

Introduction

The Final Report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate looked at climate related risks, sources of greenhouse gases in the area and the ability of residents and businesses to respond. It made 58 recommendations to set the area on a pathway to net zero emissions and to prepare for climate change impacts. It complements the work of organisations on their own strategies and action plans. The Commission highlighted that significant reductions in emissions were needed early over the next ten years to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases collecting in the atmosphere.

The 58 recommendations of the Commission set out a wide range of actions covering multiple organisations, individual organisations and businesses (as well as residents). Collectively, there has been thousands of individual decisions taken over the last few years on investment, upgrades or repairs in mitigating and adapting to climate change. We cannot tackle climate change alone or independently and in response to the Independent Commission's recommendations, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority made a commitment to focus on identifying and supporting strategic priorities and collaborative action, where more can be achieved working together or particular gaps addressed.

What principles apply to determine the actions in this plan?

- Is the action establishing the crucial building blocks to support the whole range of recommendations?
- Is the action bigger than any one organisation to scope and/or deliver?
- Does the action directly cut carbon emissions or improve nature?
- Can the action deliver adaptation benefits in addition to carbon emissions or nature improvement, with 'no regret' investment?
- Will the action have a strategic impact to make best use of the resources we have, including tackling economic, social and health inequalities?

What this plan isn't?

- This plan will not cover the climate commitments of individual organisations, we will assume actions under their direct control will be delivered. For example, the role Local Planning Authorities have in setting the climate policies for new built development or improving their own organisation estates. However, we will seek co-ordination and a collaborative approach where appropriate, to maximise our impact.
- It does not include actions which are reliant on further government policy after 2025, such as exploring hydrogen-based option for homes.

The Climate Action Plan will be updated by March 2025 to cover a further 3 years and will support what has been achieved so far, using our evidence based approaches to tackle the areas where we can have the greatest impact and protecting the most vulnerable to climate change. This plan will also build on the success of the Summit in November 2023.

What has the plan achieved so far?

We are far from being where we need to be to tackle climate change or meet the ambitions of the Independent Commission. However, a lot of work has been done by organisations and residents alike across the area that must be acknowledged.

REDUCING INEQUALITIES

Over 620 upgrades to homes across the area to improve insulation and move to low carbon heating through over £7Million of Government Grants, supporting those on low incomes.

Procurement framework for grant funded and able to pay market for energy efficiency work on homes, providing the assurance to residents across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough that the contractors have been checked that they have the relevant expertise and qualifications.

Through collaboration, securing £403K from Government to build capacity for implementing electric vehicle charging infrastructure, with an indicative allocation of £5.3m for more public sites for when home charging isn't an option (a detailed application is to be developed during 2024/25).

Commission work to understand the fitness of the innovation ecosystem across the region to support the emerging net zero-aligned agritech and nascent clean-tech sectors.

HEALTH AND SKILLS

Adoption of a Green Plan by NHS ICS to drive climate action in the NHS and associated services / businesses.

Provision of training and skills development across the area, with a specific focus on skilling the market for retrofit and Electric Vehicle maintenance and identifying what we need for the future £XXM investment in Nature schemes to improve local access to nature and greenspace.

CLIMATE AND NATURE

£1M fund for nature based solutions that will lead to financially self-sustaining projects that recover nature, promoting health and well being and support mitigation of or adaptation to climate change.

Collaboration across the area to support the delivery of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by March 2025.

£1.5m funding for local demonstration projects on biodiversity and chalk streams to show how different benefits can be combined, providing the catalyst for potential further investment.

Development of a record of potential Biodiversity Net Gain sites; to support the delivery of sustainable land use.

INNOVATION

Introduction of a Business Advice Support service in January 2024 to support local businesses on decarbonisation and climate friendly technologies.

£5.3M Investment in a Solar Park to power waste vehicles in South Cambridgeshire to move away from fossil fuels.

Investing resources in Fenland Soil to work with farmers to update our understanding of soils of the Fens and support the agricultural sectors to shift to sustainable farming practices or restore land

Supporting growth of cleantech businesses and innovation.

After successfully securing Innovate UK Pathfinder Places funding the Peterborough Accelerated Net Zero (PANZ) project will initially accelerate delivery of Peterborough's Local Area Energy Plan through the development of invest-ready net zero delivery plans tailored to specific community needs.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Local Area Energy Plan adopted in Peterborough and one underway in Cambridgeshire for completion in 2025 to ensure our energy systems generate and deliver renewable energy.

Adopted the Local Transport Connectivity Plan for the area that supports active travel and passenger transport, with a target for reducing the number of miles driven.

Support existing partnerships and plans to deliver water efficiency, supply and storage.

Our partners are improving our flood resilience and helping local communities take action.

Investment in electric public transport, including EV capable depots along with the delivery of 30 Electric Buses, and 11 more funded through University of Cambridge.

FINANCE

Exploring climate opportunities from a further Devolution Deal with Government to maximise investment opportunities.

Utilise the output of Infrastructure Delivery Framework Project to inform investment requirements for the area.

Support maximising take-up of available grants and support across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Resourcing the plan?

Actions are needed across many different sectors, and the role of other thematic partnerships is set out in this action plan, many of which have influence over funding that needs to also support climate objectives. The Commission was clear that everyone needs to take action on climate change, which ultimately means making best use of the £26bn annual economic value of the local economy. All organisations need to understand the importance that all of its spend is undertaken with an understanding of the context of tackling climate change.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority has convened work on this Climate Action Plan and has a key role in supporting the collaborative work. With the elected Mayor and Board, it brings together local government, with its constituent partners the local authorities and includes the Business Board. The Combined Authority has already identified £9.5m of new spend on specific climate projects for the period to March 2025 supported by £1.4m of revenue spend (the projects are included in this action plan). Additional activity will be identified later in the year when the local transport and economic delivery plans are finalised.

Affordability

Many residents and businesses want to make a difference and are making changes where they can. However, the current economic circumstances, with the sharp rise in energy costs and inflation, will restrict what some can do. Although these factors are outside the control of this action plan, delivering on the actions can have a positive impact. For example, energy efficiency improvements reduce energy costs, and this action plan sets out how energy retrofits for homes can be supported. For businesses the rise in materials costs has to be managed, supporting the actions around reduction in waste and promoting a circular economy. Some of the projects funded in this action plan are helping businesses to build capacity in new green markets, which will reduce costs over time. The Commission's initial report helpfully includes a guide for residents on what practical changes they can make and many of these are about changing how things are done and don't involve additional spend. <link to chapter>. Progress on the delivery of the action plan has been monitored and reported to ensure collaborative and individuals are supported in order to respond to the climate challenges.

Managing Climate risk for our communities and adapting to climate change

Mitigation and adaptation go hand in hand. One is cutting carbon emissions to reduce long term impacts of climate change and the other is ensuring our communities are resilient to the climate impacts we are currently experiencing. Adaptation also means taking advantage of new opportunities, such as supporting the green economy. Many actions in the climate action plan can achieve both mitigation and adaptation benefits and these should be actively pursued. Every action needs to think about consequences across the area to avoid creating future issues, with no regret investment. Even with mitigation of future emissions, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough needs to adapt to the climate changes already happening as a result of past emissions.

[Third National Adaptation Programme \(NAP3\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-adaptation-programme-3)

The Combined Authority Refreshed Corporate Strategy 2023-2025

The Combined Authority refreshed its Corporate Strategy in January 2024 and this sets the important 'Golden Thread' that links that links together corporate priorities with operational activity, including this Climate Action Plan. Ther Strategic Vision is to have:

'A prosperous and sustainable Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Driven by our values and using our collective voice and strengths, we seek inclusive good growth for an equitable, resilient, healthier, and connected region. Driven by our values and using our collective voice and strengths, we seek inclusive good growth for an equitable, resilient, healthier, and connected region.'

These are the Combined Authorities Strategic Objectives to achieve this vision:

- Achieving good growth
- Ambitious skills and employment opportunities
- Enabling resilient communities
- Improving connectivity
- Achieving Best Value and High Performance

What CPCA is doing in 2023-25 to help meet the Strategic vision in this Climate Action Plan

- Supporting sustainable agriculture in the Fens and elsewhere.
- Supporting Fenland Soil, which brings together local farmers and academics to address the sustainable farming and climate impacts of peat soil.

- Piloting work to address how climate change is impacting the condition of the region's roads in the Fens and other affected areas.
- Developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy to improve biodiversity as part of our Doubling Nature Vision.
- Developing a Local Area Energy Plan for Cambridgeshire to support power and water sufficiency, improve the resilience of infrastructure and address road safety.
- Retrofitting homes, care homes and village halls to address health inequalities and reduce carbon emissions.
- Supporting businesses with the transition to a low carbon economy and net-zero agenda.
- Hosting the Greater South East Net Zero Hub and supporting the delivery of the Local Net Zero Programme 2022-2025, including public sector estate decarbonisation, strategic projects, toolkit development, community projects and knowledge sharing.
- Co-hosted a groundbreaking regional Climate Summit, 'Sustainable Solutions – Uniting for a Greener Future,' with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Climate Partnership. Attended by approximately 100 politicians, thought leaders and business representatives, the event proved to be a pivotal moment for fostering collective understanding and commitment toward a more sustainable future.

Actions in this climate action plan make progress on these outcomes through to 2025. Some topics will need to be considered over a longer period (for example national projects are testing the future role of hydrogen).

What does success look like?:

- Reduced total annual net CO2 emissions to under 5000 ktCO2.
- Reduced the number of households in fuel poverty.
- Increased the proportion of land classed as nature rich.
- First investments will be completed via the Business Growth Fund to businesses adopting carbon reduction measures or delivering clean-tech products to the market.
- Decarbonisation advice and support being delivered to businesses.
- Reduced the total number of car miles driven in the region.
- Increased the proportion of journeys taken by public transport (including buses and trains), cycling and walking.

The following actions have been developed in line with the themes of the Commission's report. The type of action is also identified:



Building block projects - things that need to happen to enable adaptation and mitigation, such as electric vehicle charging points



Finance model – making sure there are ways to invest in climate change actions



Community action – helping communities take action











Direct Emissions reductions – actions that directly themselves reduce the emission of greenhouse gases



















Nature based solutions – using our natural environment to take climate action







We have also identified who is the Lead of the action and if they are:





- Delivering the action and ensuring the action is resourced and relevant partners are engaged
- Enabling by supporting the action within our partners, business or communities
- Influencing using the networks, partnerships and lobbying power to help the area get to the desired outcome

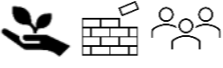





Theme	Strategic Actions		Progress to date	Lead body	Role of lead delivery body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering • Enabling • Influencing
Sustainable Finance	1. By March 2025, identify sustainable financing opportunities. Use output of Infrastructure Delivery Framework Project to inform investment requirements for the area.		Innovate UK funded project identified financial flows in CPCA area.	CPCA	Influencing
	2. Keep under review the potential for an investment scheme that channels local businesses purchase of carbon credits into CPCA area schemes.		Carbon credits market has not evolved sufficiently for such a fund and alternative investment options need to be reviewed	CPCA	Influencing
	3. By March 2025 collectively build local capacity and capability to assemble suitable projects ready for these opportunities, building up project pipelines.		Through Climate Action Plan support, some capacity has been developed in Nature and land use. However, we don't currently have a portfolio of climate projects investment ready. CPCA fund is being made available for Local Authorities to develop project concepts to business case level.	CPCA	Enabling
Engagement	1. Refreshed engagement plan and delivery during 2024, including increased opportunities for engagement with community stakeholders and joint communication opportunities. Examples are annual COP input along with specific Climate website that can aggregate information for residents and business as well as public sector and other stakeholders.	 	The Engagement Plan has been approved and will be refreshed during 2024. Funding for a joint website has been agreed that can aggregate information for residents and business as well as public sector and other stakeholders.	CPCA	Delivering
	2. Deliver small scale community projects to build local momentum and awareness by 2025.	  		CPCA	Delivering

	3. Ongoing – Developing shared policy positions where appropriate on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough climate and environment issues to influence public policy and identify funding opportunities with relevant stakeholders. The co-dependencies the CPCA Climate Action Plan across the key achievements to be identified and built into the Public Affairs work.		An Environment and Sustainability Community Committee has been established at the CPCA and the new policy team will support shared policy positions.	CPCA	Influencing
Energy	1. By March 2025 deliver a Local Area Energy Plan for Cambridgeshire, which is aligned with Peterborough’s Plan. Develop infrastructure investment programmes for spatially mapped projects and commence delivery of key projects to support decarbonisation at pace.		Peterborough City Council have completed their LAEP and are now in delivery. Cambridgeshire County Council is currently developing their plan and to be completed by 2025.	Peterborough City Council Cambridgeshire County Council	Delivering Delivering
Buildings	1. Immediate - target government decarbonisation scheme, private funding, and other competitions to support retrofits (focusing on low income/vulnerable homes and public buildings).		STATS HERE	Cambridgeshire Retrofit Partnership Peterborough City Council	Delivering Delivering
	2. In 2024/25 maximise take up of the procurement framework and able to pay market.		Cambridgeshire Energy Retrofit Partnership launched the framework with 5 contractors in June 2023 for both grant funded work and ‘able to pay market’ in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	Cambridgeshire Retrofit Partnership	Delivering
	3. In 2024/25 continue to help residents and businesses to access for low carbon technologies.		A programme to encourage the able to pay market has been running and also supported by government grants STATS HERE	Cambridgeshire Retrofit Partnership Peterborough City Council	Influencing Influencing
	4. During 2024, deliver care home retrofit programme.			CPCA	Delivering
	5. Address the barriers and boost market capacity through skills training to increase building retrofit in the area.		A Supply Chain report has been completed by SENZH to identify opportunities in current and future Domestic Energy Efficiency Supply Chain markets	SENZH, CPCA	Influencing
	6. Maximising the opportunities of retrofit by mapping the roles and responsibilities for the area.		Collaboration between organisations across the area and SENZH.	CPCA	Delivering

Transport	1. Implement LTCP in 2024 to support active travel and passenger transport, reducing the number of miles driven and agree key delivery plans including the adoption of supporting area-based strategies.		The LTCP was approved on 29 November 2023. It sets out a vision and goals for how transport supports a better future and describes the projects needed to make that new future possible. This includes things like better buses, more train services, less pollution and carbon emissions, and helping more people to cycle and walk.	CPCA	Delivering
	2. Implement Alternative Fuel Strategy.		The Alternative Fuel Strategy was approved in March 2022 and is now in the delivery phase. An EV Infrastructure Working Group has been set up to establish an agreed approach to delivery of a public EV Charging Network across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and a route to market. Officers appointed to drive this forward with £400K funding from government to support the roll out.	CPCA	Delivering
	3. Develop bids for additional Electric Bus provision across the area and infrastructure required to support these.		£5M invested in 30 Electric buses launched in May 2023, replacing 10% of the bus fleet,	CPCA	Delivering
	4. Implement a process to 'design down carbon' across all major highway construction schemes supported by the CPCA.		The Carbon Management Plan reported completed that sets out what needs to be included for any funding business case.	CPCA, CCC and PCC Highways Authority	Influencing
Business & Commercial	1. Provide Net Zero and Climate advice to local SMEs as part of the Carbon Advisory Service.		Local Economic Strategy was produced in June 2022 that included Climate Change and Nature as part of the Capital of the area. Business advice support service was brought in house at CPCA in January 2024 and will include a Net Zero Advisor to support Local Businesses.	CPCA	Delivering
	2. Investigate potential for low carbon clusters in the area by March 2025.		Innovate UK bid on low carbon industrial clusters was developed and we are exploring whether it can be taken forward locally. The Economic Growth Strategy was approved in June 2022 sets priorities to support Green Manufacturing in the area.	Cambridgeshire County Council	Enabling
	3. By September 2024 mapping the cleantech sector companies by the government definition to understand baseline, create a database, to identify strengths in the subsectors; to target investment and measure progress against low carbon growth/jobs to provide opportunities.		The project to map the cleantech sector for the area is funded by the CPCA and is currently underway.	Cambridge Clean Tech	Enabling
Nature	1. By March 2025 to have developed a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.		LRNS development resourced through CPCA funding. The Governance was agreed at the 12 June 2023 Environment and Sustainable Community Committee. Natural Cambridgeshire continue to support LRNS with the first draft due by June 2024 and final adoption by March 2025.	Cambridgeshire County Council (On behalf of CPCA)	Delivering

	2. Through 2024, continue to develop and grow a fund for nature-based solutions through a 'Fund for Nature and the Environment' to attract more private sector investment.		Three landscape projects as part of the £1M funds available for nature projects are currently in progress. Nature fund currently being delivered with a further call in 2024.	Natural Cambridgeshire	Delivering
	3. Ensure we have an effective BNG system for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that maximises outcomes.		Local planning authorities have put in place BNG guidance. Local planning authorities have recruited new/additional ecologist roles. Natural Cambridgeshire, with WT BCN leading, is developing an interactive BNG Opportunities platform to assist delivery. Advice currently being provided through the BNG register on sustainable land use. There is a fund for biodiversity work and there is a strong focus on adaptation, climate risk and impact on climate change.	Planning Authorities	Delivering
	4. Keep under review opportunities for climate outcomes related to public open space.		Rebranded to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Parks Partnership (CP3). The Steering group considering future of CP3 given funding constraints.	Future Parks	Delivering
Soils & Peat	1. Increase the area mapped of peatland assets.		Fenland SOIL set up as an organisation to identify assets, farming practices and advise on peat issues. Three Internal Drainage Board Districts (approx 10% of The Fens) mapping with report available in July 2023. Further funding received from Defra Palludiculture Exploration Fund will extend to a further 4 IDBs, taking coverage of the Fens to 25%. Funding is still needed to role this out across the rest of the Fens.	Fenland Soil	Delivering
	2. Immediate -identify operating costs/impacts to shift farming practice to sustainable farming practice.		Project commissioned Andersons Consultants to examine raising of water tables and identify the costs to changed farming practices to minimise GHG emissions in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. Project will help inform farming practice, restoration of peatland and identify cost. Report has Report to be signed off in December 2023 and the Fenland SOIL response will focus on getting Defra support for a focused 'pathway' of support to take options for practical change forward.	Fenland Soil	Delivering
	3. Immediate - demonstrate practical projects working with landowners on restoration		Fenland SOIL and the Fens Partnership administered by Lincs Wildlife Trust both received Defra funding from the Discover Grant to identify sites to restore peatland it to its natural state. These are Pan-Fens projects which include Lincolnshire and West Norfolk. This work will demonstrate some of what is practical and possibly what is not practical.	Fenland Soil	Delivering

			Fenland SOIL is also a part of Defra's Lowland Peat 3 project extending the GHG emissions monitoring from different systems.		
Water	1. Support existing partnerships and plans to deliver water efficiency, supply, storage and manage flood risk including Future Fens Integrated Adaptation Plan, and Future Fens Project. Ensure strategies by agencies and stakeholders are aligned and complementary.		<p>Regional Water Resources Plan approved and published December 2023. The Regional Plan set out the strategic approach to public water supply and relevant infrastructure. One reservoir location has been identified in Cambridgeshire; with a discussion about how to maximise wider benefits.</p> <p>Chalk Streams Environment project funding agreed by CPCA Board in Nov 2022.</p> <p>Funding for Future Fens Adaption Plan agreed.</p>	Water Resources East	Delivering
	2. Ongoing- update/include policies in local plans that actively tackle water issues;		Fenland & Greater Cambridge local plans currently under review. Government to introduce mandatory requirement for sustainable urban storm drainage systems, anticipated 2024. Public consultation expected later 2023.	Local Planning authority	Influencing
	3. Immediate - Collaborate on land management changes and understanding of what we plan for in terms of flood defences for the future.		<p>Future Fens Great Ouse Baseline study completed. Fen2100+ project to develop a Strategy and investment programme by 2026/27.</p> <p>CCC commissioned a project to identify flood risk and land management with the report due December 2023. Site visits to all 16 towns and villages, analysis of flood risk, review of existing information, gap analysis. Stakeholder Workshop 14 December workshop to gather information from all water boards to understand about flood risk and complement each other works. Concept solutions for 11 locations.</p>	Environment Agency	Influencing
	4. By March 2025, review pilot projects for innovative and nature-based solutions for flood/water management		<p>CCC partnership with Anglia Water (joint funded) to manage surface water and manage biodiversity in March. The construction will be delayed and the designs should be finalised. This is a pilot to measure if it can be replicated. (£1.5m).</p> <p>Defra funding to implement for natural flood management £725K application – results in Spring.</p> <p>CPCA join funded project, CCC, Connecting Cambridgeshire & HDC the internet of things to work out water levels to make it more available. Install 30 devices and open data platform. Water level telemetry and Internet of Things.</p>	CCC/PCC and Anglian Water	Influencing

			Natural Cambridgeshire convened a meeting with OFWAT, Defra, the EA, water companies and NFU to address short-medium issues on water scarcity.		
Waste	1. Immediate - Informing and enabling our communities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste through the facilitated development of circular waste economies with the aim of reducing the emissions from the collection, treatment and disposal of waste.		Government plans to implement the changes to the national collections have been delayed until 2026. Ahead of this the Strategy will be updated and modernised. EPR is coming in which will reduce tonnage of dry recycling and residual waste. Implementation of food waste collections is planned in March 2026. It is predicted this measure should reduce food wastage and increase tonnages collected for processing, moving waste up the hierarchy.	RECAP	Delivering
	2. Ongoing - Within the priorities of individual authorities, funding and contracts, move toward low carbon (electric, biofuels etc) waste vehicles to cut transport emissions from waste. This includes investigating RECAP wide tender opportunities for low carbon diesel alternative fuels building on the pilot projects at Waterbeach and Peterborough Highways.		RECAP currently engaged with SENZH and getting support through their Big Engine Decarbonisation Information Exchange to look at options for alternative fuel and decarbonisation. A workshop to be organised across service areas to share learning and experience on HVO, electrified and other low carbon fleet.	RECAP	Delivering
Evaluation and Monitoring/ Research	1. Undertake full review of Climate Action Plan by March 2025. To include risk based analysis of delivery of CPICC recommendations/net zero targets.		The 2024 refresh looks to link actions to the CPCA Midterm Financial Plan. Innovate UK Funding secured to develop a process for Locally Determined Contributions for the area.	CPCA	Delivering
	2. By March 2025 CPICC Undertake deep dives into different sectors e.g. supply chain maturity for retrofits or economic benefit to low carbon living			CPCA	Delivering
	3. By March 2025, identify and quantify the key climate risks that will affect the region and develop a strategic adaption response to manage those risks.		CPCA has approved the funding to carry out a collaboration across CPCA public sector bodies. A scoping workshop was held in July 2023.	CPCA	Delivering
	4. Ongoing - Monitor, evaluate, and review this Action Plan, with an annual update by each March.		The Action Plan is reported every quarter to members and actions refreshed annually by March.	CPCA	Delivering