

## Envisaging a Zero Carbon Wakefield Council

We are planning for a greener future for the Council and want your views and ideas to help us move forward and develop our Climate Emergency Action Plan. This Action Plan will drastically reduce our carbon emissions to reach our target of becoming a carbon-neutral organisation by 2030.

Please answer the questions below and send your response to [sustainability@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:sustainability@wakefield.gov.uk).

**1.** We are looking at changing the Council's fleet of vehicles from using petrol and diesel to cleaner and greener fuels. What type of technology, for example, electric power, would you like to see used in future?

Need to look at reducing journeys, travel distances, etc.

Need to use renewable electricity.

Use of shared vehicles/ car sharing.

Encourage cycling. Encourage the use of electric bikes. This requires safe cycling routes not just bike lanes alongside roads and secure cycle parking/lock up.

Encourage home working to reduce the number of work journeys made.

Encourage the use of public transport.

Need to consider a travel plan for council employees in the first instance, and then encourage other employers to develop their own travel plans. Travel to work plans could reconsider the use of employer run buses as well as public transport, and the use of circular bus routes at shift changes for employers like Next.

Council should only replace diesel and petrol vehicles with fully electric vehicles UNLESS electric power is not available for the required class of vehicle – eg – monitor the electric bin wagon trials in Sheffield. Integrate vehicle renewal programme into normal renewal schedule.

Electric vehicle charging points for council vehicles and for public use. Balance against presumption in favour of public transport.

**2.** What do you think about converting Council buildings' heating systems from gas, coal and oil to greener fuels and renewable energy? Which options, for example using solar power, would you favour?

Use of solar and wind power to provide electricity for council buildings.

More precise temperature controls to avoid overheating. Allow staff to wear pullovers – consider dress code in offices.

Insulation/cladding of buildings.

Directive to switch off lights/use of automatic switches.

Grey water recycling to reduce energy embodied in water use.

Use of green roofs and vertical gardens/green walls to insulate and absorb pollution, as well as increasing biodiversity.

Need to evaluate options on climate impacts not just cost impacts – full impact assessments.

Zero carbon electricity supplier for all WMDC buildings and operations, and partner organisations.

When evaluating heating system replacement options for a building, there should be a presumption to electrification – eg the use of heat pumps (ground or air sourced) for heating systems. These could be through “normal” ground sourced heat pumps, or through the use of warm water in flooded mineworkings. Use of school fields to provide ground area for ground sourced heat pump systems in every school. Possible use of mine water heat pumps for district heating,

Ensure that a thorough options appraisal, with decision making being based on most appropriate climate solution and most appropriate building solution.

**3.** In which ways could we make Council buildings more energy efficient? For example, installing insulation and double glazing.

Need to first measure current energy use to understand baseline, across the whole estate. This will allow WMDC to evaluate which buildings need to be refitted first, and which can be tweaked prior to later refitting with zero carbon systems. – Requirement that needs analysis drives systematic approach based on biggest emission cuts early in the 10 year programme. WMDC also owns many community buildings and some transferred to communities through long term leases – these also need to be included in the plans. Community buildings supported to become zero carbon will benefit by becoming community education centres AND improved financial viability as running costs are cut.

Lighting – LED phased in over short timescale.

Insulation – as close to Passivhaus standards or highest BREEM standards as possible. Short term tweaks whilst awaiting full refurb should consider insulated false ceilings and additional window insulation (blinds/curtains/secondary double/triple glazing). Insulate, insulate, insulate!

Electrify heating systems - see heat pump recommendations – zero carbon if zero carbon electricity supply.

Develop effective energy management systems in all WMDC buildings.

Ensure local controllability so that overly centralised control does not inadvertently lead to ineffective building management.

Use of payback time plans to manage budgets so that reduced costs in a cash fixed energy account releases cash for further low carbon investment. Quick wins first.

Building use plans – concentrating meetings in fewer rooms, managing room use throughout the week, smart energy management links to smart diary so that only occupied rooms are heated to legally required level.

Use planning authority to allow solar panels on all WMDC owned roofs that are structurally appropriate. Put solar panels on all industrial/commercial “sheds” – make it a planning requirement that all new commercial development is zero carbon electricity and heated through heat pumps.

**4.** The Council owns land across the district. How do you think this land could be used to help to generate greener and renewable energy? For example, solar panels or growing biofuel crops.

Use of hydrogen power – explore options with other regional partners.  
Investigate total cost-benefit analysis of biomass/biomethane production as a renewable system to provide zero carbon fuel where electricity is not suitable yet. Eg vans.  
Need more information – designate agricultural land, reclamation land, amenity land, etc.  
Only reclamation land should be used for biofuel production – e.g. miscanthus on spoil heaps.  
Include food waste collection in biomethane generation.  
Could WMDC create planning rule that forbids agricultural land from being used to grow biofuels? Can WMDC use its own land holdings to encourage local food production for local markets? Working with Landworkers Alliance?  
Not all biofuels are carbon-zero!!  
Solar farms allow for grazing as well as solar panels – look at multiple use options.  
If WMDC is going to become an electricity generator, need to ensure that surplus electricity production is either sold into the National Grid or used to provide back up power through regional schemes such as artificial methane or hydrogen production for zero carbon gas turbine generation.  
Lots of other land use issues – town planning, localising the economy (Preston model), regenerating town centres, linking transport with development – all contribute to zero carbon economies AND improving quality of life.  
Biodiversity matters – amenity land and urban nature reserves.  
Use of green corridors and motorway/major road planting schemes to control air pollution and enable safe passage for wildlife.

**5.** Even by delivering a range of projects we won't be able to remove all of our carbon emissions so we will need to cancel these out and. To do this we may need to look at carbon off-setting projects, such as tree planting schemes. What is your view on carbon offsetting and what type of projects would you like us to support?

Must aim for zero carbon. Off-setting should take us into negative carbon and contribute to removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Too big a risk that off-setting is used to achieve less – not acceptable. Everyone expressed this concern that this could become an excuse for inaction.

Tree planting on a massive scale. Include tree planting/forestry on marginal (grade 4?) agricultural land. Aim to at least double tree cover. Think biodiversity as well as carbon sequestration.

Only real off-setting schemes to consider are: generating more electricity than we use, so that we contribute to the national drive to zero carbon as well as our own district; tree planting; organically managed soils so that soils also sequester carbon.

Aim to develop access to locally grown food, presumption against building on agricultural land.

If you've got anything else you'd like to say, please add in your thoughts.

Electrify all school kitchens – currently all are gas powered.

School programmes – cycling to school, re-invigorate school travel plans, biodiversity in school grounds, school tree planting projects, climate change curriculum, environmental / ecological education, school gardens, climate friendly school meals

More cycle lanes! Real ones that are protected from traffic not just lines on a road.

**Zero carbon district by 2030, not just zero carbon council.**

Green play areas for children, forest schools, ecological programmes for youth groups...

Publicity – making all district residents “feel good” and “feel proud” of living in a low carbon and then zero carbon district. Less focus on consumption (shopping, consumerism) more focus on community and green spaces, more focus on healthy and green lifestyle – building exercise into daily commute, for example.

Publicity – not scaring people with doom laden scenarios, counter idea that being green means doing without, give people encouragement and rewards for positive actions. Building on what people can do now, and showing that WMDC is moving ahead and operating as a pull factor rather than a push factor.

Clean public transport (propulsion and aesthetic), more public transport, less litter, more pride.

No new homes that are not carbon zero/passivhaus standard – insist on the highest planning standards, no greenwash, no watering down. Needs investment in building inspectors, in building contractors, in materials specification.

Thank you for taking part.

The deadline for responding is Friday 1 November 2019.

Energy Team  
sustainability@wakefield.gov.uk  
01924 305887