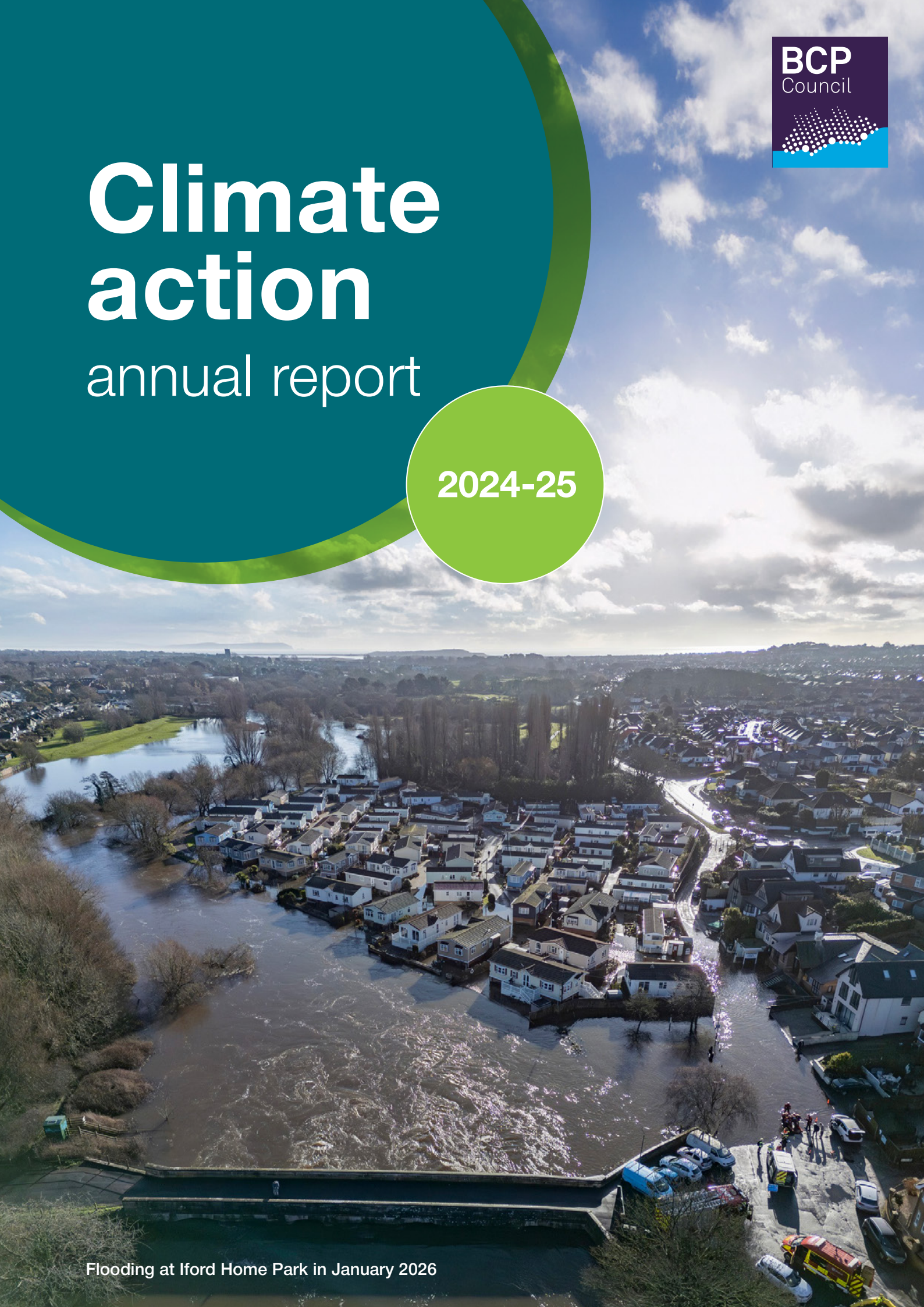
BCP Council

Climate action

annual report

2024-25



Flooding at Iford Home Park in January 2026

Foreword

This is my third Climate Action Annual Report as Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy.

It comes at a time when the effects of climate change are more apparent than ever, right on our doorstep, impacting the lives of our residents. Heavy winter rainfall and summer heatwaves are becoming more likely and more extreme in the UK. This January, as last year, we've evacuated residents impacted by flooding caused by some of the highest levels of the River Stour we've seen. And last year we and our neighbours in Dorset worked repeatedly alongside emergency services to manage several significant heath fires. The science is clear and the changes are happening right here in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Elsewhere, extreme weather events are becoming more prevalent, driving instability through flooding, wildfires, and crop failures across the globe. The UK Government recently issued the '***Nature security assessment on global biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and national security***'[1], which explores how global biodiversity loss and the collapse of critical ecosystems could affect the UK's resilience, security and prosperity. This makes grim reading, but highlights the importance of this work.

This is why tackling climate change is my passion and this report marks a clear step forward from the changes I called for a year ago, but there is still a long road ahead. We need urgent decarbonisation and faster, more transparent progress. I asked the team to identify clear actions to accelerate delivery, establish interim milestones, prepare robust funding proposals, and develop dynamic dashboards so that residents and partners could easily see how we are performing.

I am pleased to report that this year's update delivers on those improvements. The introduction of detailed action roadmaps, clearer milestones and our online emissions dashboards has strengthened our ability to track progress and make informed decisions. We now have a detailed Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) and, together, these changes place the Council and our community in a much stronger position to take the bold steps required to achieve meaningful progress towards our climate targets.

We know that finance is a challenge, not just for the Council, but for our residents and businesses too. We must make a clear case for the benefits of decarbonisation. Our LAEP demonstrates that doing nothing costs money, from wasting energy through inefficiency, paying out for imported fossil fuels, and not keeping pace with new technologies. But the positives are more compelling; secure locally owned energy sources immune to world events, active travel that encourages healthier lifestyles, fewer cars on the road leading to better safety and air quality in our communities; the list goes on.

Over the past year we have made important strides. With partners we are conducting an externally-funded study into geothermal energy opportunities – an exciting prospect that could heat neighbourhoods using heat from the ground. Work is progressing on the 15 key priorities identified in the Local Area Energy Plan, which will influence how energy is generated, distributed and used across the entire BCP area. We have installed solar panels on Two Riversmeet leisure centre, are due to shortly install solar generation on the Prom Café and we have a pipeline of funding-ready solar projects undergoing scoping and feasibility assessment. I am also pleased that we secured funding in 2025 to deliver Carbon Literacy training for officers and Councillors, helping to ensure that climate awareness and responsibility underpin decision making across the organisation.

I look forward to the year ahead as a crucial one; a year in which this Council must take the key decisions set out in the roadmaps, demonstrate continued, visible progress on climate action, and work with residents and partners across the area to promote change. By doing so, we can move with confidence and purpose towards a decarbonised and safer future for people in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area.

Councillor Andy Hadley

Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy

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Executive summary

BCP Council is committed to tackling the climate and ecological emergency so that our residents can enjoy safe, healthy, vibrant lives. Every year we report on the progress we are making to reduce our impact on the climate through our carbon emissions from the Council's own services and across the wider Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) area.

This year marks the **sixth** update since the Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019, and whilst we are pleased with the reported progress, we know we need to go further.

BCP Council now needs to align to changes in current policy and prepare itself for a move to clean energy, and this will mean identifying emerging technology, switching from gas and investing in strategic partnerships that can help us to shape delivery models.

Many local authorities are facing similar pressures to BCP Council, including the impact of recent climate events, that are accelerating climate risks, primarily intense flooding, heatwaves and coastal erosion, all of which threaten public health and infrastructure.

Progress against our corporate commitments

1 **Make Council operations carbon neutral by 2030**
Since our baseline year in 2019, the Council's carbon emissions have **decreased by 21 per cent**. This includes emissions from our buildings, vehicles, streetlighting and the services we provide.

2 **Work with the wider community to make the region carbon neutral by 2045**
Areawide emissions for 2023 have **decreased by 18 per cent** compared with 2019, based on the latest ***government data***[ii].

The council has made significant investment during the 2024/25 reporting period, implementing decarbonisation projects such as Two Riversmeet Leisure Centre, investment in our social housing stock, taking many homes to an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating C, further investment in electrical vehicle (EV) charging points, commissioning an area-wide heat network study looking into using some of BCP's excellent geothermal natural resource potential, and securing grant funding for private sector housing retrofit through the national government's Warm Homes Plan.

More recently, since this reporting year 2024-25 completed, we have continued to develop ***the climate dashboard***[iii], and have developed a new Climate Vulnerability Tool, which maps climate risks and potential impacts on communities across the BCP area. The tool brings together data on flooding, heat, exposure and vulnerability to provide a clearer picture of where climate impacts are likely to be felt most strongly.

We are continually enhancing our evidence base through improved data and greater transparency, enabling more informed decision-making and strengthening our readiness for funding opportunities and strategic partnerships.

With this work in place, we are now moving into the next phase: planning the long-term actions needed to reach our climate goals. To support this, we have developed ***two detailed roadmaps*** that set out the decisions and actions required to reach both our own Council carbon neutral by 2030 target.

A further roadmap focusing on how we can help the whole region reach carbon neutrality by 2045 has been prepared as part of the ***Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)***[iv]. In the next year, work will be done to combine these roadmaps and understand the actions needed to deliver them.

The LAEP's 15 key actions were developed in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders and sector leads. The 2025 LAEP launch marks the beginning of delivering these actions, including the creation of business cases, financial models, and routes to market. Achieving this will require a coordinated regional approach with multiple strategic partners. Progress against each action will be monitored and reported through the climate dashboard.

The challenges grow

There is an urgency in acting now, we can no longer delay, we need to accelerate our progress to combat the effects of climate change.

The ***Met Office's State of the UK Climate report 2024***[v] gives a clear message: temperature and rainfall extremes are becoming the norm.

Key report messages	What this means for us in BCP
Since the 1980s, the UK has warmed by 0.25°C per decade.	• Hot air can hold more water; this has led to more rain, and heavier rainfall events, leading to an Increased risk of flooding from rivers and groundwater across our area. • Extremely hot weather can be hazardous for some residents and visitors, and increases risk of heath fires. • Destabilisation of the coastal cliffs.
The last 3 years were all in the top 5 warmest on record.	
Winter 2023–24 was the wettest October–March period ever recorded.	
The leaf-on season is now 7 days longer than the 1999–2023 average.	This, and a more prolonged period of leaf-fall stretches the resources of the teams clearing roads, pavements and gulleys.
Frost days have dropped by 25% since the 1980s.	This changes the plants and animals that are suited to our climate, and the health of soils. Plants are flowering at increasingly odd times, which will mean nectar for insects and birds is at the wrong time for breeding.

Table 1: The significance of climatic change on Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole

These changes aren't predictions; they're already happening.

Flooding at Iford Bridge Caravan Park, Jan 2025 and (this picture) Jan 2026

Heath fire at Holt, which destroyed 72 hectares of heathland, the worst of 83 fire incidents on Dorset Heaths in 2025.

In January 2026, the Government published the '***Nature security assessment on global biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and national security***'[i]. It shows how environmental degradation can disrupt food, water, health and supply chains, and trigger wider geopolitical instability. It identifies six ecosystems of strategic importance for the UK and explores how their decline could drive cascading global impacts.

This assessment, which was developed by analysts and experts across HM Government, supports long-term resilience planning, and highlights how interconnected Climate Change, and consequent biodiversity loss are, and how these are already impacting food systems, health, migration and economics.

Success story highlights

Council success stories 2024/25

Two Riversmeet Leisure Complex in Christchurch now uses solar PV panels to power the facility, reducing energy use by an estimated 100,000 kWh each year and cutting utility bills by around 20 per cent. Installed in September 2024 with £157,000 from Sport England and £600,000 from the Council, the project also included upgrades to the pool plant room and the addition of air source heat pumps for heating the pool.

Residents and beach visitors benefit from cleaner air and a quieter seafront thanks to the Council's introduction of two new pedal-assist e-cargo bikes. Funded through part of a Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Air Quality Fund these low-emission bikes help keep our beach services running smoothly by restocking catering outlets and maintaining washroom facilities from Shore Road to Southbourne.

CP Council joined UK 100, a network of councils ambitious to make progress on climate change, sharing experiences, best practice and setting an ambitious target of net zero by 2045.

Ashdown leisure centre swapped its halide floodlights for light-emitting diode (LED) units, saving money, cutting energy use and reducing the centre's carbon footprint. The upgrade includes remote switching and improved lighting for the athletics club. Users welcomed the upgrade, commenting on improved visibility and reliability.

Areawide success stories 2024/25

The Carbon Literacy for SMEs programme launched in November 2024 to support BCP-based businesses and Early Years in building climate awareness and tackling action. All sessions were delivered in partnership with the Carbon Literacy Trust and BCP Council. Parallel business grant support for undertaking energy audits and decarbonisation initiatives ran in parallel to this.

The Transforming Travel work was completed in Wimborne Road in 2024 and improved bus stops, pedestrian crossings and cycle paths on this busy road. The results show a significant uplift in daily cycle journeys all year around, and the Longfleet Junior School is seeking additional cycle storage as a result.

Peatland restoration at Canford Heath completed in February 2025, transforming over 37 hectares of land into a thriving wetland habitat. These nature-based solutions will help rare species return, reduce wildfire and flood risk, and lock away carbon; peatlands can store up to three times more carbon than woodlands.

Seven permanent School Streets now exist across the BCP area. By restricting traffic and parking outside schools during peak times, while allowing access for residents and blue badge holders, the initiative aims to enhance safety, encourage active travel, and improve air quality.

A survey showed a 12 per cent increase in walking, cycling, or scooting, and 92 per cent supported making the scheme permanent. Around 80 per cent of respondents said they felt safer outside their schools during the trial.

Areawide further highlights 2024/25

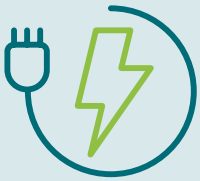
Shaping of the Local Area Energy Plan got underway with consultations and engagements

Restoration of the Long Groyne at Hengistbury Head to protect against rising sea levels and severe storms

BCP Urban Forest Strategy[vi] guided tree planting in areas with the least canopy cover

433 **new homes built to EPC B and A standards** during 2024

Healthy Homes Dorset **insulation scheme** saves £659k on household bills and 620 tCO_2e[1] each year



Secured £1.4m in **Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure funding** to install 1,100 charge points over the coming years

Winton Library has been transformed into a **thriving green space**, thanks to volunteers from the BH9 Business Community and support from BCP Council

Thirty local stakeholders met to discuss the area's climate goals and ideas for **partnership working**

Grant funding was given to 45 businesses to undertake energy audits, set targets and fund decarbonisation improvements

Performance overview

Delivering on the recommendations

The recommendations set out as part of the ***2023-24 Climate Action Annual Report***[vii] approval process have now been delivered. These recommendations were as follows:

- The introduction of an emissions dashboards and its continual refinement.
- The drafting of ***roadmaps*** of climate actions. These have been developed and this report seeks their approval from Cabinet to take the Council to its carbon neutral by 2030 target.
- The development of a companion ***roadmap*** as part of the Local Area Energy Plan which seeks to address the area-wide 2045 target. This also has been developed and this report its approval from Cabinet to take the Council to its 2045 target.

Over the past year, the Council has taken clear and practical steps to strengthen climate action, improve governance and set strong foundations to accelerate progress towards our carbon neutral goals. More recently (2025-26) we have also taken positive action on preparing the Council for project delivery, working in partnership with procurement to develop a framework for solar panels, identifying buildings with high energy usage, work on bill validation and demand forecasting. This preparation will support our project delivery during 2026/27.

[1] tCO_2e is shorthand for tonnes of carbon dioxide CO_2 equivalent. Greenhouse gases which cause climate chaos also include methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (NO_2), and the fluorinated gases. These other gases have varying impacts, although often have shorter lifespans and are higher in intensity than CO_2. However, they are all converted into CO_2e to provide a consistent metric to enable comparison. For reference, the emissions of the average person in the UK are around 12 tCO_2e per year, depending on what is included in scope

2030 BCP Council target

Make BCP Council and its operations carbon neutral by 2030

Overall progress to this target

The overall trend in the Council's organisational emissions returns to moving in the right direction, but time is increasingly short. As of 2024/25, total recorded emissions have **decreased by 21 per cent** since the baseline year of 2019, reflecting sustained progress across a range of Council services.

Emissions across all of the Council scope subcategories have decreased against the 2019/20 baseline. In comparison to 2023/24, for the reporting year 2024/25 decreases in emissions were seen across all of scopes 1, 2 and 3, as shown in ***Figure 1*** and ***Table 2***.

Stronger governance structures, monitoring methods and cross-department co-operation mechanisms are now in place. The Climate and Sustainability Service has also expanded its team, welcoming two new members, providing additional resource to design and implement a wider range of measures. While ambitions require ramping up and realisation, we are in a much stronger position to enact effective and sustained progress towards our targets.

Annual BCP Council emissions since 2019 ($KtCO_2e$)

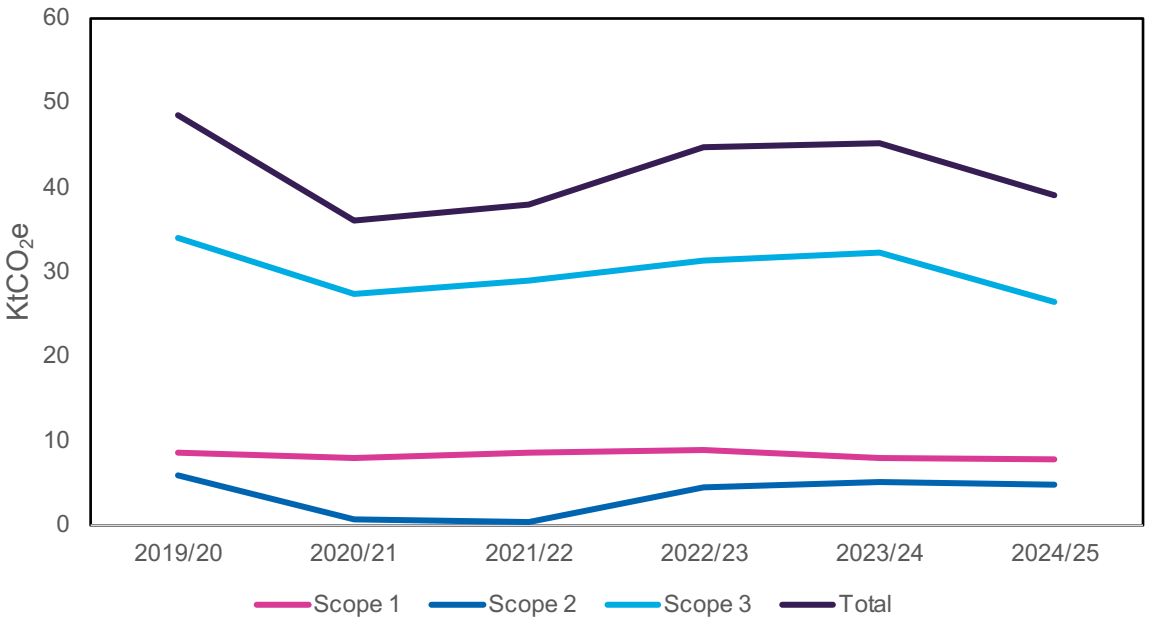


Figure 1: Chart showing the change in BCP Council emissions between 2019 and 2025 for scopes 1, 2 and 3

BCP Council emission catagories as a proportion of total emissions

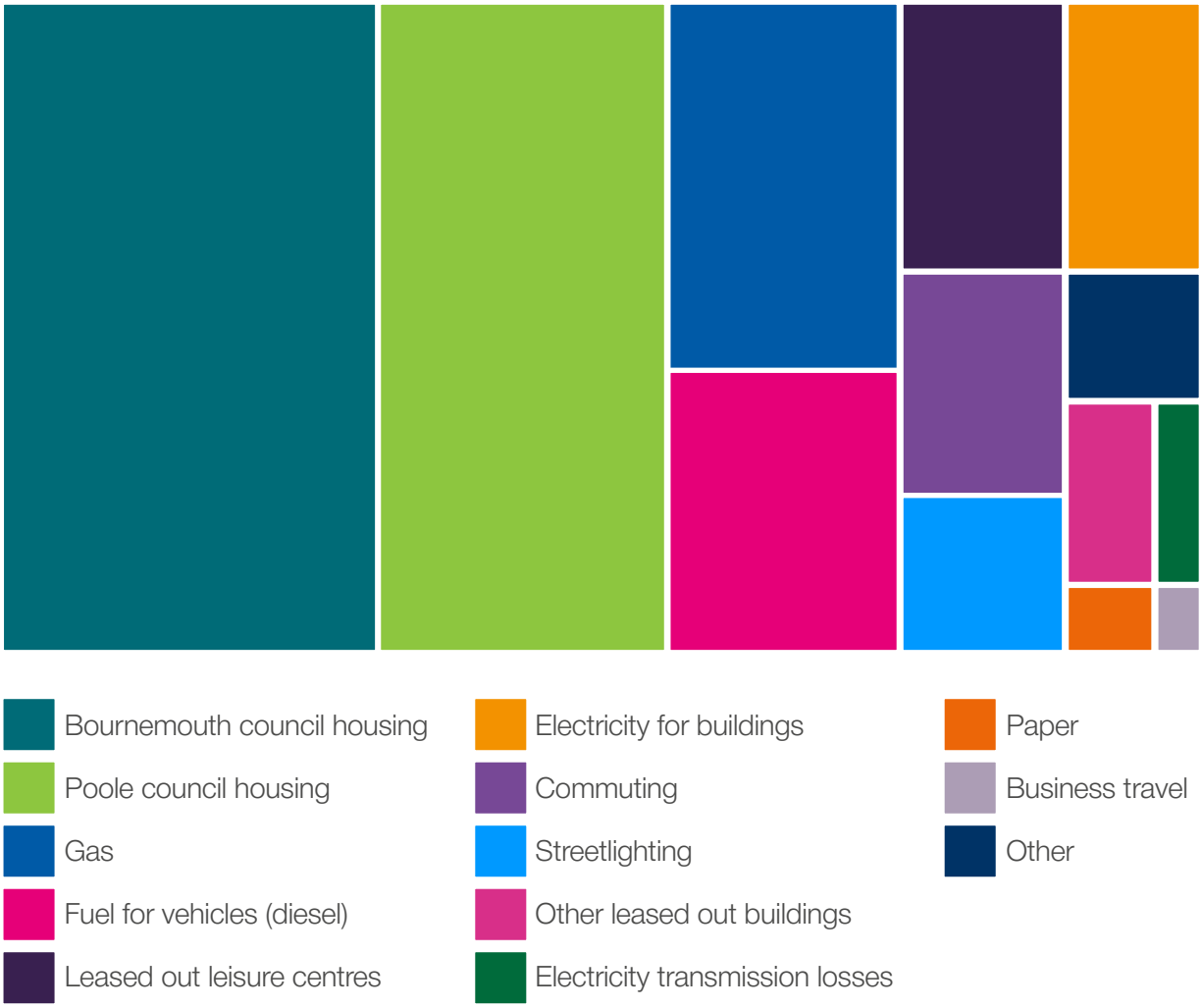


Figure 2: Hierarchy chart highlighting BCP Council's main sources of emissions, ensuring focus is maintained on the areas where we can make the biggest impact

Sector	Scope	Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions (tCO_2e)						% change between 2019/20 and 2024/5	% share of total emissions in 2024/25
		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25		
Natural gas usage	1	4,570	4,112	4,898	5,177	4,357	4,455	2.5% decrease	**11.4**
Refrigerant leakage	1		138	6	39	29	113	18.1% decrease	0.3
Vehicle fuel	1	4,009	3,652	3,732	3,646	3,601	3,211	19.9% decrease	**8.2**
Electricity usage	2	5,524	312	244	4,301	4,923	4,725	14.5% decrease	**12.1**
Water	3	458	332	182	222	175	157	65.7% decrease	0.4
Paper	3	1,764	111	31	29	27	43	97.6% decrease	0.1
Grid	3	469	397	421	393	426	418	10.9% decrease	1.1
Waste	3	101	28	54	52	63	40	60.9% decrease	0.1
Business travel	3	582	171	195	239	278	302	48% decrease	0.8
Staff commuting	3	3,630	885	905	2,470	2,672	1,527	57.9% decrease	3.9
Home working	3					585	186	68.3% decrease	0.5
Leased out buildings	3	28,284	27,319	27,194	27,334	28,011	23,709	16.2% decrease	**61.2**
TOTAL		49,390	37,458	37,860	43,903	45,148	38,886	21% decrease	

Table 2: BCP Council emissions by scope subcategory per year between 2019/20 and 2024/25

Scope subcategory	Emissions 2023/24 (tCO_2e)	Emissions 2024/25 (tCO_2e)	% change between 2023/24 & 2024/25	Explanation of variance
Natural gas usage	4,357	4,455	+2.2%	A relatively small year-on-year change which is difficult to pinpoint. The overall trend since 2019/20 remains down by 2.5%, which we attribute to: • Retrofit investment on corporate estate • Decommissioning of the corporate estate
Vehicle fuel	3,601	3,211	-10.8%	A significant increase in the amount of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) purchased (and an equivalent decrease in the like-for-like replacement of the more polluting diesel) between 23/24 and 24/25 explains most of this decrease. Complete replacement of diesel with HVO (used to fuel our bin lorries, vans, social care minibuses and parks vehicles) is estimated to cost in excess of £400,000 per annum. Its performance and economics will be monitored ongoing. We have also continued to electrify our fleet - as of April 2025 we reached 74 Electric Vehicles (EVs), up from 66 in early 2024. The main constraint is electrical capacity and space at the depots.
Electricity usage	4,923	4,725	-4.0%	Continued rollout of efficiency improvements, such as those on Two Riversmeet. Decreases can be identified through the decommissioning (sale) of corporate property and efficiency improvement programmes at a number of sites. Decarbonisation of the grid has also contributed to this decrease as well as a decrease in the number of properties in use.

Table 3: Explanations behind the change in emission levels for some of the most significant variances in scopes 1 and 2

Scope subcategory	Emissions 2023/24 (tCO_2e)	Emissions 2024/25 (tCO_2e)	% change between 2023/24 & 2024/25	Explanation of variance
BCP Council homes	24,094	20,681	-14%	The average emissions for Council homes has decreased to 2.3 tCO_2e per year (down from 2.9 tCO_2e) in Bournemouth and to 2 tCO_2e per year (down from 2.1 tCO_2e) in Poole. This was realised through updated Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) which picked up energy efficiency works completed in the last few years, and a data cleansing exercise.
Other leased out buildings	3,916	3,028	-23%	These emissions are estimated based upon the Council's housing stock (above) as a reference, meaning emissions have fallen in line based on which relating housing stock area these leased out buildings reside.
Commuting	2,672	1,527	-43%	A new staff travel survey was implemented, taking into consideration vehicle type in greater detailer e.g. EVs, hybrids and plug-in hybrids. The use of these less polluting vehicles has therefore been taken into account, alongside an increase in hybrid working.
Waste	63	40	-37%	Reductions in waste emissions stem from lower impact emissions factors in the treatment of waste and the changes to recycling treatments.

Table 4: Explanations behind the change in emission levels for some of the most significant variance in scope 3[2]

[2] Note that scope 3: leased out buildings has been broken down further between BCP Council homes and other leased out buildings

Carbon reduction target roadmaps

Council carbon neutral by 2030 target – Roadmap for scopes 1 and 2

The ***2023-24 Climate Action Annual Report***[vi] recognised that a clear pathway was needed to show the required steps to reach our carbon neutral by 2030 target. All actions listed in the roadmaps have been benchmarked against published local authority methodologies such as from the ***Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)***[viii], and are based on technologies that are currently available.

Whilst the roadmaps and interim target remain the same as the previous report, progress has been made against a number of the highlighted actions which can be reviewed in Table 5. There are a number of variables and uncertainties which will be taken into consideration including funding opportunities, strategic partnership alliances, the cost of inputs, and changes in national policy and outlook. Each action will require further evidence to support the project viability. This will be demonstrated by detailed business cases and clear delivery pathways.

The roadmaps will be reviewed in each interim target year and amended to reflect progress and new opportunities.

BCP Council scopes 1 and 2 emissions roadmap

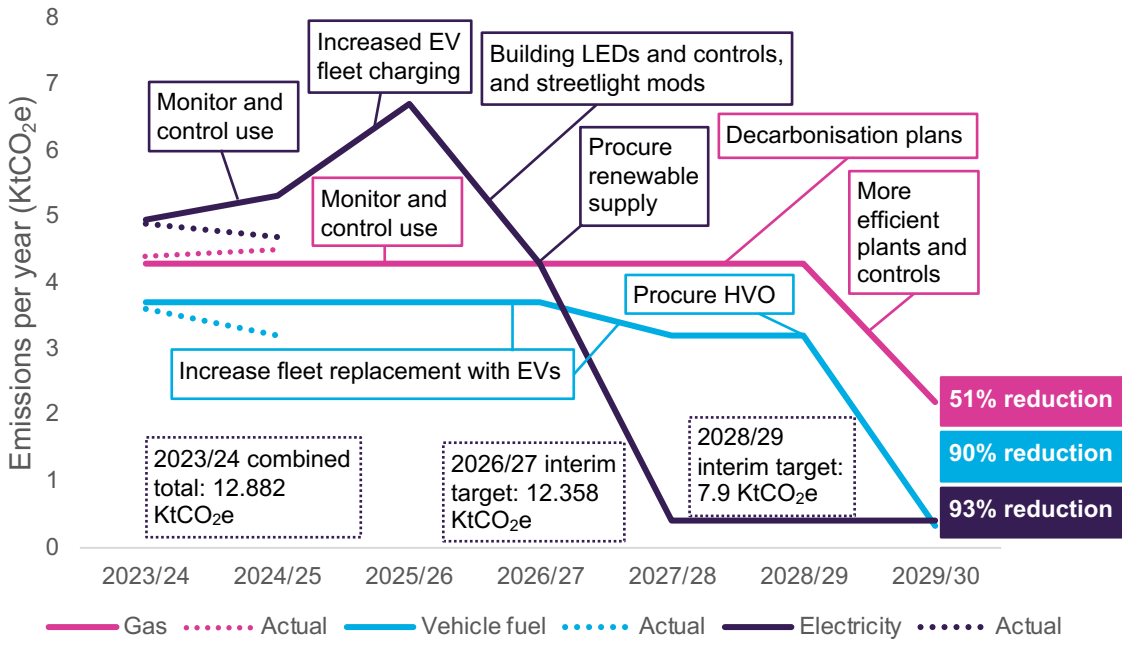


Figure 3: BCP Council scopes 1 and 2 roadmap to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Dotted lines represent actual progress to date.

Progress to date

In 2023/24 we set two interim targets to guide us towards the final target: one for 2026/27 and one for 2028/29. The targeted emissions levels are 12,358 tCO_2e by 2026/27 and 3,546 tCO_2e by 2028/29. Emissions reductions achieved in 2024/25 are currently exceeding the target set for 2025/26. If scopes 1 and 2 emissions are reduced by a further one per cent (from the baseline year) by 2026/27, we will have achieved the first interim target.

Target year	Category	RAG rating	Explanation
Monitor and control use	Gas		200 tCO_2e above target. Two Riversmeet leisure centre retrofit is showing large decreases in gas and has proven the model for wider leisure centre rollout. Other planned sites for electrification are currently under review.
Increase fleet replacement with EVs	Vehicle use		As of April 2025, we reached 74 EVs, up from 66 in early 2024, meaning we are on track in terms of small fleet with a temporary solution in place for refuse vehicles. However, for us to continue to make the progress needed, further expansion is dependent on improved infrastructure at our depots.
Monitor and control use	Electricity		We are taking steps to improve our internal data monitoring and control. We are currently optimising and looking to enhance Energy Management Systems in our highest consuming buildings and have a current funding programme to target those which are most practicable.

Table 5: RAG rating for scope 1 and 2 roadmap interventions up to 2024/25

Target year	Gas	Vehicle fuel	Electricity	Total
2023/24 target	4.3	3.7	4.6	12.6
2023/4 actual	**4.4**	**3.6**	**4.9**	**12.9**
2024/25 target	4.3	3.7	5.3	13.3
2024/25 actual	**4.5**	**3.2**	**4.7**	**12.4**
2025/26	4.3	3.7	6.7	14.7
2026/27 *interim target year	4.3	3.7	4.3	12.3
2027/28	4.3	3.2	0.4	7.9
2028/29 *interim target year	4.3	3.2	0.4	7.9
2029/30	2.2	0.3	0.4	2.9

Table 6: Progress to date against annual roadmap projections and targets. All figures are in $KtCO_2e$

Council carbon neutral by 2030 target – Roadmap for scope 3

Scope 3 emissions include the indirect sources outlined earlier in this report, such as leased out buildings, staff commuting and business travel. A roadmap (Figure 4) has also been produced for these emissions to show where the Council can influence reductions.

How and where we can affect change

Scope 3 includes our largest emissions source; leased out buildings – a category over which we do not have full property management control. The vast majority of the Council's leased out buildings are social housing and there is a programme of works to improve the energy efficiency of these to ensure that they reach EPC C rating by 2030. The Council has made provisions within the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the decarbonisation of the social housing stock up to 2035, this is estimated to cost £8,000-£9,000 per property.

Other tenants of council leased out buildings, such as those operating leisure centres, have demonstrated that they are willing to take action to reduce emissions. In the case of BHLive, they have chosen to procure zero emissions electricity to cut their and, in turn, the Council's emissions. It is estimated that approximately ten per cent of total emissions will remain after all steps have been taken which will require offsetting. This is where both aspects of the climate and ecological emergency declaration combine, as planned action to increase biodiversity and the resilience of nature can in turn reduce and store carbon. In recognition of this, nature-based offsetting is included in the roadmap (Figure 4). Other potential projects are also undergoing review. Expanding nature-based carbon removal projects like this will play an important role in mitigating difficult-to-avoid future emissions. We will be assessing how Biodiversity Net Gain, and our other nature recovery plans and strategies can support us in this effort.

BCP Council scope 3 emmisions roadmap

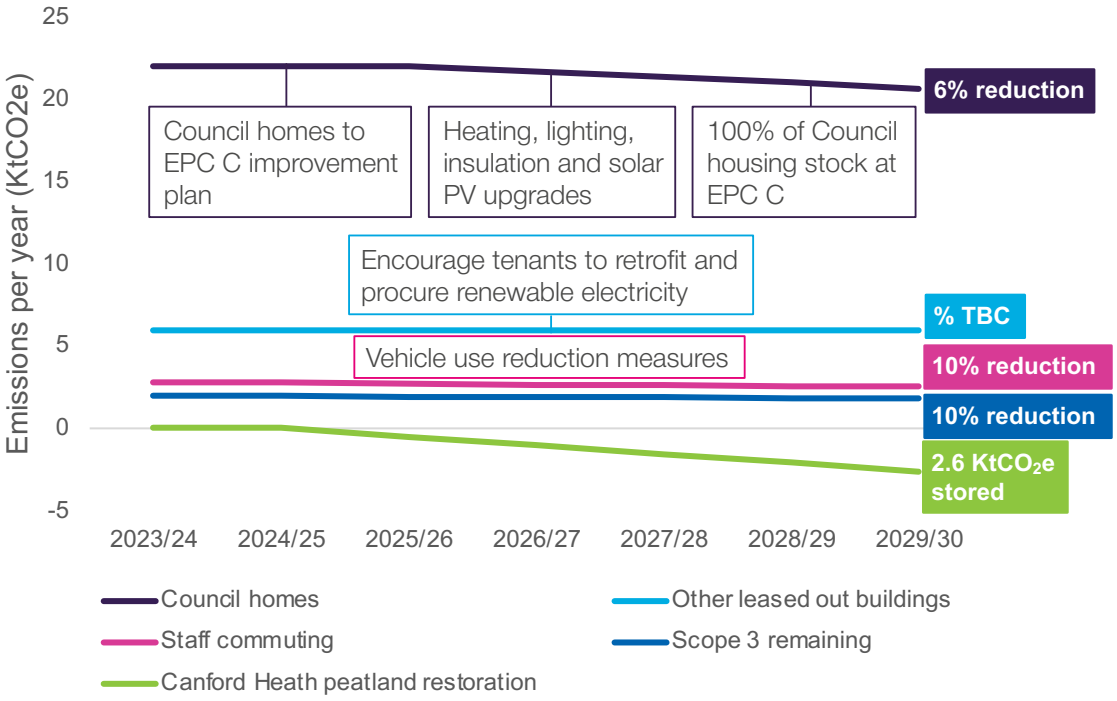


Figure 4: BCP Council scope 3 roadmap to becoming carbon neutral by 2030

Performance overview

2045 areawide target

Make the BCP area carbon neutral by 2045

Overall progress to this target

The overall trend in greenhouse gas emissions across the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area continues to show steady progress. Total recorded emissions have now **decreased by 18 per cent** since the baseline year of 2019. The breakdown of this is shown in Figure 5 and Table 6. This demonstrates steady progress towards the region's long-term goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2045, yet significant acceleration is still required.

The data used in this analysis is the most recent available from the UK Government. ***National emissions datasets***[ii] are published with a one-to-two-year time lag, which means the latest figures currently cover the period up to 2023. Despite this delay, there is now enough consistent data to show clear areawide progress between 2019 and 2024, and to track key trends across the main emitting sectors.

Government published data includes emissions from scopes 1 and 2, broken down by sector, but does not provide a full picture of scope 3 emissions due to their complexity and the lack of nationally consistent methodology. To present a more complete view, our ***emissions dashboard***[iii] incorporates an estimated scope 3 figure based on recognised modelling from the ***SCATTER project***[ix], providing users with a fuller understanding of the areawide carbon footprint.

More detail on sector trends and factors driving change is provided in the following sections, alongside the interactive data available through our ***online dashboards***[iii].

Emissions per sector in the BCP area 2019-2023

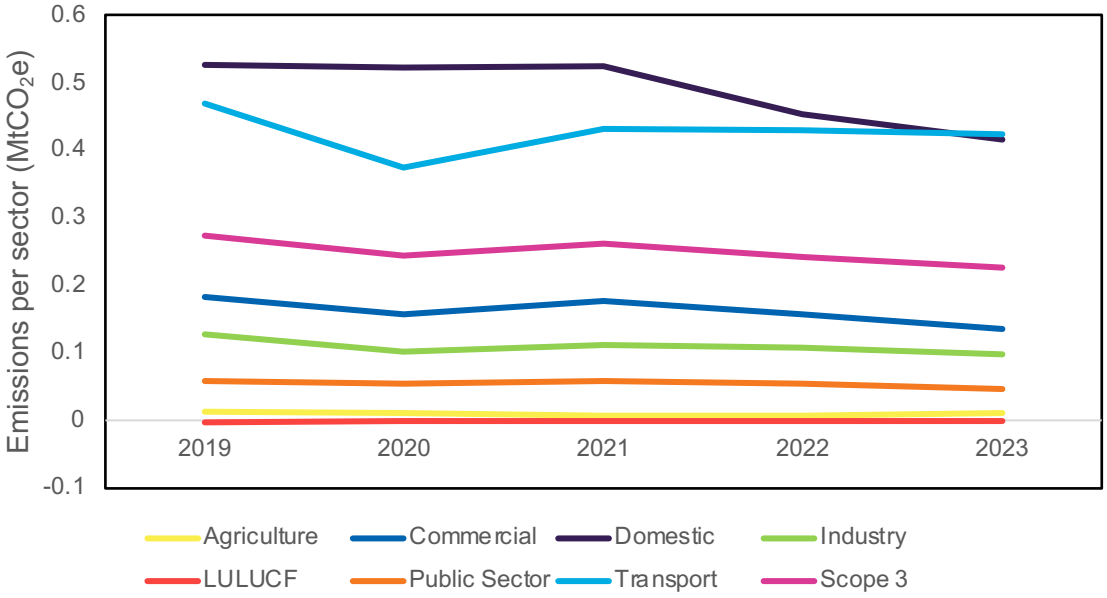


Figure 5: Areawide emissions by sector per year from 2019 to 2023

Sector[3]	Change since 2019	2023 % of total	Indicator of rise or fall in emissions
Agriculture	-15%	15	↓
Commercial	-25%	10.03%	↓
Domestic	-21%	30.68%	↓
Industry	-23%	7.13%	↓
LULUCF (land use, land use change and forestry)[4]	+71%	-0.03%	↑
Public Sector	-19%	3.47%	↓
Transport	-9%	31.32%	↓
Scope 3	-18%	16.67%	↓

Table 7: Changes in emissions by grouped areawide sector between 2019 and 2023

[3] The government data we use for areawide figures has a one-to-two-year lag. 2023 therefore represents the latest available data.
[4] Although emissions from LULUCF remain negative, relative emissions have increased, as in 2019 this sector in the area was sequestering more CO_2e from the atmosphere than in 2023.

Domestic emissions

The most substantial emissions reductions have come from emissions generated by gas and electricity use in homes, which have **decreased by 21 per cent** since 2019. This positive trend has likely been driven by a combination of factors, including:

- improved home energy efficiency, supported by national and local schemes such as the Home Upgrade Grant and Healthy Homes Dorset
- ongoing decarbonisation of the national electricity grid, reducing emissions from household electricity use
- the increasing energy efficiency of household appliances
- a gradual shift away from gas boilers to heat pumps and other low carbon heating technologies
- a growing public awareness of climate change, prompting behaviour change and more conscious energy use
- higher energy prices, which have encouraged many households to reduce consumption.

Growth rate of key low carbon technologies in BCP

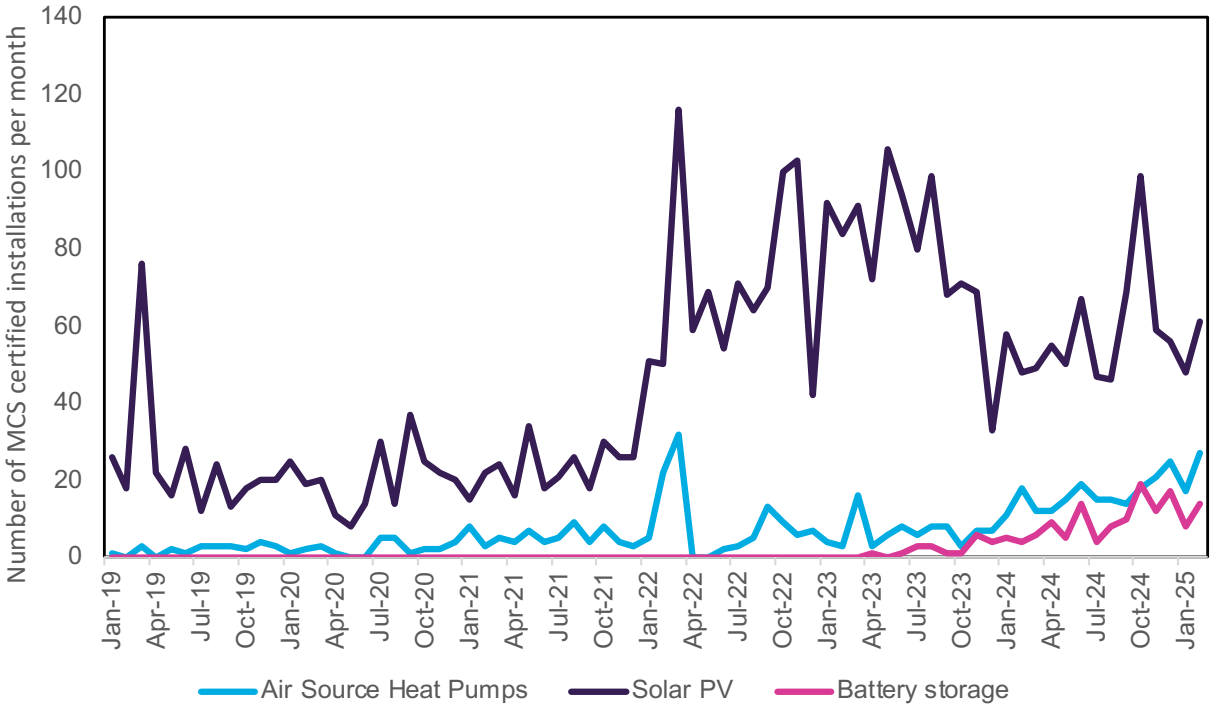


Figure 6: Number of Microgeneration Scheme certified installations for the leading low carbon technologies per month in the BCP area, between 2019 and 2025. Records indicate a steady increase in installations over recent months and years[x].

Transport emissions

Previously a rising trend, transport emissions have now levelled off across the BCP area.

Public transport

In 2024/25, the area saw a significant rise in public transport usage, with bus journeys increasing to 23.4 million, up by 14 per cent from 20.6 million in the previous year. This increase in part was in part due to a £2 national fare cap (now £3 nationally), and the 'commuter club' Morebus initiative capping fares on all routes within Zone A after 7pm to £1, funded by the ***BCP Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan***[xi].

Active travel

Regional data for the Southwest[xii] from the 2024 National Travel Survey, shows continued engagement with walking and cycling with a 14 per cent higher modal share as a proportion of total traffic volume compared to 2019 levels. Rates of walking and cycling were higher for shorter distance trips.

Electric vehicle (EV) adoption

BCP has seen a steady rise in battery electric, hybrid electric, and plug-in hybrid electric vehicle adoption[xiii]. EV infrastructure investment is planned to keep pace with this trend. The ***Public Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (PEVIS)***[xiv] for 2024-2030, forecasts 44 per cent of cars within the area will be electric by 2030. Figure 6 shows EV and hybrids overtaking petrol and diesel models in new vehicle registrations for the first time in BCP in 2025.

Registration of vehicles in BCP by fuel type

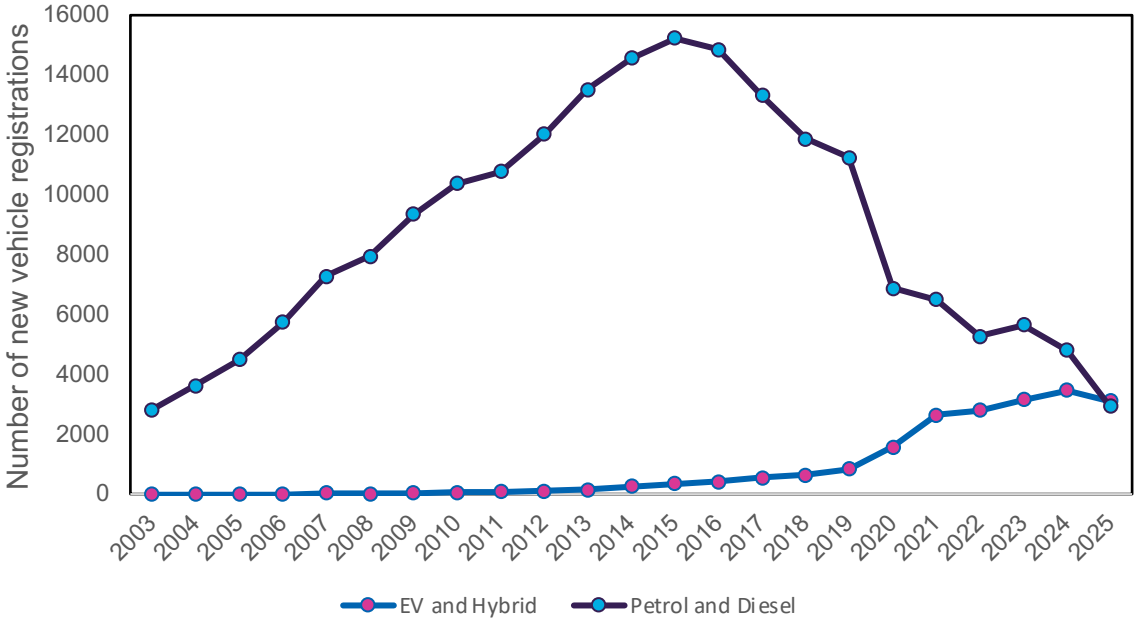


Figure 7: Department for Transport figures of new vehicle registrations[xii]

Methodology and reporting periods

The ***Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol)***[xv] provides a standardised methodology for business and areas to report their emissions. It is the most widely used methodology and the one which the Council uses for all of its emissions tracking. Its approach categorises emissions into **Scope 1** (emissions released on-site from energy use, usually gas or transport fuel), **Scope 2** (emissions released off-site from energy use, typically from the generation of imported electricity) and **Scope 3** (indirect emissions from everything else an organisation uses, purchases or sells). Scopes are designed show the relative influence a typical organisation has over its emission sources.

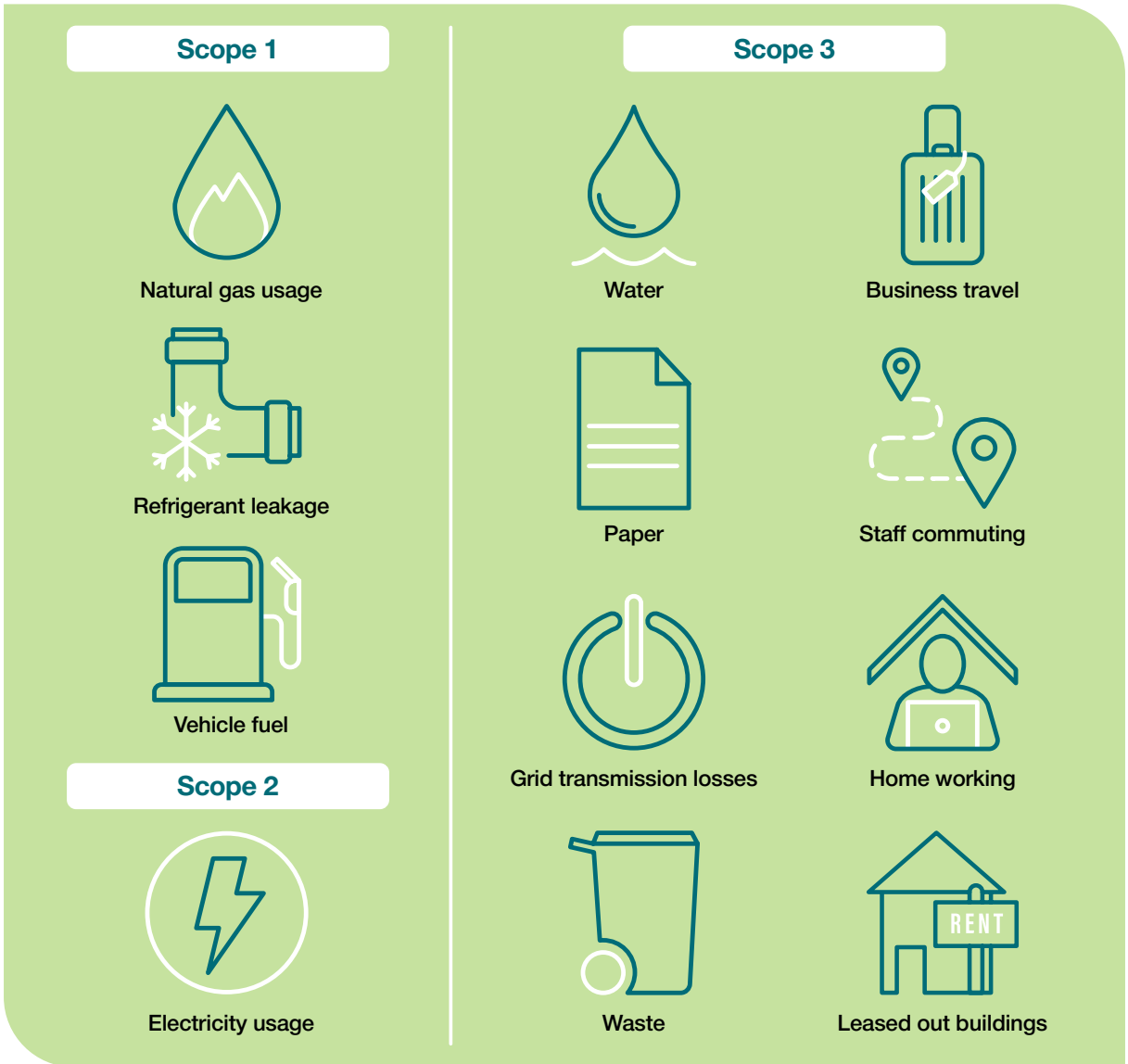


Figure 8: BCP Council emission source by scope category as per the GHG protocol methodology

What is and is not included in scope

For Council emissions all of scope 1 and 2 emissions are included. Unlike many other councils, BCP Council also include scope 3 in our reporting. This includes buildings which the Council leases, the waste it produces, business travel, and commuting by Council employees. However, emissions from purchased goods and services (the CO_2e embedded in the goods we buy) are not included. This is due to high levels of complexity and inaccuracy in the available data required to take targeted action. These consumption-based emissions typically represent one-third of total emissions (50 per cent above the current emissions total when they are excluded[xvi].

The areawide dataset is fully inclusive and includes complete data for scope 1 and 2 emissions. Areawide scope 3 emissions are estimated from the ***SCATTER project***[x].

The GHG protocol is also under review, and an updated, more emissions inclusive version is expected to be released over the coming years.

Reporting periods

BCP Council emissions reporting is undertaken for each financial year. However, there is a discrepancy in the reporting periods between council emissions and areawide emissions, as shown in Table 7. We contextualise the progress of these emissions by providing data from previous reporting periods.

Reporting periods	Council emissions reporting period	Areawide emissions reporting period
Baseline data report	FY 2019/20 (baseline year)	Calendar year 2018[5]
1st annual report	FY 2020/21	Calendar year 2019
2nd annual report	FY 2021/22	Calendar year 2020
3rd annual report	FY 2022/23	Calendar year 2021
4th annual report	FY 2023/24	Calendar year 2022
5th annual report	FY 2024/25	Calendar year 2023

Table 8: Reporting period history and differences in reporting periods for BCP Council and areawide emissions reporting

[5] The one-to-two-year lag in data cannot be avoided being reliant on when national data becomes available. Where relevant we have made it explicit that reporting activity in the areawide is not comparable to similar activities reported within operational emissions.

Projects and progress 2025-26

The projects outlined in this section reflect the work already underway during the 2025-26 financial year. Many of these initiatives are currently in progress and will continue to develop over the coming months. They offer an early view of the activity that will be reported in detail in next year's Climate Action Annual Report, highlighting how momentum is being maintained beyond the 2024-25 period covered in this document.

Launched the Local Area Energy Plan

The ***Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)***[iv], which was published and launched in 2025, sets out detailed targets for energy use in homes, businesses and road transport across the wider area. More detail on the LAEP is outlined in a later section.

Managing a reserve for climate and ecological action

This dedicated fund continues to support energy improvements in council buildings. A series of investments spent on energy efficiency improvements on the corporate estate are anticipated to generate a significant return on investment in utility bill savings, avoiding 282 tCO_2e over the lifespans of the installations. Projects include an air curtain at the Bournemouth pier arcade, a new cooling system in BCP civic offices data centre, new internal LED lighting at Ashdown leisure centre, sensor-controlled lighting in a multistorey carpark and solar PV on the Prom Café.

Further developed our interactive online emissions dashboard

The dashboard provides a more transparent, dynamic and accessible way for residents and partners to view up-to-date emissions data and track progress against our targets.

Created a Climate Vulnerability Tool

This tool helps identify areas within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole most at risk from the climate change impacts of extreme heat and flooding. This will help to support informed decision-making across the Council to mitigate these risks.

Issued a solar PV procurement framework to the market

A new solar PV procurement framework is due to close its application window shortly. This will support the rapid delivery of solar projects across the Council's estate. Over 100 sites have been scoped for excellent solar PV potential, pending further feasibility assessment.

Funded a heat network study

A study funded by the Southwest Net Zero Hub is looking at the potential for geothermal energy, alongside other technologies such as heat pumps in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. This study bridges the gap from earlier studies and starts to prepare the Council for a wider discussion on heat network viability, building an outline business case and providing valuable data for future development of heat networks across the towns. This study will also touch on new heat network zoning legislation which is earmarked for spring 2027.

Supporting schools with climate action and decarbonisation plans

Educational settings are required to develop their own Climate Action Plans setting out how they will reduce emissions, encourage biodiversity, strengthen climate resilience and embed sustainability in teaching. To support this, BCP Council has partnered with the national Climate Ambassadors programme, training several Council officers as Ambassadors. Ambassadors work closely with schools through webinars and in person workshops, alongside offering one-to-one support to help staff build confidence and develop meaningful climate actions.

Strengthened regional partnership working

A refreshed programme of engagement began with a stakeholder meeting in the summer of 2024, aiming to reenergise partnerships with public, private and community organisations. This areawide collaboration will continue to grow throughout 2026, meeting quarterly to learn and share knowledge and progress on decarbonisation and nature recovery initiatives.

Delivered school upgrade projects

Highcliffe St Mark's school now benefits from a warmer winter environment thanks to a major upgrade of the heating system. Improved insulation coupled with intelligent controls which adjust the energy-saving equipment in real time, reduce energy use and keep classrooms comfortable throughout the day.

Delivered funded Carbon Literacy training

Twenty-five funded courses were delivered during 2025, both Council members and officers attended carbon literacy training, and additional funding was sourced for SME support. The intention is to extend this further during 2026/27 by delivering a carbon literacy lite programme to BCP members and officers.

Encouraging and promoting plant-based diets

Steps have been taken towards encouraging and promoting plant-based diets within the BCP area, which will broadly support reduced climate impact from agriculture. Amongst a number of actions, minimum plant-based diets food provision levels will be set for BCP Council owned and operated food outlets and major events. The actions contained are set for annual review.

Next steps for 2026

The year ahead will be pivotal, with several key actions planned to maintain momentum and advance delivery:

- finalise and continue implementing the scopes 1 and 2 roadmaps, including progressing funding bids, feasibility work and early-stage investment proposals
- develop detailed business cases against our highest consuming sites for priority decarbonisation projects, ensuring they are financially sound and aligned with the ***Council's strategic priorities***[ix]
- continue the work of the Carbon Neutral Steering Group, using improved data and roadmap milestones to coordinate delivery across services
- prioritise the ***15 actions*** identified in the LAEP, setting out a clear framework of actions, responsibilities and sector specific targets for achieving areawide carbon neutrality by 2045
- expand the rollout of solar PV opportunities, progressing identified priority sites (we anticipate installing at least five projects in 2026), through the new procurement framework
- continue Carbon Literacy development for staff, Councillors and partners, supporting clearer, more informed decision making across the organisation
- enhance the emissions dashboards further, incorporating new datasets as they become available and improving the transparency of reporting for residents and partners
- strengthen partnership working, building on the 2024/25 stakeholder engagement and preparing sector specific collaborations that support delivery of the LAEP
- support the delivery of community energy projects, by identifying delivery models and strategic partnerships
- continue to support schools in the delivery of their decarbonisation plans
- develop a regional carbon offset strategy, to mitigate the impacts of residual emissions, approximately ten per cent of BCP's and area-wide targets.
- consider the impacts of achieving the 2030 target, given the changes in national policy and the investment/timeline required to upgrade the national grid
- consider the purchase of 100 per cent renewable electricity, either via a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) or a renewable tariff.

By continuing to take focused, practical action and by working closely with residents, communities, partners and businesses, BCP Council can maintain momentum and move with confidence towards a cleaner, greener and more resilient future.

The Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)

The Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)[iv] was officially launched on 24 October 2025, following over a year in development and Cabinet approval.

The plan provides a data-driven framework to target decarbonisation works in a way that benefits our most fuel impoverished residents first and uses public funds in the most timely and cost-effective way. Fifteen priority actions are ordered around the following four themes:

1. Crosscutting enabling actions (Actions 1-3)

2. Energy generation and infrastructure (Actions 4-7)

3. Building efficiency, retrofit and heat (Actions 8-12)

4. Transport (Actions 13-15)

We have now begun delivering against its 15 actions. Roadmaps focusing on achieving the areawide target of becoming carbon neutral by 2045 have been developed as part this plan to aid prioritised implementation.

Figure 9: Launch event attended by BCP Council Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder, MP, and representatives from City Science and Southwest Net Zero Hub as well as other partners and stakeholders.

LAEP actions and roadmaps to 2045

Crosscutting enabling actions

1. Investigate developing a Net Zero fund for financing LAEP delivery across all sectors
2. Support local green skills & workforce development to ensure supply chain capacity
3. Support the energy transition through local planning policies

Energy Generation & Infrastructure Actions

4. Set-up a formal process for reporting to & working with SSEN to optimise net-work planning
5. Support rooftop solar PV deployment across all buildings in the BCP area
6. Improve understanding of future alternative fuel supply chain
7. Encourage community energy projects in the BCP area by developing a support programme

Building Efficiency, Retrofit & Heat Actions

8. Support the development of the Dorset Retrofit Hub
9. Continue working on decarbonising the BCP Council Estate to meet the 2030 target
10. Carry out a scoping exercise to secure funding for Retrofit Works
11. Facilitate the development of District Heat Networks in the BCP area
12. Scale-up the Healthy Homes Dorset local insulation grant scheme & relevant

Transport Actions

13. Support the Local Transport Plan 4 to encourage mode shift to sustainable transport
14. Support PEVIS Actions to encourage the rollout of public EV charging infrastructure
15. Work towards a zero-emission council fleet and decarbonising the BCP bus fleet

Table 9: LAEP set of 15 actions coloured by theme category

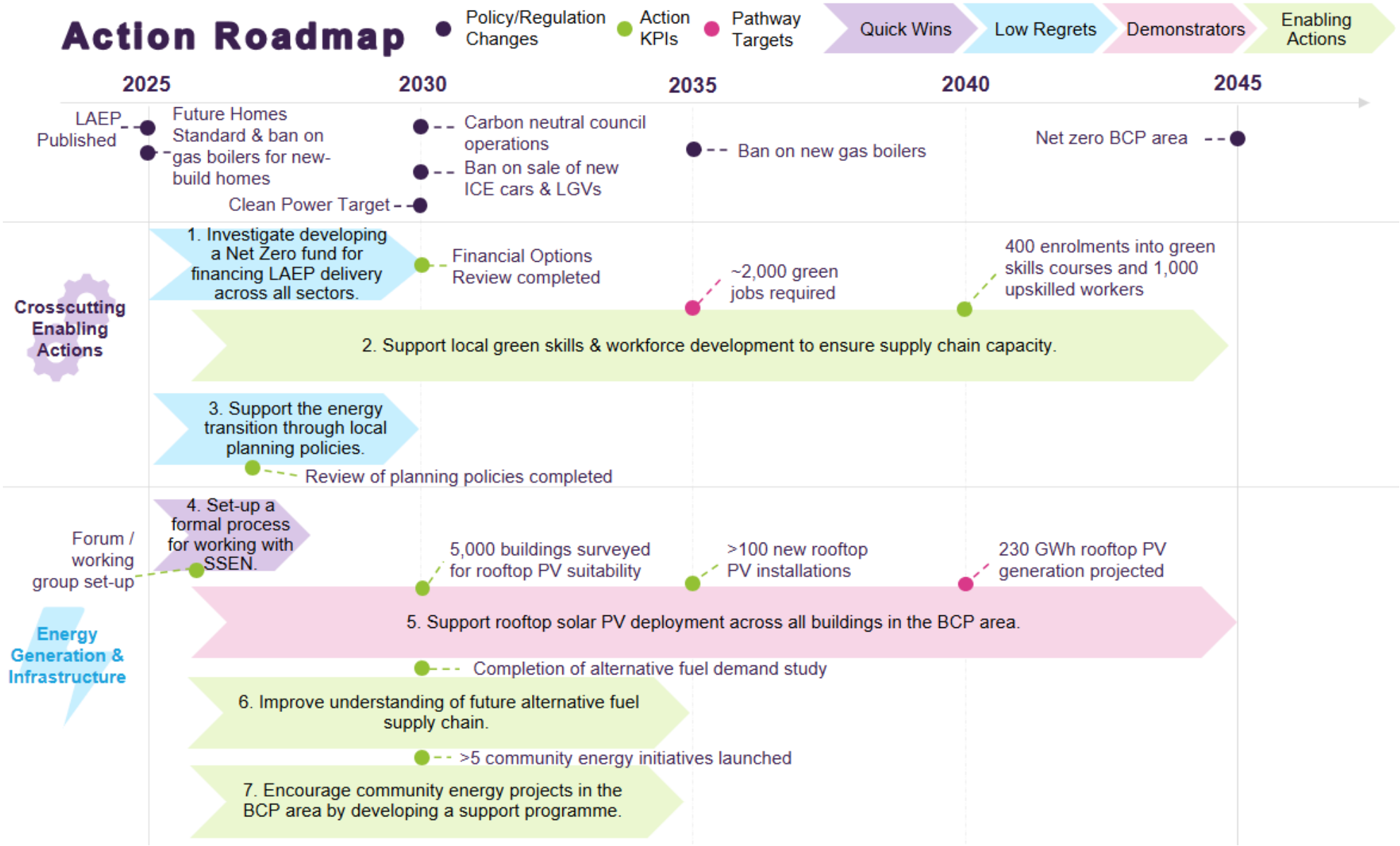


Figure 10: Roadmap for meeting the areawide emissions carbon neutral by 2045 target

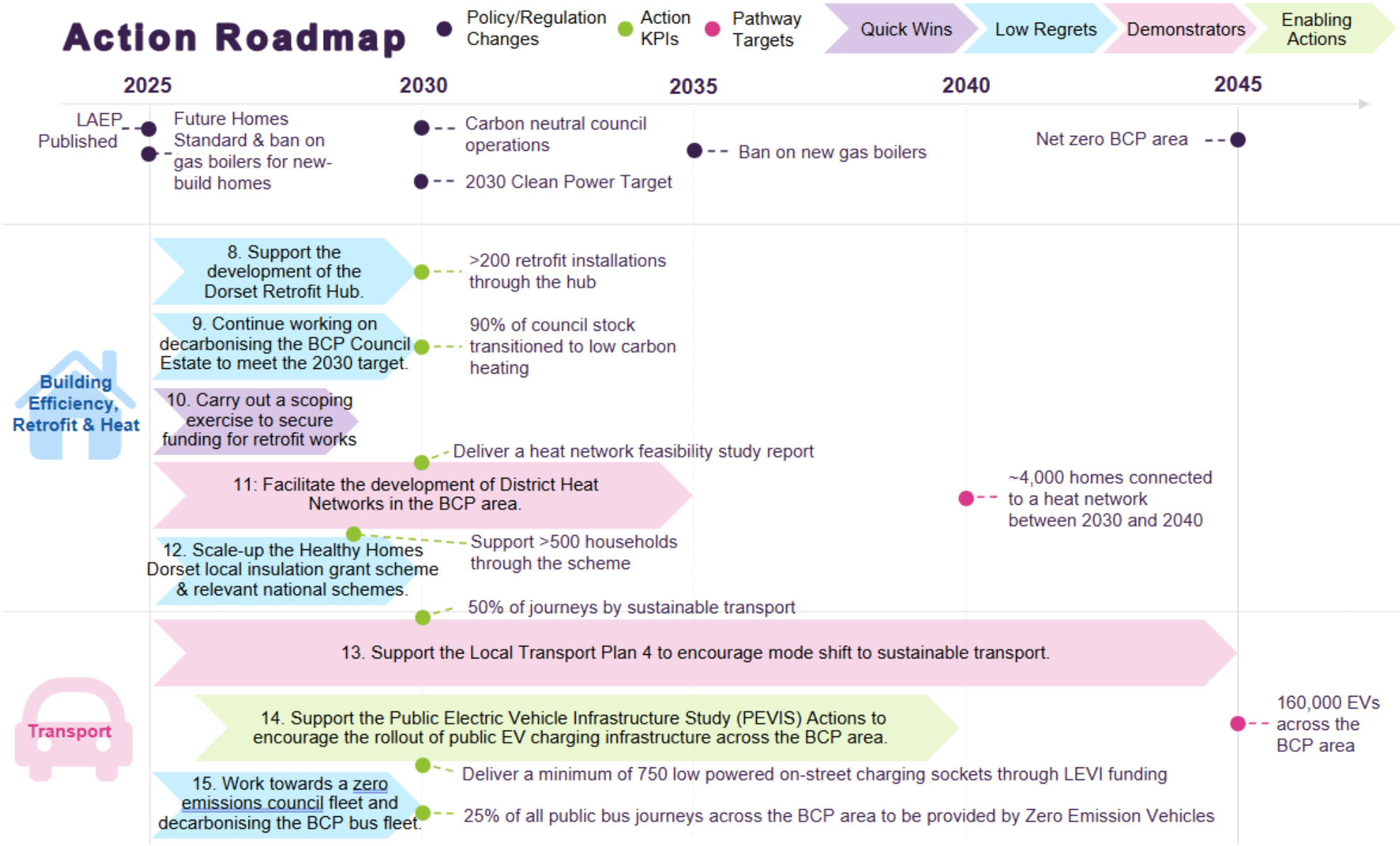


Figure 11: Roadmap for meeting the areawide emissions carbon neutral by 2045 target

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