

# STRATEGIC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN - 2025 -2028

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<b>Papers with report</b>	Strategic Climate Action Plan – Adopted Version Appendix 1 – Hillingdon Friends of the Earth Consultation Response

## HEADLINES

<b>Summary</b>	<p>The Council declared a climate emergency in 2020 and followed this with the adoption of the comprehensive Strategic Climate Action Plan. ‘The Plan’ contains 6 corporate commitments aligned with 9 Key Themes to cover a wide range of action to address the climate emergency. A review of the plan in 2024 formed part of the commitment.</p> <p>‘The Review’ sets out the action to be taken over the next 3 years (identified as the short to medium term). It retains the vision, corporate commitments and key themes but sets out an amended series of actions to continue to positively tackle the climate emergency in a more focused and targeted manner.</p> <p>The review also sets out the progress since the adoption of the plan noting the challenging environment facing all local authorities. It identifies significant progress against the majority of the key themes and also where further development is required. It also reports on the council’s own positive progress towards its carbon neutral target.</p> <p>The review was published for consultation which ran from 11 November 2024 through to 12 January 2025. The responses have informed this version presented for adoption.</p>
<b>Putting our Residents First</b>  <b>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</b>	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Live in a sustainable borough that is carbon neutral</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Green and Sustainable Borough</p> <p>The Strategic Climate Action Plan sits as a parent strategy and is supported by:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport Strategies including Local Implementation Plan</li> <li>• The Local Plan</li> <li>• Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy</li> <li>• Air Quality Action Plan</li> <li>• Flood Risk Management Plan</li> <li>• Tree Strategy</li> <li>• Green Space Management Plans</li> <li>• Procurement Strategies</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Financial Cost</b></p>	<p>The production of the review has been developed using existing internal resources as well as consultancy support to review carbon footprint data. The consultancy support has been funded by Section 106 (carbon) funds.</p> <p>The Review commits to actions that are in line with business-as-usual approaches to tackle climate action, with additional funding from external sources, i.e. Section 106 funds and public sector decarbonisation scheme (PSDS).</p> <p>Action to reduce the carbon footprint will ultimately result in more efficient council operations with projects prioritised that have the additional benefit of reducing exposure to energy costs or are income generators (i.e. solar panel installations, improved building efficiency, and energy saving measures).</p>
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<p><b>Select Committee</b></p>	<p>Residents' Services Select Committee</p>
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<p><b>Ward(s)</b></p>	<p>All</p>
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Cabinet:**

- 1. Consider the outcome of the public consultation;**
- 2. Approve the updated Strategic Climate Action Plan 2025-2028**

**Reasons for recommendation**

The Council declared a climate emergency in 2020 and responded by producing the strategic climate action plan ('the Plan') which was adopted in 2021. The plan included a commitment to undertake a review in 2024.

This commitment was to ensure that continued action remains focused, prioritised and aligned with the vision and corporate commitments set out in the plan. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on how best to target current resources to maximise effective action.

The commitment also required the review to be subject to public consultation to allow residents, communities and other stakeholders to actively engage in the future actions to address the climate emergency.

The consultation was undertaken from November 2024 until 12 January 2025. The consultation was via an online survey with invitation to respond through alternative media. There were 33 responses to the survey and a separate comprehensive response from Hillingdon Friends of the Earth (attached). Changes have been made to the plan because of the consultation.

The review sets out the approach for 2025 through to 2028.

### **Alternative options considered / risk management**

It is considered that a 'business as usual' approach, (i.e. retaining the current plan and not undertaking a review) would still result in effective climate action but it would not necessarily be a targeted or efficient use of resources available. This approach would also be inconsistent with the commitments made in the original plan.

### **Democratic compliance / previous authority**

The Cabinet approved the strategic climate action plan review to be subject to a formal consultation from November 2024 to January 2025.

### **Select Committee comments**

Hillingdon Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees have regularly reviewed implementation of the Climate Action Plan, since inception. More recently, the Residents' Services Select Committee has been involved in this review and consultation of the updated Plan at their meeting on 27 November 2025 and the minutes of that meeting are set out in the background papers. The Committee is scheduled to undertake further scrutiny of the delivery of the Action Plan annually.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

1. On 16th January 2020 at full Council, the London Borough of Hillingdon declared a climate emergency. The impetus for the declaration was a petition from residents and member recognition of the global and local issues associated with climate change. The declaration impacted council business across all departments as it looks for ways to adapt and mitigate for climate change.
2. The adoption of the strategic climate action plan followed in 2021 and set out how the council would respond to the climate emergency. This included a series of corporate commitments aligned with 9 key themes which would heavily influence council wide operations. The plan included a series of specific actions linked to the themes. These were comprehensive and ambitious.
3. The declaration and subsequent plan also heavily influenced the subsequent council strategy which states:

*Hillingdon will be a sustainable, carbon-neutral borough, protecting Hillingdon's heritage, built environment and valued green spaces. Residents will live in pleasant neighbourhoods with access to sustainable waste management and transport.*

4. The Plan included a commitment to undertake a review of the actions in 2024.

#### *Need for Continued Action*

5. As part of the review, it has been necessary to restate the need for continued action. Although the plan set out a great deal of progress across a range of council operations, it also stated why further action and progress was needed.
6. Since the plan was adopted, more information and understanding about the impacts of climate change have emerged. The climate continues to warm at significant rates with 2022 and 2023 the warmest years on record. In 2023, the UK recorded the wettest September to December period since 2000 with a sequence of named storms.
7. More information is also now available on the impacts of climate change and how this affects all communities but particularly the most vulnerable. Risks to water supply, localised flooding, loss of biodiversity, heat stress and uncertain food security are among some of the impacts associated with a changing climate. The environmental and social impacts are considered to result in significant economic disruption.
8. The review therefore presents the need for continued and sustained action.

#### *Progress*

9. The review also presents the opportunity to set out how much progress has been made in the last 3 years against the commitments made.
10. It records positive progress against the majority of the 9 key themes with further development required against two (i.e. where progress is less than positive). The review recognises that progress has been complicated by the challenging circumstances facing all local authorities but still reports very positive performance

Key Theme	Progress Recorded
Community Leadership	Development Required
The Council's Own Operations	Very Positive
Building Better Places	Very Positive
Using and Producing Clean and Green Energy	Positive
Waste Management	Very Positive
Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation	Positive
Carbon Offsetting	Positive
Sustainable Transportation	Positive
Transparency, Communication and Reporting	Development Required

11. Progress has been particularly positive in relation to our commitment to become carbon neutral. It sets out a 54% reduction in our own emissions from the 2020 baseline reported in the original Plan. This is a significant achievement and reflects considerable work to improve the fleet and reduce emissions across council assets.
12. Importantly, the most recent Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) work at the Civic Centre is forecast to make a significant contribution to carbon reduction. The civic centre is the asset with by far the largest carbon footprint and the PSDS project will reduce this by nearly 50% once complete and operational.
13. The review also considers wider actions committed to in the original plan and records significant progress and where further actions should be targeted.
14. Considerable progress is particularly noted in relation to the management of waste, flood risk, green spaces and new development. Areas requiring more development include engagement with schools and communities, biodiversity planning and in relation to the transparency, communication and reporting of progress.

### *Actions*

15. The review has identified that the direction of travel set out in 2021 remains broadly the correct one with many of the objectives still relevant, appropriate and sufficiently challenging. Inevitably there are some amendments in order to prioritise resources where maximum benefit can be achieved.
16. The review therefore concludes with setting out the actions to be taken over the next 3 years to achieve the vision and corporate commitments. The table above shows where further targeted action would be required with particular attention on work with school and young people (community leadership theme) which was a key part of the original plan.
17. It is recommended that there is a reduced range of actions with those remaining to be more targeted and focused to make an efficient use of the resource available. The review therefore reports on what is going to be taken forward, but to focus on the priority actions over the next three years.

## Annual Review

18. The plan will continue to be kept under review with an annual progress report submitted every autumn in addition to scrutiny by the Residents' Services Select Committee. This allows the actions to be revised and added to as and when appropriate.

## Financial Implications

19. The approach adopted by the council is to embed carbon management within business as usual operations. This avoids a costly 'bolt on' solution to work already being undertaken. The targeted actions over the next three years are intended to reflect current workstreams and objectives in line with the Council Strategy; all in line with current budgets. Council Resources along with external funding, for example through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and Section 106 funds, will be accessed to deliver projects that are deemed to result in meaningful outputs.

20. Below is a breakdown of the Investment in Carbon Initiatives to date and funding yet to be allocated.

### Investment in Carbon Initiatives to date

Programme	Project	Total Project Budget £000	S106 Funding £000	PSDS Funding £000	Council Resources Funding £000
Carbon Initiative Programme	Carbon Initiatives Programme - Park Lodge Solar Farm	565	0	0	565
Carbon Initiative Programme	Carbon Initiatives Programme - Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Civic Centre Winston Churchill Hall Highgrove Leisure Centre Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Centre	19,542	2,263	13,750	3,529
Carbon Initiative Programme	Carbon Initiatives Programme - London Environment Directors Network	80			80
Corporate Property of Works	Grainges, Cedars and Blyth Road Car Parks - installation of Cummulite Emergency Lighting Systems	762	281		481

Civic Centre Transformation	Mezzanine. Basement and Members Car Parks - installation of Cummulite Emergency Lighting Systems	566			566
Civic Centre Transformation	Installation of Commulite emergency lighting system at the Civic Centre Service tunnels below the building	86			86
Carbon Offset Officer	Carbon Offset Officer	59	59		
<b>Total</b>		<b>21,660</b>	<b>2,603</b>	<b>13,750</b>	<b>5,307</b>

### Budget Allocated for Carbon Initiatives yet to be identified and developed

Programme	Project	Total Project Budget £000	S106 Funding £000	PSDS Funding £000	Council Resources Funding £000
Section 106 carbon reduction	Programmes to be developed	4,400	4,400		
Carbon Initiative Programme	Carbon Initiatives unallocated Programmes to be developed	4,813			4,813
<b>Total</b>		<b>9,213</b>	<b>4,400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,813</b>

21. To date £21,660k has been invested in carbon Initiative schemes. Currently the council holds £4,400k unallocated Section 106 carbon reduction funds along with £4,813k of council resources that can be drawn down against and used towards schemes that will enable to deliver the strategic climate action plan.

## RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

### The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

22. The climate action strategy is the basis for borough improvements in several areas. Residents and communities will benefit from a clear picture of how the council is responding to the climate emergency. All actions are intended to respond to the climate emergency which is recognised to have major impacts on residents. In addition, targeted carbon reduction action will result in long term savings through a reduction in energy demand or through income generation from renewable energy supplies.

23. Following the consultation (see below) the proposed adopted version has been strengthened to provide greater community facing action for 2025/26. The review recognises that further work is required in relation to community leadership key theme although accepting the challenges facing the local authority in delivering. However, following the consultation feedback and discussions with Hillingdon Friends of the Earth,

the proposed adopted version rationalises the previous scope of activity into a more focussed list of actions that will benefit residents.

### **Consultation & Engagement carried out (or required)**

24. A full public consultation was carried out from 11 November 2024 until 12 January 2025 in accordance with the approved Consultation Strategy.

#### *Hillingdon Friends of the Earth*

25. Hillingdon Friends of the Earth (FOE) are a valued partner in developing climate action. They have been regularly engaged since 2024 on a range of issues, principally relating to the council strategy objective of a 'green and sustainable borough'.

26. Hillingdon FOE provided a detailed and comprehensive response which is attached in the supporting papers.

27. The response supports the progress made and recognises the good work undertaken to date. It also identifies the areas for improvement, particularly relating to the community leadership theme. A large part of the commentary relates to more specific details that will emerge through the development of the supporting action plans identified in the Plan and carried through to this review.

28. Specific to this review, the Hillingdon FOE response has resulted in the addition of text in relation to the impacts of climate change, minor amendments elsewhere and further actions at R1.6 and R1.7 relating to community leadership. A large focus of the response relates to details which officers consider are suitably addressed at a broad level in the review but will need to be considered as plans for implementation are developed further. Officers meet monthly with Hillingdon FOE who continue to provide valuable insight into climate action. Officers will continue to liaise with Hillingdon FOE as the detailed climate action work is developed further.

#### *Survey Responses*

29. There were 33 responses to the survey. Climate change continues to be a divisive topic with responders equally critical of the council not being progressive enough whilst others believing more should be done.

30. The relevant responses related to specific climate action details that sit at the operational state at the level below the strategy. Nonetheless, these provide an understanding of the priorities for residents and will be reflected in ongoing discussions as the detailed actions develop.

31. The relevant matters are set out in the table below:

Topic	Addressed in the Plan
<b>Community</b>	
More information for residents on energy efficiency measures	R1.1, R1.2, R1.3, R1.4, R1.5, R1.7, R9.2, R9.3
Clearer understanding of the Climate Action being done for communities	
More information on climate change	
More information requested in relation to solar panels and where to get funding assistance	
More education for young people	
<b>Transport</b>	
Greater north/south public transport links particularly to Hillingdon Hospital	R8.1, R8.2
More electric vehicle charging points	R8.6
Improve cycling infrastructure including facilities	R8.3, R8.4, R8.5
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Provide better accommodation for biodiversity in the public realm	R7.2, R7.4, R7.5
More biodiversity improvements particular in urban areas	
Tree planting needs to be more coherent	
Less mowing and more natural spaces including tiny forests (link: <a href="#">what are tiny forests</a> )	
<b>Air Quality</b>	
More action on idling vehicles	Air Quality Action
<b>Waste Management</b>	
More recycling at kerbside	R5.4, R5.5
Promote repair and less disposal	
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
Dimming of streetlights	R2.6
More solar panels	R2.4
More rain gardens	R6.3, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
Improvements to Council housing	R2.3

## CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

### Corporate Finance

Corporate finance have reviewed this report and concur with the financial Implications set out above, noting the recommendation to adopt the strategic climate action plan review for 2025-2028 to continue addressing the climate emergency.

Furthermore, it is noted that the actions outlined in the review are in line with business-as-usual approaches to tackle climate action, with additional funding from external sources such as section 106 funds and the public sector decarbonisation scheme (PSDS). The targeted actions over the next three years are intended to reflect current workstreams and objectives in line with the council strategy, all within current budgets.

The council has invested £21.66m in carbon Initiative schemes to date, with £4.4m unallocated section 106 carbon reduction funds and £4.813m of council resources available for future schemes. This funding strategy ensures that the council can continue to deliver meaningful outputs and progress towards its carbon neutral target.

## Legal

The climate change Act 2008 provides the legal framework to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and thereby enable the UK to adapt to climate change. The council plays a pivotal role in meeting the government's net zero strategy to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions through its strategic climate action plan ("the Plan") that was adopted in 2021.

In order to ensure that the plan remains relevant and in line with emerging climate change data, and legal and policy updates, the council should review the plan every three to five years. The council reviewed the plan in 2024, and following a public consultation on the plan, it was updated accordingly. The reviewed plan is therefore necessary for the council to continue delivering effective carbon initiative schemes in the council's area.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Select Committee minutes – 27 November 2024](#)