

Sevenoaks District Council

Net Zero 2030

Action Report

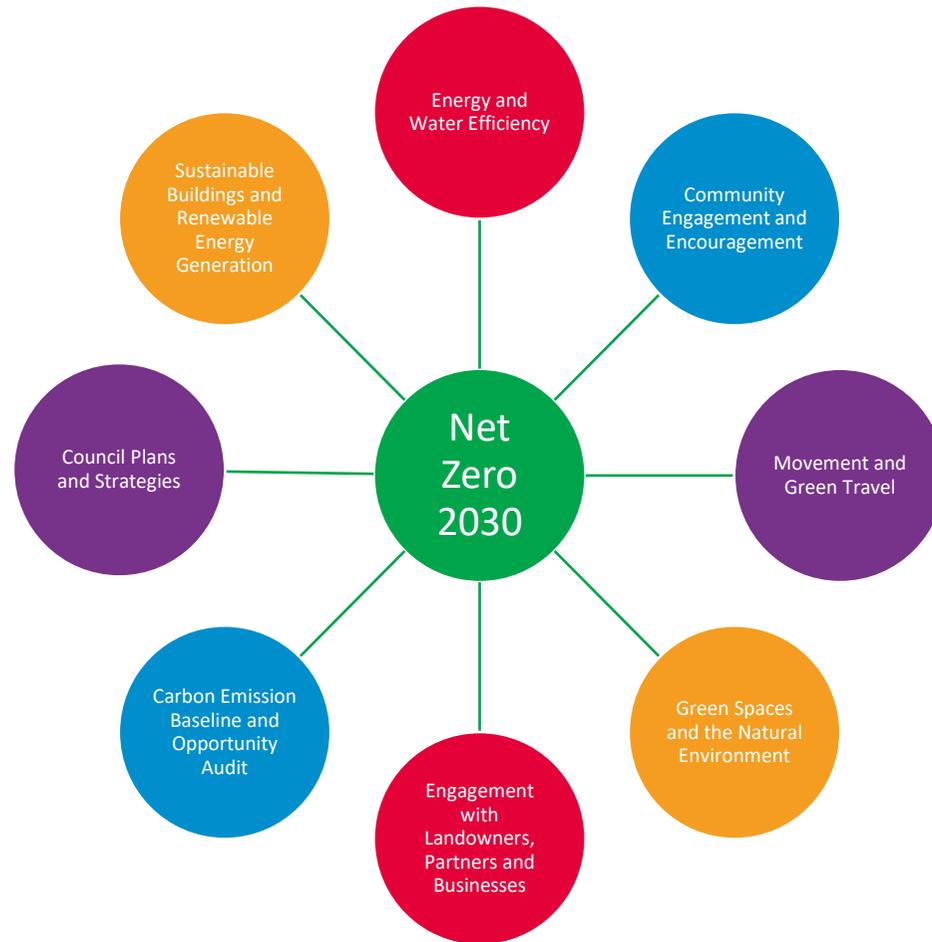
2021-22



Net Zero 2021-22 Action Report

Net Zero 2030 Actions for 2021-22 were agreed by Cabinet in February 2021. This is the final report on progress to achieve these actions up to March 2022. Evaluation of the progress was undertaken by the Net Zero Officer Working Group and the findings have been used to revise the actions for 2022-23.

For 2021-22 the actions were grouped into the following work areas relevant to the Net Zero 2030 commitment.



Energy and Water Efficiency

We are committed to increase the energy and water efficiency in Council buildings. This will also reduce the associated carbon emissions. In addition, we will aim to source the remaining energy needs from renewable and low carbon sources.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
ENG1	Increase energy efficiency in Council buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six of the 13 recommendations in the Energy Management Survey of Argyle Road offices have been fully or are partially completed. • An internal staff competition, held via Grapevine (internal newsletter) was held in September 2021 offering prizes for ideas to improve energy efficiency and to reduce waste in Council buildings. The ideas have been presented to management and then implemented as appropriate. • Energy Efficiency measures have begun to be implemented with regards to the Council's IT hardware including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Replacing old hardware with energy efficiency alternatives ○ Moving services to the cloud means and therefore reducing the requirement for hardware on premise ○ Adjusting the requirements of the remaining on premise hardware, to account for the reduced resource required including reducing the area needed for cooling • Staff have been encouraged to consider their energy usage in SDC buildings including switching off lights and appliances when not in use.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
ENG2	Explore Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund for energy efficiency improvements in the Council Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bid for Round 1 of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund was prepared and submitted; but later withdrawn following questions over long term future of Argyle Road building and match funding required. • The Council will continue to investigate potential options for funding including further rounds of the Public Sector Decarbonisation fund to support the Net Zero 2030 commitment assisted by the outcomes of the Carbon Reduction Plan work.
ENG3	Water efficiency measures in Council buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water efficiency measures have been implemented including toilet refurbishments to replace old cisterns and waterless urinals. • Staff have been encouraged to consider their water usage in SDC buildings.

Community Engagement and Encouragement

We will support businesses, residents and visitors to reduce carbon emissions across the District. We will do this through positive engagement, best practice and working with local communities.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
COM1	Create a dedicated “Net Zero” and “Climate Change” webpage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of dedicated webpages has been set up and is regularly updated www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/netzero. A link to the net zero pages has been added under “Your environment and community” which can be accessed from the “Council Services” drop down box on the homepage. • Information on these pages include details of the net zero commitment and progress, sustainable movement, home energy efficiency and ways that residents, businesses and schools can get involved to reduce their own carbon emissions. • A Net Zero 2030 Communications Plan has been developed and implemented. Net Zero 2030 regularly features on the Council’s social media posts and an InShape article was published in July 2021. • Social media posts ranged from encouraging recycling, tips on how to lower your carbon footprint, reducing food waste, making businesses more sustainable, energy efficiency as well as promoting SDC initiatives and progress.
COM2	Promote national events to support wildlife awareness and opportunities to improve biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks Wildlife Event took place in July/August 2021 in partnership with the North West Kent Countryside Partnership (NWKCP). This included releasing “making space for nature at home” videos and “Eco-trails” in SDC owned open space and woodland. The videos, released via social media and available on the Council’s YouTube channel, sought to increase resident’s awareness of local biodiversity and provide engaging DIY activities for families to do at home. The scavenger hunts

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		<p>included an eco-quiz and awarded prizes to five randomly selected residents who took part.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council promoted “Plant a tree for the Queen’s Jubilee” including planting 3 new trees on SDC land. • Residents were invited to help with the Council’s Greensands Commons project in partnership with Kent Wildlife Trust and the NWKCP “Help Hedgehogs” project.
COM3	Promote national events to support water saving initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water saving advice was published on the Council’s social media platforms to encourage water efficiency measures.
COM4	Support and promote initiatives and opportunities to reduce waste and improve levels of recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero waste week was held at the beginning of September 2021 and provided guidance and advice to residents so they can take steps to reduce their waste. This included an informative video from the Leader of the Council. • Additional information on how residents and business can recycle was promoted on social media including promoting Global Recycling Day in March 2022. • SDC Social media included features on reducing food waste including over Christmas 2021. • Solar power “smart” compacting bins have been installed across the District. The bins tell the Council when they’re full, reducing mileage and carbon emissions from wasted journeys.
COM5	Help householders and businesses improve energy efficiency by providing free advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice to increase home energy efficiency is set out on our Net Zero webpages including guidance on subsidised heating and insulation.

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	and support for energy improvements and energy saving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thermal imaging camera is offered on loan so that residents can discover where heat is escaping in their homes. • Successful delivery of Green Homes Grant (Phase LAD 1) which has seen the installation of external wall installation measure to a significant number of Park Homes. • Participating in the Kent wide 'Solar Together' scheme with KCC and iChooser to be progressed throughout 2022. • We have been successful in our application to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) Home Upgrade Grant, receiving £402,500 for the next 12 months to help tackle fuel poverty for low income families by providing energy efficiency upgrades, insulation and low-carbon heating to low-income households in the Sevenoaks District. An Energy Efficiency Projects officer has been appointed to oversee this project and work with communities to improve energy efficiency.
COM6	Hold a Green Summit in bringing together groups, organisations, companies and experts to engage and inspire residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfortunately, due to social distancing measures, it has been very difficult to plan an event such as a Green Summit during 2021/22. Therefore, hosting a Green Summit has been delayed beyond a short term action as we consider how best to engage with residents and business, and promote carbon efficiency across the District. • Members and Officers have participated at various events and presented to local communities about the Council's work and how we can work together to reduce emissions across the district. This includes presentations to Sevenoaks School and Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce.

Movement and Green Travel

Transport is the greatest carbon emitter for both the District and the Council. Although we are not the highways authority for the District, we will work with Kent County Council and communities to develop and encourage sustainable travel. We also commit to reducing the carbon emissions from our own fleet by efficiency measures and embracing new low emission technologies.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
TRA1	Promote low carbon travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Movement Strategy has been produced to setting out the Council's priorities for sustainable travel and movement across the District. It was adopted in April 2022. • The Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy was agreed in July 2021 and sets out how SDC will support low emission and electric vehicles within the Council's fleet and across the District. • The Council has commissioned consultants to undertake the first Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan to be completed later in 2022.
TRA2	Improve the electric vehicle charging network across the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy sets out how SDC will support low emission and electric vehicles within the Council's fleet and across the District. It was agreed by Cabinet in July 2021 and published August 2021. • We continue to work with KCC to deliver the ambitions in the Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy. This includes encouraging Town and Parish Councils to take part in the Rural charging scheme and participating in a group buying scheme to install new charging points in SDC car parks. • We are working with KCC to deliver 2 charging points for Taxi Vehicles to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles for taxis.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
TRA3	Work with schools, local communities and groups to encourage community transport hubs for short journeys, minimising pollution, improving air quality and reducing congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have been working with KCC and neighbouring authorities to consider the impact of the new national bus strategy and how Enhanced Bus Partnerships can help deliver the sustainable transport and support the Movement Strategy. • The Air Quality Action Plan includes measures to improve air quality, and therefore reduce emissions, through working with communities and schools to reduce car idling and promote more non car school journeys. This will be delivered by the Air Quality Promotions Officer who was appointed in January 2022.
TRA4	Promote the annual Car Free Day and similar initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of initiatives to reduce car travel have been included in the communications plan. Car Free day took place on 22 September 2021 and was shared with staff and residents. Similar events such as Cycle to Work Day and Bike Week have also been shared to raise awareness of active travel and promote alternatives to car use.
TRA5	Continue our transition to a zero-carbon emissions vehicle fleet wherever practicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy was agreed in July 2021 and sets out how SDC will support low emission and electric vehicles within the Council's fleet and across the District. • The Direct Services team have been working with potential providers to explore low emission and electric vehicles including the use of biodiesel and hydrogen vehicles. • The Council purchased electric enforcement vehicles in March 2022 and electric vehicles charging points have been installed at the Dunbrik Depot. • A Direct Services Waste Collection Review was undertaken and agreed by members in April 2022 and will be rolled out from September 2022. This increases the efficiency of the Waste Collection service and therefore carbon emissions. • A staff electric car lease scheme has been introduced.

Green Spaces and the Natural Environment

We commit to improving our natural environment for now and future generations, taking account of a changing climate. We will also support multi-benefit projects which conserve and enhance the natural environment whilst also increasing levels of carbon sequestration.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
NAT1	Carbon emission offsetting through new planting including planting new trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New trees have been planted on SDC land as part of the Queen's Jubilee Green Canopy initiative. Technical evidence and site selection underway for larger scale planting. • We have been working with the KCC Tree Officer to consider how we can work in partnership to encourage tree planting across Kent. • Offsetting will be included in the Carbon Reduction Plan.
NAT2	Improve areas for biodiversity and create new habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have developed a number of community based projects with the North West Kent Countryside Partnership (NWKCP) including hedgehog highways and climate change community gardens these have been shared with community groups. • The NWKCP have delivered a number of projects across the District to improve and enhance areas for biodiversity. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhance habitat at White Hill for Pollinators ○ Habitat enhancement “Old Chalk New Downs” project at Otford ○ Biodiversity advice for the ponds at Lullingstone Golf Course ○ Habitat enhancement and community engagement at Palace Park Wood and creation of a hedgehog highway ○ Working with Bore Place to integrate biodiversity into land management create new habitats and deliver weekly nature based mental wellbeing sessions.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWKCP produced 5 wildlife films for Sevenoaks to engage local communities in encouraging wildlife these are hosted on the SDC YouTube channel. • The Council are participating in “No Mow May” on suitable areas of SDC land.
NAT3	Natural flood management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A natural flood management project along the River Darent has been delivered by the North West Kent Countryside Partnership through the re-planting of hedgerows to reduce flooding, another project has been delivered as part of the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme. • Ongoing work with North West Kent Countryside Partnership and KCC to identify additional suitable projects and funding opportunities.

Engagement with Landowners, Partners and Businesses

Partnership working is key to the delivery of the Council's Net Zero 2030 commitment. Many other organisations have also committed to a similar achievement and therefore there are many opportunities for partnership working and we all work towards the same goal.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
PAR1	Require bidders for all tenders to include an environmental statement, including their plan for achieving Net Zero, a 'Net Zero Commitment'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions are being help with the Procurement Assurance Group (PAG) about the introduction of social value in the Council's procurement processes, and how this can be used to lever Net Zero outcomes for goods and services. Provide appropriate information and training for officers once this has been agreed. • The Kent-wide market position statement on climate change is being looked at by PAG with a view to this being presented to SMT in the near future for adoption by the council. This would then form part of any tender pack or request to quote. However, there will be further work needed in terms of how climate change/Net Zero commitments in tenders are monitored and reported on as part of the contract management of work post tender.
PAR2	Report and promote our actions towards Net Zero, and support our partners including landowners, residents, businesses and visitors to our District to play their part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress was regularly reported to the Cleaner and Greener Committee with a mid-year progress update report in Autumn 2021 and a final report in Summer 2022. • The Councils webpages are updated with Council targets and actions to reach Net Zero and also offer helpful advice to residents on topics such as energy efficiency, biodiversity and even how to calculate their own individual carbon footprint. In addition, an extensive communications plan aims at sharing advice and support through social media to a wider audience.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Zero presentation was given at the Town and Parish Forum in July 2021, to Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce in September 2021 and as part of Sevenoaks School's Green Week in November 2021. • Net Zero features in each issue of In Shape and there are regular net zero social media posts.
PAR3	Encourage the location of clean growth businesses in our District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Zero 2030 presentation to the Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce in September 2021. We are continuing to look for future opportunities to work with the business and commercial sector. • The forthcoming Economic Development Strategy will include our Net Zero ambitions. • Kent County Council are running an electric van (EV) hire scheme available to local businesses to trial for free. We have been publicising the EV van scheme and local businesses have taken up the opportunity.
PAR4	Work with the local government family within Kent to deliver Net Zero across all our communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We continue to work with KCC Officers from the Transport Innovations Team, Climate Change Network and Sustainable Business and Communities Team including putting forward joint bids for funding for energy efficiency and active travel projects. • We have worked in partnership with Kent County Council to develop the first Local Cycling and Waling Infrastructure Plan. • The Kent and Medway ELES has been endorsed by the Council. The Implementation Plan has also been agreed. • We continue to actively engage with Town and Parish council and community groups. We responded to a request for comments on the Sevenoaks Town Green

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
		Community Investment Plan in January 2022 identifying potential opportunities for partnership working.

Carbon Emission Baseline and Opportunity Audit

It is important to understand the baseline carbon emissions for the Council. This will be incorporated into the Carbon Reduction Plan and is currently calculated following the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy guidance and the Local Government Association Greenhouse Gas Reporting Tool.

We have also committed to looking ahead to 2030 by identifying potential opportunities for achieving Net Zero. This will also be incorporated into the Carbon Reduction Plan.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
BASE1	Audit our current and levels of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emissions reports are published on the Net Zero Webpages www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/netzero
BASE2	Undertake an Opportunity Audit for ways to reduce carbon emissions in Council buildings and assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council have requested quotes for a Carbon Reduction Plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heat decarbonisation plans for SDC buildings including the leisure centres Carbon Reduction Plan for SDC - roadmap to net zero by 2030 including costed interventions District Emissions Report - drivers, causes and potential interventions.

Council Plans and Strategies

We are committed to ensure the Net Zero commitment is integrated into all aspects of the Councils plans, strategies and services to ensure all potential opportunities are utilised.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
STR1	Deliver the carbon emission reducing aspects of the Air Quality Management Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The actions within Air Quality Action Plan align with the net zero commitment and the Air Quality Promotions Officer and Net Zero Project Co-ordinator are working closely to deliver the joint aims and actions.
STR2	Deliver the environmental aspects of Sevenoaks District Councils Council and Development Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee report template has been revised to take account of carbon emissions implications for Council decisions. This includes a Net Zero carbon emissions assessment. Relevant National and Local Plan Policies are being applied in decisions including the installation of electric vehicle charging points and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.
STR3	Explore opportunities to invest in clean growth such as a local Net Zero Bank to finance energy efficiency and carbon reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers are considering ways to support clean growth through SDC policies, government funding and partnership working.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
STR4	Where everything possible has been done to achieve zero carbon but there is still a shortfall, take action through offsetting carbon dioxide emissions where necessary, and explore a Carbon Offset Fund to finance this	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carbon Offsetting will be included as part of the Carbon Reduction Plan.

Sustainable Buildings and Renewable Energy Generation

Buildings remain a significant emitter of carbon and therefore we commit to supporting low carbon buildings where suitable. This will also include exploring renewable energy technologies and opportunities both large and small scale.

Ref	Action 2021/2022	Action Progress and Review
SUS1	Investigate ways to encourage sustainable building practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is underway to update the emerging local plan. The plan will include policies to promote sustainable building practices in line with the latest evidence.
SUS2	In all new SDC and SDC owned company developments, set an ambitious stretch target for sustainable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new White Oak Leisure Centre has achieved BREEAM Very Good standard. • Our residential-led schemes use green technologies including air source heat pumps, mechanical ventilation heat recovery and solar PV panels and provide electrical vehicle charging points. • SDC organised a seminar for officers on Passivhaus schemes including case studies. • Officers continue to investigate different options to learn from other case studies, policies and targets elsewhere.
SUS3	Investigate renewable energy generation possibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions are under way with an officer group from Policy and Property to investigate potential sites for solar PV development in the District. • Industry specialists are being consulted as part of this with a view to commissioning a feasibility study