

# Our Climate Commitment





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Fallen tree in West Park following Storm Ciara, 2020

## Foreword

Climate change endangers our planet, our nation and our city.

It's an important and growing priority for all Wulfrunians but especially our younger generations who are key to the future success of our city. They've told us that climate change is the single biggest issue for them. It's time our city listens, learns and acts.

It's because of our city's future generations that we have made Our Climate Commitments. In it we set out how we will deliver our commitment to make the City of Wolverhampton Council carbon-neutral by 2028 and deliver upon the promises we made when we declared a climate emergency at Full Council in 2019.

We are also committed to leading a whole-city approach and to work with a wide range of partners across the city to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of our city and the future generations that will inherit it.



**Tim Johnson**  
Chief Executive



**Councillor Ian Brookfield**  
Leader of the Council

# Climate Change: The Facts

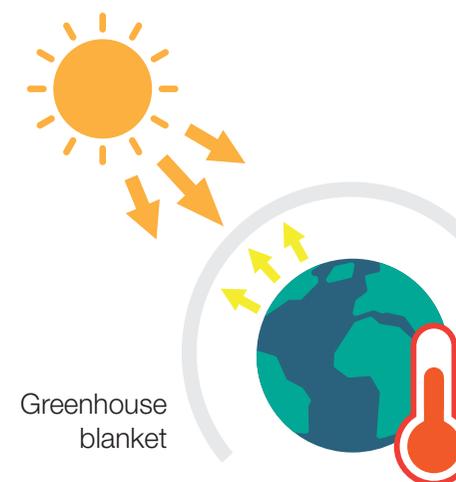
- Carbon is an important element found across the world
- It is stored in many forms e.g. coal, wood, plastics, oil, etc.
- When released into the atmosphere it takes the form of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)
- This CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases traps heat acting as a greenhouse blanket around the Earth
- The average global temperature has risen 0.85°C over the last 100 years
- This warming effect on the world is changing the Earth's climate at a much quicker rate than would naturally occur

## Definitions

**Carbon emissions** – the release of stored carbon into the atmosphere

**Greenhouse gas emissions** – all gases that have a warming effect when released into the Earth's atmosphere e.g. methane, carbon dioxide

**Carbon footprint** – greenhouse gas emissions that a person or organisation is responsible for releasing into the atmosphere



The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change made the Paris Agreement in 2015 committing the global community to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.

It warns that global warming of 2°C would increase risks to health, food security, water supply and economic growth.

**Therefore, it recommends that 1.5°C is a realistic target for avoiding the worst extremes of Climate Change.**

For more information on Climate Change [go here](#).

### 1.5° vs 2.0°

The difference between 1.5° and 2° seems slight on paper. However, the repercussions will be great:



	<b>If a warming of only 1.5° is kept there will be:</b>	<b>If warming continues to 2° the risks are:</b>
<b>Flood risk</b>	<b>100% increase</b>	<b>170% increase</b>
<b>Severe drought</b>	<b>350 million urban residents</b> exposed by 2100	<b>410 million urban residents</b> exposed by 2100
<b>Sea-levels</b>	<b>46 million people</b> impacted by sea-level rise of <b>48cm</b> by 2100	<b>49 million people</b> impacted by sea-level rise of <b>56cm</b> by 2100
<b>Oceans</b>	<b>Lower risks</b> to marine biodiversity, ecosystems and their ecological functions and services	<b>Increased risks</b> to marine biodiversity, ecosystems and their ecological functions and services
<b>Arctic Ice</b>	Ice-free summers in the Arctic at least <b>once every 100 years</b>	Ice-free summers in the Arctic at least <b>once every 10 years</b>

## National risks



Flooding from Storm Dennis on Linthouse Lane, Wolverhampton

The wider world will suffer more from the impacts of Climate Change. However, it will have a great affect on the UK as well.

### Predicted Impacts:



**£130 billion of infrastructure** is at risk of flood damage due to sea levels rising



**'1 in a 100 year' floods** will become more common and summer droughts will increase



Fuel, food and insurance **prices will go up**

Without investing in sustainability, Wolverhampton will not be a city in which our future generations can thrive.

We want our future city to have clean air, to be green and to be economically prosperous without harming our environment. Only by investing in sustainability can this goal be achieved.

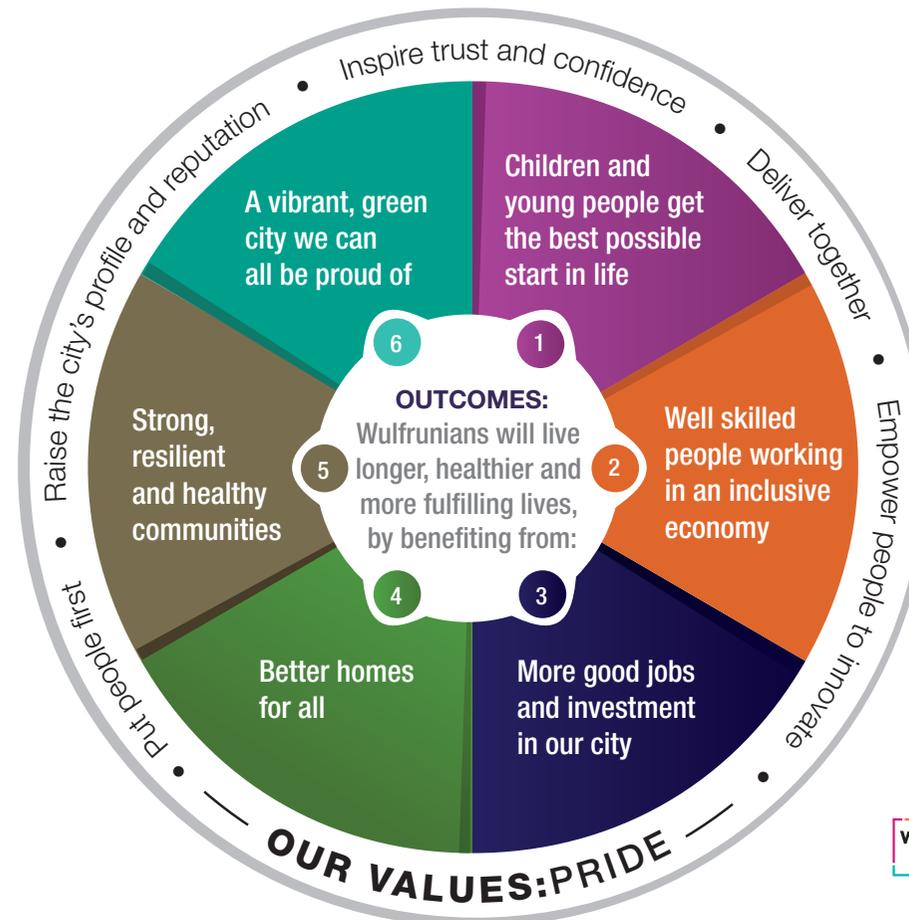
## Sustainability in the city

One of our key priorities is to make Wolverhampton *“a vibrant, green city that we can all be proud of.”*

In order to achieve this, the council has committed to investing heavily in sustainability within the city making it an integral part of our work.

In 2013, the Sustainability Strategy and Implementation Plan was born. This sought to further embed sustainability across the council's actions making considerable progress.

The council has addressed the challenge of Climate Change through our work over the years. There have been a series of strategies going back to the Local Agenda 21 Strategy in 1999. The latest was the Climate Local Wolverhampton Action Plan 2013-18.



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 FOR EVERYONE

# Our Climate Emergency Declaration



As demonstrated, the council has made great efforts to improve sustainability within the city and to reduce its carbon footprint over the years. However, the council recognises that even greater action is necessary to ensure a thriving city.

So, in July 2019, City of Wolverhampton Council become the first local authority in the Black Country to declare a Climate Emergency. This declaration is showcased here.

## Our Climate Emergency Declaration pledged to:

- Make all council activities net carbon zero by 2028

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- Ensure all strategic decisions and budgets are in line with shift to net carbon zero

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- Ensure robust governance is in place to embed and champion Climate Change across the council

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- Appoint a Member Champion for Climate Change

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- Work with partners across the city and region to work towards a net carbon zero future

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- Request a review of the investment strategy within the West Midlands Pension Fund to give due consideration to Climate

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- Lobby national and regional powers to secure greater resources for tackling Climate Change

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- Hold a Citizens Assembly to direct work around Climate Change, and proactively include young people in co-producing strategy and future of the city

\*Net carbon zero is where emissions are reduced as far as possible with any remaining emissions off-set in order to deliver a net result of zero emissions.

# Our Sustainable Journey

In 2013, the council launched the Sustainability Strategy and Implementation Plan. The work that was undertaken within the council has led to good progress in developing a more sustainable, climate friendly city.

**Achievements include:**

Planning policies put in place to ensure **renewable generation built into new housing developments**

2011

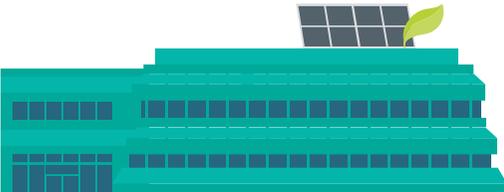


2012-13

Council launches **Sustainability Strategy and Implementation Plan** with carbon footprint of 28,500

Solar panels installed on the Civic Centre

2012



2012

Asset rationalisation undertaken across council estate

6 Mega Watts of Solar Panels built into the i54 plant

2015



2012

First of three **Passivhaus (carbon neutral) schools** built in the city



**Lowest absolute emissions of CO2**  
among Black Country Local Authorities  
2018-19  
(WMCA Sustainability)

24 km of new or improved  
**cycle path** delivered

2017



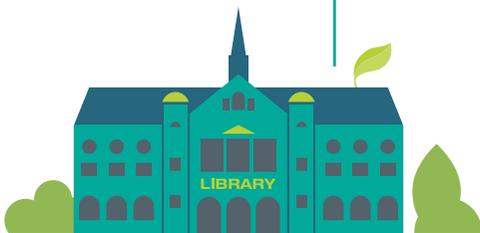
2019

**Climate change actions**  
embedded into all council  
leadership teams



All council buildings and street  
lighting within the city powered by  
**renewable electricity**

2019

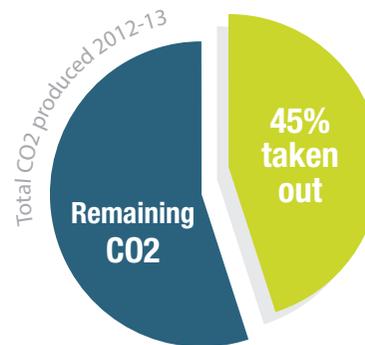


2019

**Member Champion**  
for Climate Change appointed



The council's carbon footprint  
**has reduced by 45%**  
between 2012-13 and 2018-19



2019

**6 electric vehicle charging**  
**points** have been installed with  
more planned early 2020



**16,000**  
**tCO2**

2018-19

**Council's carbon footprint**  
2018-19

# Breakdown of the council's carbon footprint

The council has committed to becoming net zero as an organisation by 2028. But it only directly contributes to **just over 1% of Wolverhampton's carbon footprint**.

However, the council can indirectly influence the 99% by driving green policies and service delivery, planning changes and by working with city partners.

### Electricity (total 8,043 tCO<sub>2</sub>)

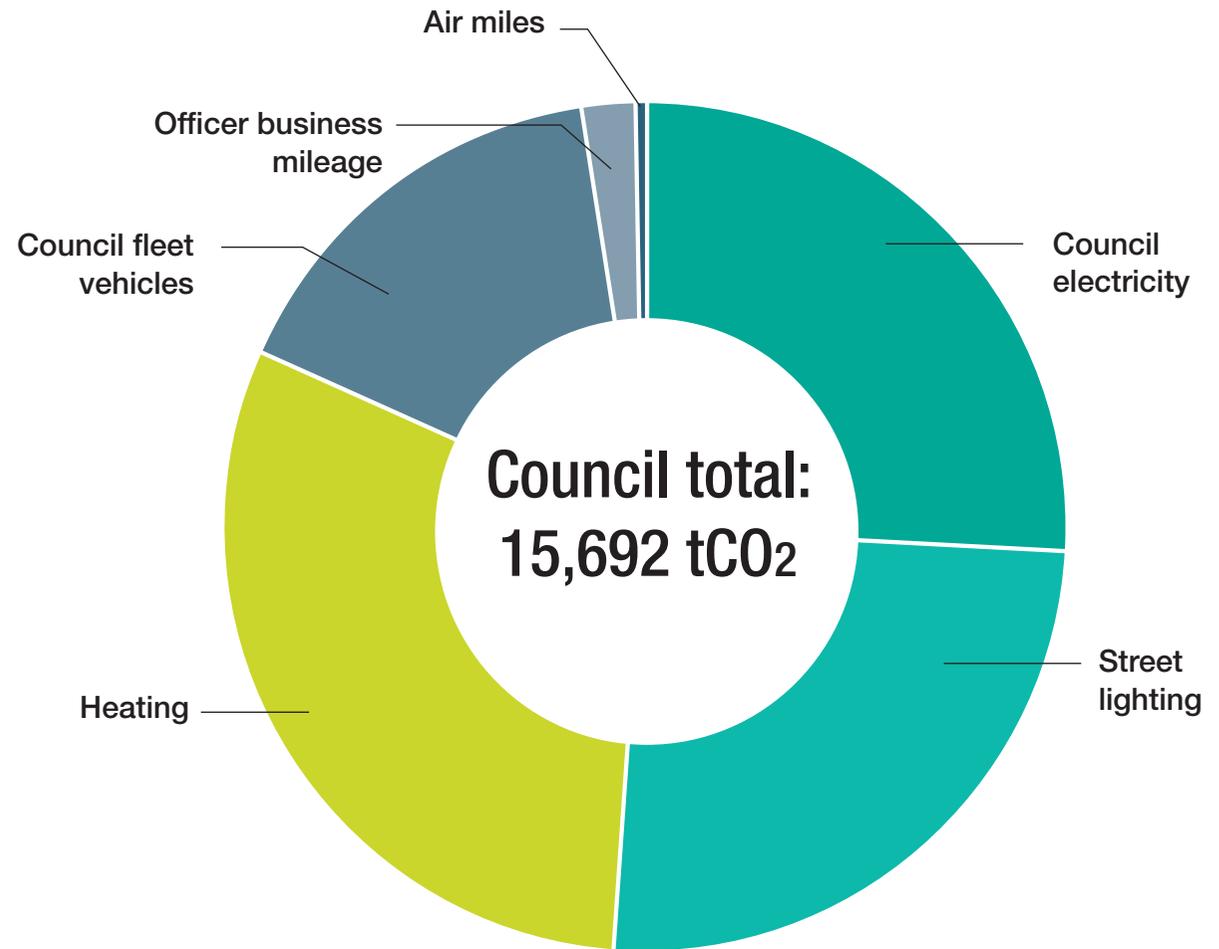
- Council: 4,089 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Street lighting: 3,954 tCO<sub>2</sub>

### Heating (total: 4,802 tCO<sub>2</sub>)

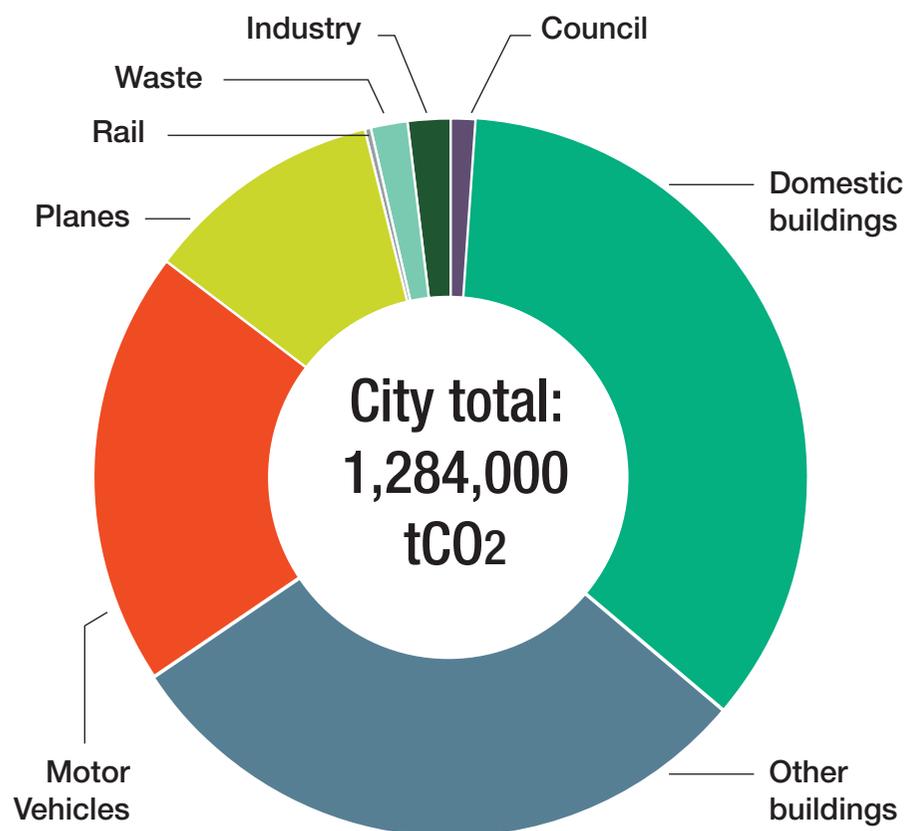
- Heating: 4,802 tCO<sub>2</sub>

### Transport (total: 2,847 tCO<sub>2</sub>)

- Council fleet: 2,470 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Employee business mileage: 371 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Air miles: 6 tCO<sub>2</sub>



## Breakdown of the city's carbon footprint



The West Midlands Combined Authority has declared that the West Midlands should be net zero by 2041 to meet the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Following public consultation, **89% of respondents** said that Wolverhampton should have a target of 2041 or sooner.

The City of Wolverhampton Council welcomes an initial Wolverhampton wide target of 2041 for the city to reach net carbon zero.

Together, working as a city, we will be able to reach this target and make Wolverhampton a greener city.

### City total (total 1,284,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>)

- Council: 16 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Domestic buildings (electricity and heating): 451 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Other buildings (electricity and heating): 381 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Motor Vehicles: 254 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Planes (residents flying): 137 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Rail: 4 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Waste: 21 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Industry: 25 tCO<sub>2</sub>
- Trees: -5 tCO<sub>2</sub>

\*Above data received from most recent update of the SCATTER Tool.  
The tool is funded by the department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy.

## Our commitments

All actions that the council is undertaking, following the declaration of a Climate Emergency, fall into three fields – Council, City and Community – each with two outcomes:

### Council

- Reducing the council's carbon emissions
- Increasing sustainability within the council

### City

- Improving support towards carbon reduction in the city
- Improving support for sustainability in the city

### Community

- Raising Environmental Awareness
- Enabling Community Action

The council's 2028 commitment will be reached by actions in the council field. Actions within all three fields are cross-cutting and will help the city become net carbon zero by 2041.



Citizen's Assembly Welcome Meeting, 3 February 2020, Wolverhampton Art Gallery



To ensure future generations of Wulfrunians live longer, healthier lives we will take immediate action, altering the way we generate energy, care for the environment and deliver services



### Reducing the council's carbon emissions

- Making the council's transport fleet ultra-low emission by 2028
- Council to use renewable energy sources to power all council buildings
- Ensure all council buildings are as energy efficient as possible

### Increasing sustainability within the council

- Improve transparency around recycling in the city
- Continue ensuring that all future corporate regeneration schemes are evidently sustainable
- Increase recycling and reduce single-use plastics across council's estate



### Improving support towards carbon reduction in the city

- Further develop electric vehicle infrastructure across the city
- Support delivery of renewable energy facilities within the city
- Further develop existing infrastructure to support energy shift
- City to be carbon neutral by 2041

### Improving support for sustainability in the city

- Deliver scheme to enable sustainable practices and carbon reduction in schools.
- Deliver SMART technology across city to reduce energy use
- Deliver scheme that encourages business to eliminate single-use plastics



### Raising environmental awareness

- Run a campaign about the risks of Climate Change and actions communities and business can take to help
- Encourage citizens to make Climate Change pledges
- Deliver a Citizens Assembly on Climate Change

### Enabling Community Action

- Develop tree planting programme within the city
- Support community groups to get funding and support to deliver 'green' projects



## Bowman's Harbour Solar Farm

Since the public consultation on the Climate Emergency, the council has made a great initial stride to reduce the city's carbon footprint.

**Clean, Green, Life-Saving Energy** will soon be provided within Wolverhampton as the council turns a contaminated, brownfield site into a green 6 megawatt powerhouse that will help power New Cross Hospital.



Artist Impression of Bowman's Harbour Solar Farm



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