

CLIMATE ACTION FROM UK LOCAL AUTHORITIES

2020 DISCLOSURE

MARCH 2021



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LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

UK local authorities are critical to achieving ambitious national goals

Five years on from the [Paris Agreement](#), when almost 200 countries committed to limit global warming to “well below” 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to hold it to 1.5°C, the climate crisis has never been higher on the global agenda. Despite a [7%](#) drop in global emissions in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN Environment Programme’s [2020 Emissions Gap Report](#) shows that we are still heading towards 3°C of warming by the end of this century. This is far off the 1.5°C global warming limit needed to avoid catastrophic climate change, according to the IPCC’s [landmark report](#).

Since 2019, the UK government has taken important steps towards ending its contribution to climate change, passing [legislation](#) to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2050 and setting an interim emission reduction target of [68% by 2030](#). UK cities and local authorities, through close engagement with their local communities and influence over planning and transport, will be critical to achieving these ambitious national goals.

With the UK hosting [COP26](#) in Glasgow in November 2021, local authorities have a unique opportunity to showcase their climate leadership, by joining the UNFCCC’s [Race to Zero](#) and [Race to Resilience](#) campaigns. This will demonstrate to the UK government and wider global community what can be achieved at the local level.

To date, over [300 local authorities](#) in the UK have declared a climate emergency, demonstrating their ambition to address climate change risks and impacts. Now is the time to put in place the plans and actions necessary to turn that ambition into reality.

With the support of the [Esmée Fairbairn Foundation](#), CDP has been working with local authorities in the UK since 2018 to help them set and meet their climate goals. This report outlines the progress local authorities have made in this time and identifies areas where they need more support.



ABOUT CDP

CDP is a global environmental non-profit organisation that helps investors, companies, cities, states and regions assess their environmental impact and take urgent action to build a sustainable economy. Over 900 local and regional governments worldwide measure and disclose their environmental data through the [CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System](#) to manage their emissions, build resilience and reduce their climate impact.

This report was created using the data reported to CDP by UK local authorities through the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System in 2020. Our open-source cities, states and regions datasets can be downloaded for free from our [Open Data Portal](#).

Please see our [Aiming for A](#) document for more information on best practice for reporting, and tools and resources to help you achieve this.

For more information about annual disclosure, please email citiesemea@cdp.net.

MORE UK LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE DISCLOSING THAN EVER BEFORE



In 2020, 33 UK local authorities reported through the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System¹

Despite the significant challenges UK local authorities faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, more local authorities reported in 2020 than ever before. These local authorities cover a range of government structures, from district councils to combined authorities.

These 33 local authorities represent

21% | **93 million tonnes**
Scope 1 & Scope 2
of [UK Emissions](#)

35% | **23 million**
of [UK Population](#)

52% | **>£1 trillion**
of [UK GDP](#)

17
local authorities disclosed for the first time in 2020

UK
had more cities and local authorities reporting than any other country in Europe



A LIST UK LOCAL AUTHORITIES

In 2020, 88 cities around the world received an [A score](#) from CDP, reflecting their leadership on environmental reporting and climate action. Four UK local authorities achieved an A score this year: Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole (BCP) Council, Bristol City Council, Greater London Authority (GLA), and Newcastle City Council.

1. This data was collected in partnership by CDP and ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability.

UK LOCAL AUTHORITIES DISCLOSING IN 2020

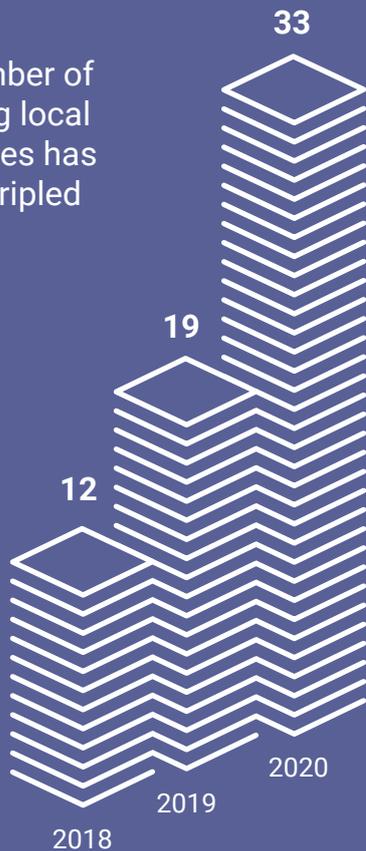
Local authority	Years disclosing	Population	Risk and vulnerability assessment (RVA)	Adaptation plan (AP)	City-wide emission reduction target	Climate action plan (CAP)
Bath and North East Somerset	2	192,100	RVA		Carbon neutral 2030	
BCP (Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole)	6	395,300	RVA	AP	Carbon neutral 2050	CAP
Birmingham	2	1,141,400		AP	Net zero carbon 2030	
Bradford*	3	539,800				
Brighton and Hove*	First time	290,400				
Bristol	2	463,400	RVA	AP	Carbon neutral 2030	CAP
Cambridge*	5	124,900				
Cardiff	5	367,000	RVA	AP	26% by 2020 (per capita)	
Cornwall	First time	569,600		AP	Carbon neutral 2030	CAP
Coventry	3	366,800	RVA	AP	27.5% by 2020	CAP
Derry and Strabane	First time	150,700	RVA	AP	Net zero carbon 2045	
Durham	First time	523,500			Carbon neutral 2050	CAP
Edinburgh	First time	524,900	RVA	AP	Net zero carbon 2030	CAP
Essex	First time	1,492,200	RVA	AP		
Greater London	10	8,908,000	RVA	AP	Net zero carbon 2050	CAP
Greater Manchester	9	2,835,700	RVA	AP	Carbon neutral 2038	CAP
Kirklees	First time	437,400			Net zero carbon 2038	
Leicester	6	353,500	RVA	AP	Carbon neutral 2030	CAP
Manchester	2	563,200			Zero carbon 2038	
Newcastle	First time	300,200	RVA	AP	Net zero carbon 2030	CAP
Norwich*	3	213,000				
Nottingham	First time	332,900	RVA	AP	Carbon neutral 2028	CAP
Plymouth	2	256,400			Carbon neutral 2030	CAP
Richmond	First time	199,100		AP		CAP
Slough	First time	149,400				
Somerset West and Taunton	2	155,100	RVA	AP	Carbon neutral 2030	CAP
South Lakeland	First time	105,000			85% by 2037	CAP
Southend on Sea	First time	182,500	RVA	AP	Zero carbon 2050	CAP
Wandsworth	First time	332,500		AP		CAP
West Midlands	First time	2,928,600		AP	Net zero carbon 2041	CAP
Winchester	First time	124,100			Carbon neutral 2030	
Wolverhampton	2	265,800		AP	Net zero carbon 2041	
York	First time	209,900	RVA	AP	Carbon neutral 2030	

* These local authorities disclosed their data privately through the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System

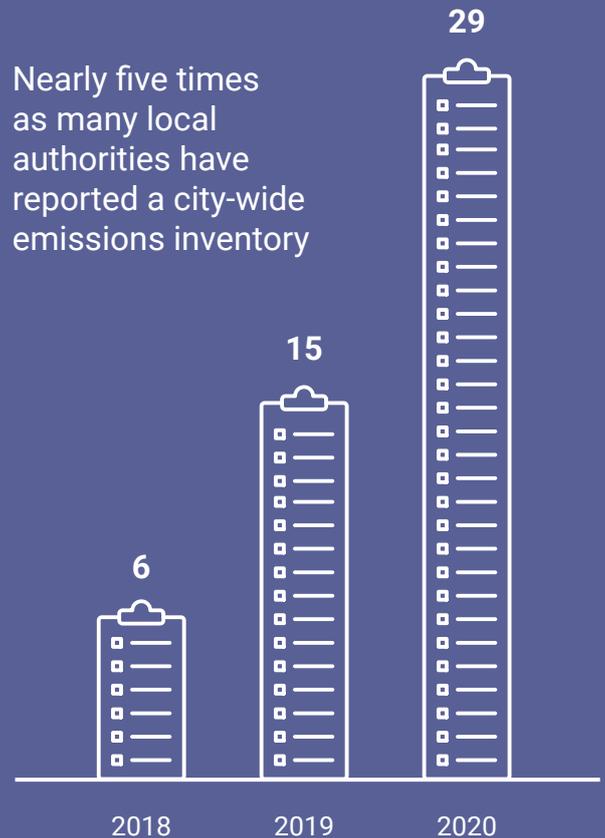
UK LOCAL AUTHORITIES: PROGRESS SINCE 2018

Since the IPCC 1.5°C report was published in 2018, we have seen a significant rise in climate ambition from UK local authorities

The number of reporting local authorities has almost tripled



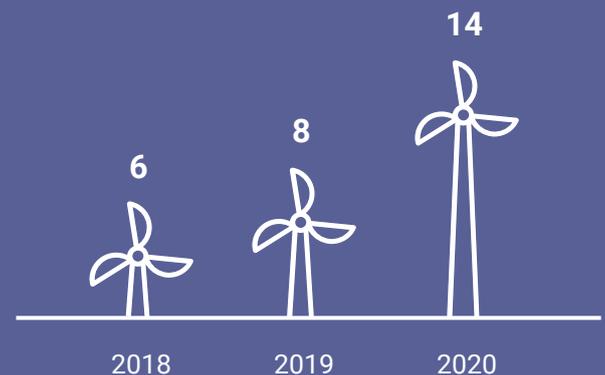
Nearly five times as many local authorities have reported a city-wide emissions inventory



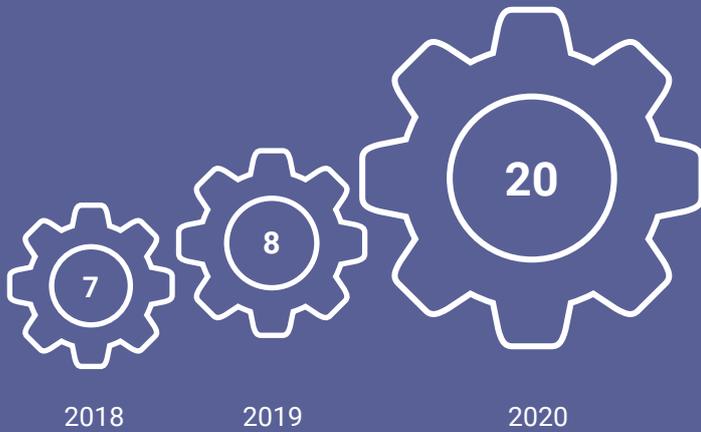
Over three times as many local authorities have a city-wide emission reduction target



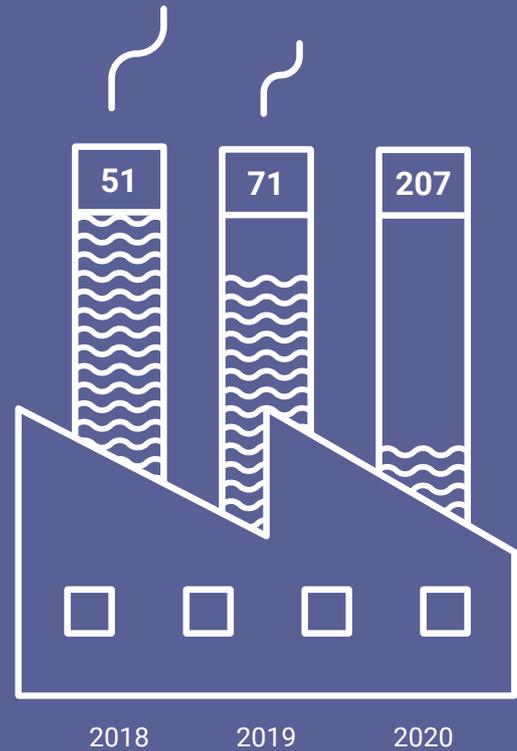
More than twice as many local authorities have a renewable energy target



Almost three times as many local authorities have developed a climate action plan

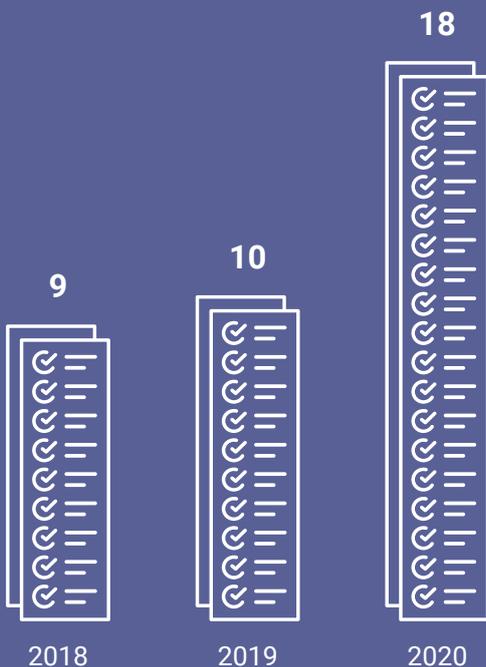


Local authorities are taking four times more actions to reduce emissions

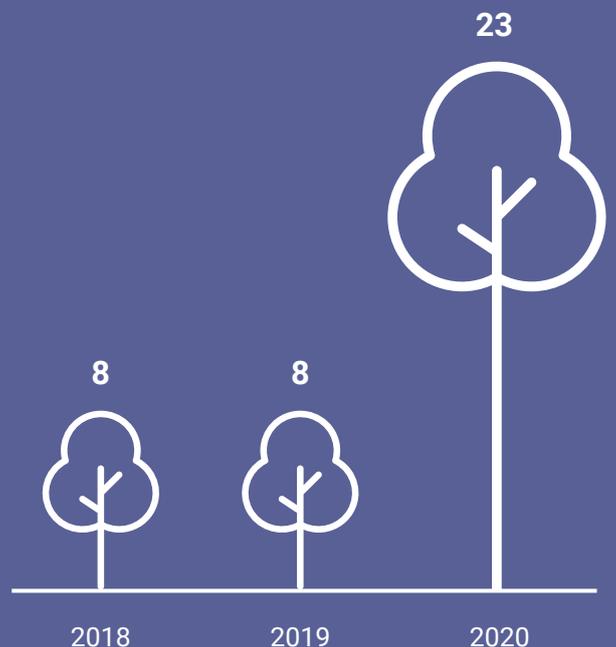


Local authorities are increasingly identifying the climate risks and hazards they face and putting in place plans to address them

The number of local authorities reporting a risk and vulnerability assessment has doubled



Nearly three times as many local authorities reported an adaptation plan



LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE MEASURING THEIR EMISSIONS

Almost all local authorities reported their city-wide greenhouse gas emissions

An important first step towards reducing your GHG emissions is to measure and understand how much you are emitting. UK local authorities are increasingly reporting their emissions.

Several local authorities are starting to develop consumption-based emissions inventories. This takes into account the emissions resulting from the production of goods and services that are imported into urban areas and consumed by citizens within their boundaries, acknowledging that the climate impact of urban areas goes beyond their direct and indirect 'in-boundary' emissions.



88% | 29/33

of local authorities reported an emissions inventory



24% | 8/33

of local authorities reported a consumption-based emissions inventory



Coventry, England

Understanding their impacts beyond their boundaries: Bath & North-East Somerset and the Greater London Authority

Bath & North-East Somerset (B&NES) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) have estimated their consumption-based emissions to try to understand their broader impact on the climate.

Both local authorities found that their estimated consumption-based emissions were much higher than their direct and indirect 'in-boundary' emissions (**1.7 times higher** in B&NES and **3.5 times higher** in the GLA). However, please note that some consumption-based emissions may include location-based emissions and therefore be double-counted.

In B&NES, the agriculture, mining, utilities, and manufacturing sectors were responsible for the most consumption-based emissions.

Consumption-based emissions in B&NES and the GLA **have fallen during the last 10 to 20 years** (despite the GLA's population growing by 1.5 million in that time) due to **increased efficiency of goods**.

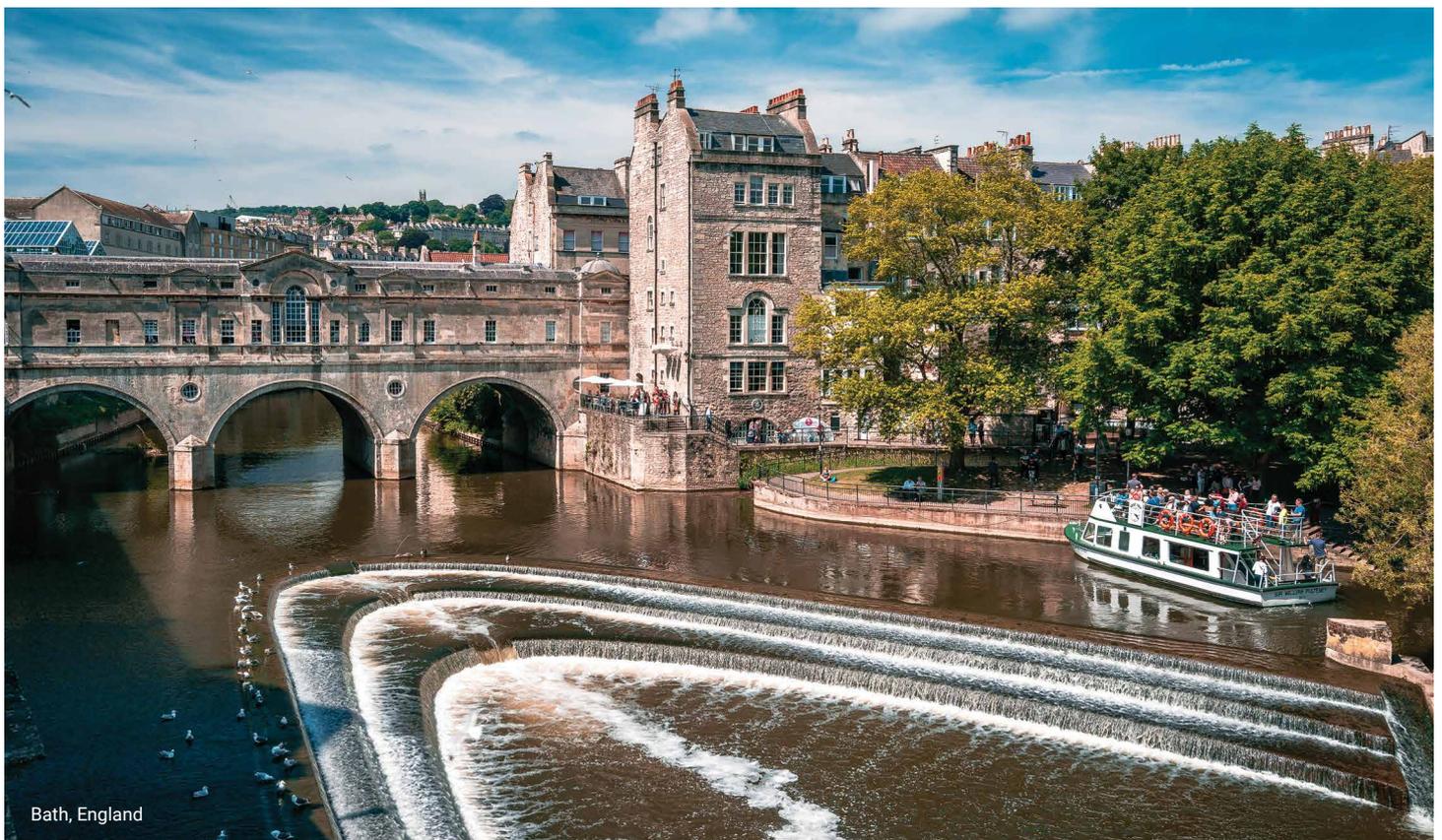
In terms of final demand, households were estimated to be the most significant source of consumption-based emissions in both authorities, but the GLA had [higher consumption-based emissions](#) related to food eaten outside of the home and from air travel than the UK average, reflecting different behaviour patterns to the rest of the country.

Consumption-based emissions in [B&NES](#) and the [GLA](#) have fallen during the last 10 to 20 years (despite the GLA's population growing by 1.5 million in that time) due to increased efficiency of goods.

How did they measure their consumption-based emissions?

B&NES estimated their [consumption-based emissions inventory](#) using national datasets for UK consumption emissions over time and economic data for Gross Value Added (GVA), which is available both at a national and local authority-level from the Office for National Statistics. The [methodology](#) assumed that economic activity and carbon consumption are closely related and scaled down national consumption-based emissions to local authority level by allocating emissions in the same ratio of the B&NES GVA to UK GVA.

The GLA commissioned the [University of Leeds](#) to measure and report its [consumption-based emissions](#) on an annual basis using the latest available data (running from 2001-2016) on average expenditure on different types of goods and service. This methodology aligns with the method used by the government at national level.



Bath, England

SETTING AMBITIOUS EMISSION REDUCTION TARGETS

Almost all disclosing local authorities reported an emission reduction target, showing widespread ambition to reduce their contribution to climate change



91% | 30/33

of local authorities reported a city-wide emission reduction target



73% | 24/33

of local authorities reported that their emission reduction target was aligned with a 2°C - 1.5°C pathway²

Some local authorities are going a step further by setting science-based targets

[Science-based targets](#) are measurable and actionable targets that allow cities to align their actions with the goals of the Paris Agreement and the [latest scientific advice](#) from the IPCC. By setting a science-based target, cities can be confident that their emissions reduction efforts are aligned with a 1.5°C or well-below 2°C pathway and that they are making a fair contribution to tackling climate change.

There are several [methodologies](#) available for setting a science-based target, including [C40's Deadline 2020](#), [WWF's One Planet City Challenge framework](#) and the [Tyndall Centre Carbon Budget Tool](#).

The Tyndall Centre Carbon Budget Tool, developed by the [Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research](#), was designed to scale the emission reduction requirements of the Paris Agreement down to UK local authority level. The methodology can be easily used to calculate carbon budgets for any local authority in the UK.

More information on setting a science-based target can be found in the Science Based Targets Network's [Guide for Cities](#).

Aligning targets with the science: West Midlands

Determined to make their fair contribution to meeting the Paris Agreement goals, West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has used the [Tyndall Centre Carbon Budget Tool](#) to set a science-based target to reach [net zero CO₂ emissions](#) no later than 2041. To do this, WMCA is finalising its first five-year plan, which will indicate the actions that need to be taken to reach net zero. Underlying this is the need for the transition to be equitable and provide opportunity for all people of the West Midlands, boosting the authority's resilience to climate change and increasing the prosperity of the region. Find out more in the WMCA's [climate action plan](#).

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has used the Tyndall Centre Carbon Budget Tool to set a science-based target to reach **net zero CO₂ emissions no later than 2041**.

2. Please note that local authority emission reduction targets are not currently validated. Local authorities will be supported to check their existing targets and set new targets from 2021 onwards.

IMPLEMENTING CLIMATE ACTION TO ACHIEVE TARGETS

As well as setting targets, UK local authorities are putting in place the plans and actions to achieve their climate goals

A climate action plan outlines the steps a local authority is planning to take to reduce its emissions. A typical plan includes information on baseline emissions, emission reduction targets, the sectors the local authority will

focus on, how it will engage and get buy-in from stakeholders, how it will implement the plan, and how it will monitor progress.



61% | 20/33

of local authorities reported a climate action plan



12

local authorities disclosed climate action plans that were aligned with their net zero/ carbon neutrality targets



30

local authorities reported **207 climate mitigation actions**



Cardiff, Wales

Tackling the climate impact of food: Cardiff

Cardiff has been working hard to increase the healthiness and affordability of food consumed by its residents, whilst also reducing its climate impact. The Council is a founding member of [Food Cardiff](#), a partnership of key local organisations that is helping to deliver vital and inspiring food programmes across the city. This includes the [Veg Cities](#) campaign in Cardiff which has recruited local businesses, schools and organisations to encourage people to eat more vegetables and grow their own food. Moreover, in 2015, the city became one of the first places in the UK to be awarded [Bronze Sustainable Food City](#) status and the city is now working towards Silver status.

Cardiff Council recently published its [Cardiff Food Strategy](#) which aims to tackle food inequality, increase availability of healthy food, and promote local food production. This will include creating a new sustainable food market in Cardiff Market and opening up council-owned land to community groups and commercial growers to grow food and turn the city into an 'edible landscape'. A key driver of this strategy is to reduce the GHG emissions of food that is produced and consumed within the city. This will enable the city to address both food poverty and quality issues, as well as climate impacts, as part of their drive to become a [One Planet city](#).

THE MOST COMMON MITIGATION ACTIONS LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE TAKING ARE:



24

local authorities

Retrofitting and increasing the energy efficiency of buildings

Greater Manchester has launched a project to model the need and opportunities for housing retrofit across the region. This will enable Greater Manchester to make informed decisions on the amount of retrofit needed and how to achieve it by 2038.



18

local authorities

Increasing renewable energy generation

Nottingham has rolled out solar PV across a range of commercial and council-owned properties, including 4000 council houses.



12

local authorities

Shifting to low- and zero-carbon transport

Through their Black Country Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle Strategy, Wolverhampton is aiming to ensure that 95% of urban areas within the Black Country are less than 500m away from a charging point.



8

local authorities

Switching to low-carbon fuels in buildings

Bristol is installing heat networks across the city, investing £6 million in the scheme and supplying over 1,000 properties with low-carbon heat to date.



8

local authorities

Switching to energy efficient street lighting

Manchester has replaced 95% of its 56,000 street lights with energy efficient LEDs, resulting in energy savings of 71% and expected annual costs savings of £2 million.

Driving innovation: Newcastle

Newcastle published its [Net Zero Newcastle - 2030 Action Plan](#) in September 2020, setting out the city's pathway to becoming net zero by 2030.

Developed through extensive engagement with a broad range of residents, businesses, organisations and other stakeholders, the plan – which will be reviewed and updated annually – aims to decarbonise the city across three core themes: energy (responsible for 64% of the city's emissions), transport (29% of emissions), and adaptation and sustainability (including waste, which counts for 6% of emissions).

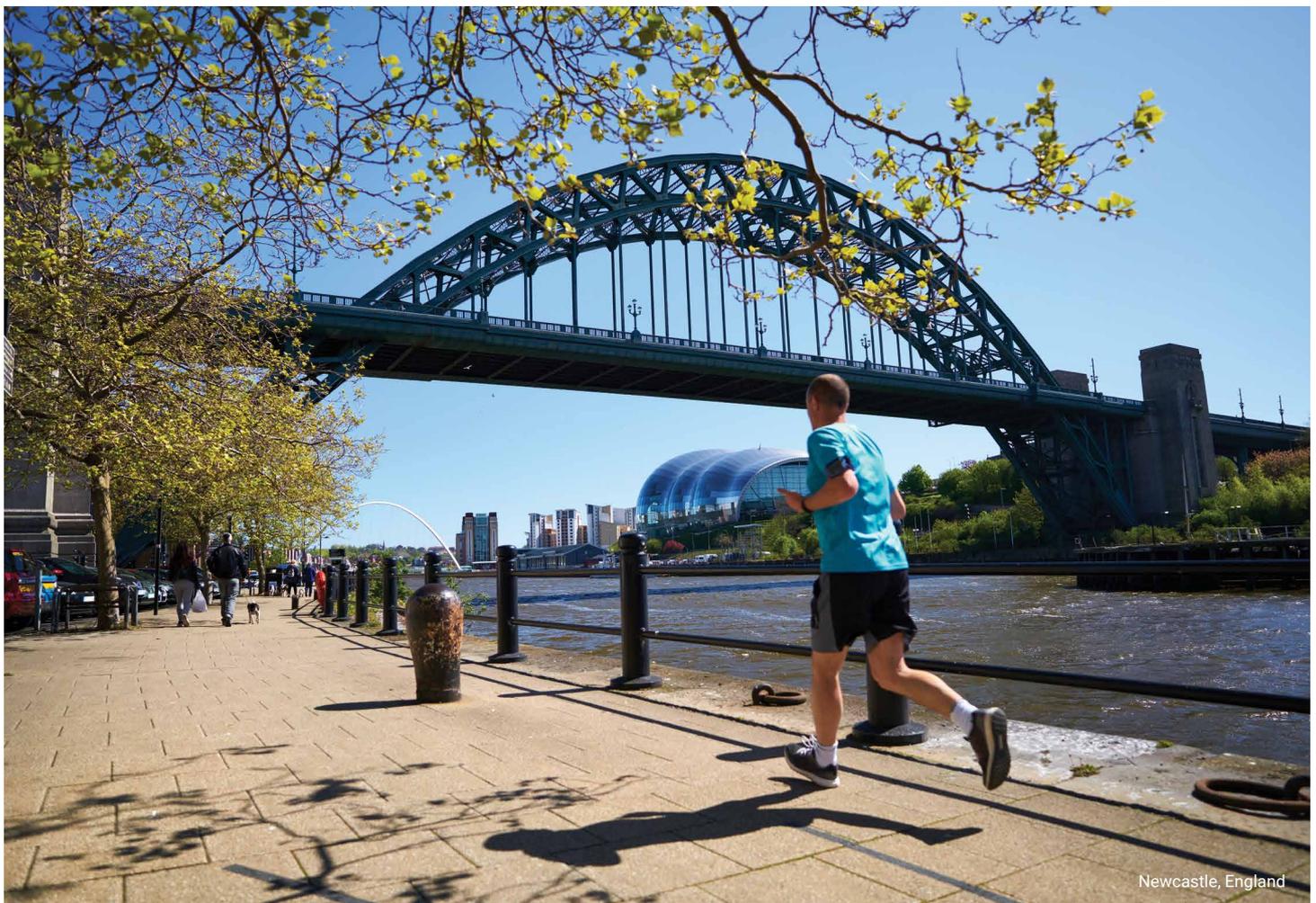
Newcastle's **Net Zero Action Plan** aims to harness the strengths of the city and the North East to **decarbonise and grow the local economy at the same time.**

It also focuses on nurturing green growth, new skills, innovation and business, with the North East already a hub for offshore wind energy and host to a sub-sea technology supply chain cluster. Newcastle University has also partnered with Northern Powergrid and Siemens to develop the [Smart Grid Lab Newcastle Helix](#), the UK's largest project of its kind, which will simulate distribution networks to understand how smart grids can help meet future energy challenges.

Delivery of the plan is being led through a [Climate Change Committee](#), who provide expert advice to the City Council; a Net Zero Taskforce of key stakeholders in the city; and a regional Citizens' Assembly.

Newcastle has also collaborated with [ClimateView](#) to model the city's path to achieving its Net Zero target, with each of the Priority Actions set out in the plan including a delivery timeframe, estimated costs, performance indicators, and responsible parties. Their climate action plan also seeks to deliver many co-benefits, such as improving public health, reducing fuel poverty, and alleviating mental health issues.

Newcastle's Net Zero Action Plan aims to harness the strengths of the city and the North East to decarbonise and grow the local economy at the same time.



Newcastle, England

TRANSITION TO RENEWABLES

Many local authorities are setting renewable energy targets, giving a clear indication to their residents and businesses that they are prepared to maximise the opportunities offered by the low-carbon energy transition



42% | 14/33

of local authorities reported a renewable energy target

Taunton, England

However, varying levels of control over energy supplies was reported as a barrier by some local authorities to setting more ambitious targets



18% | 6/33

of local authorities reported a 100% renewable energy target



18% | 6/33

of local authorities reported an energy efficiency target



6

local authorities reported that national control of the electricity grid was a barrier to setting renewable energy targets

Achieving 100% renewable energy by 2050: Somerset West and Taunton

Somerset West and Taunton recognise the important role energy will play in achieving their goal to become carbon neutral. In their [Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Action Plan](#), they have set a local authority-wide target to have 100% renewable energy by 2050. To get them on the pathway to achieving this goal, they have identified a

range of actions they can take, including understanding the renewable energy potential of their local authority, being more proactive in investing in and enabling local renewable energy schemes, and lobbying government to remove barriers to delivery of renewable energy. Find out more in Somerset West and Taunton's [climate action plan](#).

ADAPTING IN THE FACE OF GROWING CLIMATE HAZARDS

UK local authorities are facing climate-related hazards that are increasing in frequency and magnitude

As the UK increasingly faces climate-related extreme weather events, local authorities across the country are being severely [impacted](#). In August 2020, the UK suffered an [extended heatwave](#), with air temperatures exceeding 34°C for six days in a row in some areas. In October 2020, Storm Alex brought the [wettest day on record](#), with an average of 31.7 mm of rain across the UK and [flooding](#) up and down the country.

Meanwhile, research from the [National Audit Office](#) showed that parts of the south and south-east could run out of water in the next 20 years due to hotter and drier weather, water leaks, and increased demand for water. Average daily consumption of water per person in England has risen each year since 2014, reaching [143 litres per day](#) in 2018/19.



31

local authorities reported that they were impacted by **143 climate-related hazards**



91% | 130/143

of these hazards were expected to increase in frequency and intensity in the future

THE MOST COMMON HAZARDS LOCAL AUTHORITIES REPORTED WERE:



23

local authorities

Heat wave

Southend on Sea suffers from extreme heat events several times a year. Its grey infrastructure and lack of tree cover make it difficult to find places to stay cool outside during a heatwave. This is a particular problem for elderly residents in the borough, who are more vulnerable to very hot weather.



23

local authorities

Flash or surface flooding

Large swathes of impermeable surfaces and an outdated Victorian drainage system have made the Greater London Authority increasingly vulnerable to flooding. Nearly 70,000 homes and 12,000 businesses are at high risk of surface water flooding in the city.



17

local authorities

River flooding

In August 2017, extreme rainfall around Derry City and Strabane resulted in flooding in three local rivers and £12 million worth of damage to homes, businesses, agriculture and other services.



12

local authorities

Rain storm

In 2012, Newcastle was hit by the "Toon Monsoon", an intense summer storm which saw a month's worth of rain fall in just two hours, resulting in the flooding of 500 homes and millions of pounds worth of damage.



11

local authorities

Drought

During the 2018 UK heatwave, Coventry came close to experiencing serious water shortages. The city expects water stress to get more severe as temperatures rise, impacting residents and businesses.

Many local authorities are beginning to systematically assess their risk and vulnerability to climate-related hazards and are developing plans to address them



55% | 18/33

of local authorities reported a risk and vulnerability assessment



70% | 23/33

of local authorities reported an adaptation plan

Local authorities are taking actions to address these hazards and enhance their capacity to adapt to climate change



30

local authorities in the UK reported **126** climate adaptation actions. This is over **three times** more actions than were reported in **2018** (**7 local authorities reported 37 adaptation actions**).



Essex, England

Harnessing nature to combat flooding: Essex

In 2018, Essex County Council delivered an award-winning scheme to reduce flooding in the Kingsmoor area of Harlow using innovative, natural and sustainable methods. As part of the Kingsmoor Flood Alleviation Scheme (also known as the [Harlow Leaky Dams Project](#)), 'leaky dams' made of woody debris were built across waterways in the local Parndon and Ridsen Woods. These helped slow the flow of water into nearby communities during heavy rainfall events.

To minimise the impact of construction, the dams were built with the help of Suffolk Punch heavy horses that transported and positioned the wood across the channels. In addition to this, two on-line storage ponds were reinstated, improving the local biodiversity by creating new and diverse habitats. The scheme, which won the Small Project of the Year award at the [2018 British Construction Industry Awards](#), has helped to protect 40 homes in the local area from flooding.

THE MOST COMMON ADAPTATION ACTIONS LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE TAKING ARE:

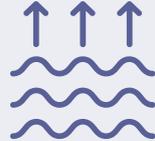


17

local authorities

Flood mapping

In their [Climate Emergency Strategy](#), Richmond Council are working to ensure that the borough's flood risk maps are up to date, including identifying the most vulnerable people in the areas that are most at risk of flooding.



11

local authorities

Flood defences

In collaboration with South Gloucestershire, Bristol is developing the [Avonmouth Severnside Enterprise Area Ecology Mitigation and Flood Defences project](#) – 17 km of flood defences that are designed to withstand a 1 in 200 year tidal flood and create a new wetland habitat for over-wintering birds.



9

local authorities

Tree planting or creation of green space

Over the next decade, Edinburgh is aiming to plant 270,000 trees to reach its target to become a [Million Tree City](#) by 2030. This will help reduce the impact of heatwaves and flooding in the city.



8

local authorities

Community engagement

Through their online [Local Resilience Forum](#), BCP communicates to the public about the risks of heatwaves and flooding. They target their engagement at the most vulnerable (e.g. the elderly) and those with the most power to influence change (e.g. landlords).



5

local authorities

Public preparedness

As a member of the [North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum](#), York has developed [engaging reading materials](#) to help residents prepare and respond to emergencies.

Some local authorities are recognising water security risks and taking action to address them



30% | 10/33

of local authorities reported that they were aware of substantive current or future risks to their water security



7

local authorities reported taking **36** actions to mitigate water security risks



30% | 10/33

of local authorities reported a Water Management Strategy



The top water security risks identified by local authorities were:

- ▼ Increased water stress
- ▼ Increased water demand
- ▼ Increased water scarcity



The top actions taken to mitigate water security risks were:

- ▼ Conservation awareness and education programmes
- ▼ Diversifying water supplies
- ▼ Efficiency regulations and standards

Community engagement and political transparency are supporting local authorities' ability to adapt, but councils are hindered by poverty and limited budgets

THE MOST COMMON FACTORS SUPPORTING ADAPTATION

Community engagement	9 local authorities
Political engagement/transparency	8 local authorities
Land use planning	7 local authorities
Political stability	7 local authorities
Access to basic services	5 local authorities

THE MOST COMMON FACTORS CHALLENGING ADAPTATION

Budgetary capacity	16 local authorities
Poverty	15 local authorities
Housing	14 local authorities
Access to quality/relevant data	10 local authorities
Inequality	8 local authorities

CLIMATE ACTION IS PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES AND CO-BENEFITS

The recent [Co-benefits of Climate Action](#) report by CDP, the Tyndall Centre and Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations showed that as well as ending their contribution to climate change and increasing their capacity to adapt to climate-related hazards, cities and

local authorities around the world are gaining multiple additional benefits from climate action, including job creation, cleaner air, and improved public health. UK local authorities reported that climate action was providing them with a range of opportunities.

THE MOST COMMON OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES FROM TAKING CLIMATE ACTION



Manchester, England



Cutting energy use and improving health: Leicester

Leicester recognises that actions to cut emissions can deliver other public health benefits. [The Warmer Homes Greener Homes Scheme](#) launched in April 2020 provides low-income homeowners suffering from long-term illnesses in cold and damp houses with funding to make their homes more efficient and warmer. Through this scheme, Leicester secured [£100,000](#) of funding, with 50% from Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group's Better Care Fund, to help

lift households out of fuel poverty, cutting both energy use and heating bills.

The council also has direct influence on the energy efficiency and warmth of [21,000 council houses](#) (16% of the housing stock in Leicester) and is rolling out retrofits, installing new efficient boilers and insulation in just over [4,000](#) council houses up to March 2019.

Reducing transport emissions and delivering co-benefits: Somerset West and Taunton

Decarbonising transport by shifting to Electric Vehicles (EV) not only reduces local authorities' carbon impact, but it also helps to deliver other co-benefits, including improved air quality and technological innovation.

Somerset West and Taunton are putting in place the plans and actions to move to a more low-carbon transport system. They have been a key partner in developing a [Somerset EV Charging Strategy](#) to help Somerset local authorities identify pathways to deliver EV charging infrastructure across the county.

The local authority was also chosen as the host authority for Western Power Distribution's [DC Share](#) scheme. This is an innovative pilot project to trial new EV charging smart technology which will utilise spare electrical capacity in local substations across Taunton to power 15 rapid EV chargers and is expected to be ready for public use in Spring 2022.

THE MOST COMMON SECTORS IN WHICH LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE COLLABORATING WITH BUSINESSES ARE:



26

collaborations

Energy

Birmingham City Council is working with ENGIE on its [Birmingham District Energy Scheme](#) to deliver three district energy networks in the city centre which will save over 15,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions every year.



16

collaborations

Building and infrastructure

Nottingham has partnered with Nottingham City Homes and construction partners Melius Homes to pilot a deep retrofit model called [Energiesprong](#) on a terrace of houses, significantly reducing energy consumption for these homes.



11

collaborations

Transport

Coventry has teamed up with a range of local companies for its [Go Electric Taxi](#) scheme, which provides incentives worth up to £2,500 to taxi drivers who want to switch to an electric vehicle to reduce air pollution in the city.



10

collaborations

Business and financial services

Through its [Business Energy Efficiency Project \(BEEP\)](#), Durham County Council is providing local SMEs with fully-funded audits to help them understand how to increase their energy efficiency. This has allowed SMEs to reduce their emissions and save money [at the same time](#).



5

collaborations

Industry

Manchester has been working with [Manchester City Football Club](#) to reduce the club's emissions, including changing the light fittings in their stadium to LED, reducing consumption by just over one million kw/h, and launching a programme on energy use behaviours to reduce consumption and energy waste across the organisation.



67%

23/33

of local authorities reported that they were collaborating with businesses on sustainability projects

WORKING TO ENSURE THAT NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and protests against racism exposed huge social inequalities and racial injustice across the UK

The [post-COVID-19 recovery](#) and the [transition to a low-carbon economy](#) present an opportunity for local authorities to place social inclusion and equity at the heart of their planning, and bring everyone along with them on the journey to net zero.

Cornwall and the Greater London Authority (GLA), two local authorities with very different characteristics, are working to ensure that vulnerable people within their boundaries are

not left behind by the impacts of climate change and the transition to a low-carbon future.

Cornwall and the GLA are no strangers to the challenges of poverty and inequality. Both regions host neighbourhoods that are among the [10% most deprived](#) areas in the UK. This is why they are working to ensure that their climate action planning is inclusive and that they engage with their communities throughout the process.

Protecting vulnerable groups through the low-carbon transition: Greater London Authority

In the [Green New Deal for London](#), the GLA is investing £10 million in 2020/21 to fund a green post-COVID-19 recovery that will ensure that tackling inequality and prioritising the most vulnerable is central to all solutions. This is the first of a multi-year investment to support interventions that contribute towards tackling the climate and ecological emergencies and air quality, while creating economic growth and job opportunities and tackling inequalities. The initial investment is supporting [1,000 green jobs](#) across the

city and providing financial support to those living in poor quality housing with limited access to green space and in areas of high air pollution. The Green New Deal fund is also providing support to green SMEs, with a particular focus on Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic, and female-led enterprises, and will help to fund London Living Wage internships in cleantech businesses to enable people from all economic backgrounds to access the industry while targeting areas hit hardest by the pandemic.



Ensuring everyone is included and can have their say: Cornwall

Cornwall Council has ensured that citizens and stakeholders are consulted throughout the development and implementation of their climate action plan. When Cornwall's [Action Plan](#) was adopted, a clear political steer was given that all decision-making related to climate change mitigation should be balanced against the principle of social justice. Utilising the 'Doughnut Economics' model developed by Kate Raworth, a [decision wheel](#) has been deployed for cabinet decisions since September.

Whilst developing the plan, the council engaged with [thousands of residents](#) from across Cornwall to find out what actions they wanted the council to prioritise. Through their online consultation platform [The Hive](#) and the [Carbon Neutral Cornwall Partnership Group](#), they are also engaging with Cornwall's key emitting sectors, health partners and individuals to develop Cornwall's asks of national government and design the next stage of the action plan.

AREAS WHERE LOCAL AUTHORITIES NEED MORE SUPPORT

Despite the level of ambition many local authorities are increasingly showing, they face several significant barriers to achieving their climate goals



42% | 14/33

of local authorities reported that their emission reduction targets were conditional on the success of an externality or component of policy outside of their control.

Conditions that local authorities reported they needed to be able to achieve their targets included:

- ▼ Continued decarbonisation of the national grid
- ▼ More ambitious national policy and change in planning legislation
- ▼ More devolved powers for cities to support climate action
- ▼ Financial support from national government
- ▼ Establishment of a national strategy for long-term decarbonisation of heat
- ▼ National transport strategy for the transition to sustainable transport
- ▼ A strategy to reduce emissions from national aviation



Derry, Northern Ireland

Local authorities need more support to mobilise finance to implement climate action. This will be critical to delivering their plans and meeting their targets



11

local authorities reported **29** sustainability projects seeking over **£3 billion** worth of funding.

Projects include:

- ▼ Improving energy efficiency and retrofitting buildings
- ▼ Increasing renewable energy generation
- ▼ Improving waste management systems
- ▼ Implementing sustainable transport options for citizens

IN THE RUN UP TO COP26, LOCAL LEADERSHIP HAS NEVER BEEN MORE VITAL

Time is running out. In the next ten years, we need to [halve](#) global emissions to stay aligned with the 1.5°C mitigation pathway and avoid catastrophic climate change.

In November 2021, the UK is hosting [COP26](#) in Glasgow, during which countries around the world will be expected to increase their Nationally Determined Contributions and step up their efforts to reduce emissions to meet this goal.

With all eyes on the UK, **COP26** provides a critical **opportunity for UK local authorities to demonstrate real leadership** and show the UK government and the international community what can be achieved.

In the lead up to the summit, the UNFCCC High Level Champions have launched the [Race to Zero](#) and [Race to Resilience](#) campaigns to mobilise cities, regions, businesses and investors to commit to becoming net zero and increasing resilience by 2050 and to send a strong signal to national governments that non-state actors are united in meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement.

With all eyes on the UK, COP26 provides a critical opportunity for UK local authorities to demonstrate real leadership and show the UK government and the international community what can be achieved.

Our data shows that over the last three years, UK local authorities have upped their game, making the move from declaring a climate emergency to reporting their data and taking action. In 2020, 33 local authorities, representing over half of UK GDP, a third of the UK population, and a fifth of UK emissions, reported taking climate action through the [CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System](#). Local authorities have made significant progress since 2018, setting more targets and plans, delivering more actions, and demonstrating what global [climate leadership](#) looks like.

Now we must keep this momentum going and show the world that a net zero, resilient, fair, and prosperous future is possible.



Birmingham, England

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