at Clitheroe Market
	Ensure Grant Schemes factor in Carbon reduction benefits	NH/MB			Grant cycle 2024/2025 Medium	Ongoing Council website - Housing

Encourage energy efficiency standards and improvements and reduce fuel poverty	Promote available grants to private landlords to improve eco-standards and reduce domestic emissions	RP / RS			On going High	Ongoing Council website - Landlords
	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) and Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to upgrade social homes and public buildings.	NH / RP	Government funding (£1.8 billion collectively – allocated regionally).		On release of next grant schemes Government initiatives to reduce overall UK energy demand by 15% by 2030. High	Ongoing Council website
Ensure Planning and Building Control supports carbon reduction and growth.	Ensure full compliance with The Future Homes Standard (FHS): changes to Part L and Part F of the Building Regulations for new homes built from 2025.	LH	2024 – FHS Implementation consultation. 2025 – FHS regulations come into effect		New homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes built under the current Building Regulations. High	Ongoing (Post April 2025) - FHS applies to all new homes built in England and is expected to come into effect from June 2025.
	Ensure that Carbon reduction is considered in the new Local Plan and supports the local economy.	NH	Officer time		Look to align the Local plan with the Climate Change Action plan High	Ongoing – new local Plan in progress - Post April 2025
	Examine the possible use of additional Supplementary Planning	NH	Officer time		High	Ongoing - post Local Plan publication

	Guidance to enhance carbon reduction in all new developments.					
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Theme 4 – Mobilising the Community

Objective / Goals	Actions	Owner / lead officer	Project cost or funding in place	Progress review	Target / Milestone / CO ₂ Impact / Carbon Saving potential (High, Medium, Low)	2024/2025 RAG rating
Campaign to promote reduce, reuse and recycle messages	Newsletters, social media campaigns - Recycling Week / Garden waste service / Contamination campaign (graphics) / recycle it right	TS	Officer time - minimum cost (Comms / Good housekeeping campaigns - design and print)		Medium A tonne of waste sent to landfill emits 466kg CO ₂ e A tonne of waste recycled or combusted emits 21kg CO ₂ e	Commenced and ongoing
Implement food waste collection	Preparation for implementing separate food waste collection in April 2026	AA/WR	Officer time		Pre April 2026 High	Ongoing Regular project meetings scheduled as well as reporting on funding and progress to CMT and Committees
Increase recycling	Packaging producers - waste packaging recycling responsibilities (to be introduced in 2026)	AA/WR	Officer time		Pre October 2025 High	Project commenced and ongoing for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

Support community initiatives - empower homeowners, tenants, and landlords to use energy from low and zero carbon sources	Community wide low carbon heating systems High Temperature Ground Source heat pumps (GSHP) / Air Source Heat Pump network (ASHP) / community hydro scheme to enable residents, organisations, and local communities to install and use renewable energy technologies.	CCWG/AA/JH	Funded by external innovative funding and support	Examples: Chipping Community Energy and Whalley Community Hydro (constructed in 2014 – total cost £750k)	Medium	Ongoing Principal Policy and Performance Officer regularly circulates external funding information to local community organisations
	Lobby Government to provide funding for the decarbonisation and expansion of local low carbon heat networks, enabling a transition from natural gas to low carbon (electrified) heat sources	CCWG/AA/JH	Officer time		Medium	Ongoing – grant funding
Identify private land for potential community growing initiatives	Community orchards / work with local ecology and flood groups / enable community groups to manage greenspace to aid and maximise carbon capture	AA/ WR/ DH/ AS /RS	Identify land and external funding		Planting season November 2024 to March 2025 and beyond Medium	Ongoing Private land identified by RVBC Countryside Officer in 2024/25 2 x Micro forests /Miyawaki forests at Longridge and Edisford. (Funded by DEFRA)
Lobby LCC to actively seek opportunities to creatively engage young people in climate change activities	Work to ensure young people are engaged in solutions. Raise aspirations and skills of young people Work with local schools, sixth forms, and other education	SA/AA/JH	Officer time – working with LCC		September 2024 Medium	Ongoing LCC Treescapes team engaged with local volunteers (adults and young people) to plant 2 x Micro forests /Miyawaki forests at Longridge and

	bodies to increase understanding and involvement in climate change solutions					Edisford. (Funded by DEFRA) February 25 - Conference of Ribble Valley Schools (CORVS) – 36 High school pupils met Cllrs Edge and Birtwhistle to discuss the challenges posed by climate change
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