



Waltham Forest

Climate Action Plan

This is an interactive document

[Vision](#) [Why we must act](#) [What we will do](#) [How we will do it](#)

We need to accelerate commitment for climate action to reach net zero by 2030

How does Waltham Forest reach net zero emissions by 2030? To understand the level of commitment and intervention that is needed, we developed three scenarios. Each of the three scenarios shows the estimated emissions reduction that could be achieved at varying levels of action.

These pathways highlight the need for all stakeholders across the borough to take significant climate action. Meeting the target of becoming net zero by 2030 can only be achieved through acting upon the highest level of ambition and commitment.

[+ What if we only implemented already committed policies?](#)

[+ What if the Council took strong leadership to directly influence emissions through new policy?](#)

[+ What if Waltham Forest pursued its maximum ambition for climate action?](#)

What if we only implemented already committed policies?

At the national level, across the Greater London Authority (GLA) and within Waltham Forest, a range of climate policies have already been committed to, such as national plans to decarbonise the electricity grid through renewable energy. These already committed policies will only reduce Waltham Forest's emissions by about 20%, in 2030 leaving a significant gap to bridge.

Year	Committed Policy	Strong Council Leadership	Maximum ambition
2020	700	700	700
2025	650	550	450
2030	550	350	250
2035	500	300	200
2040	450	250	150

Graph showing the amount of carbon emissions if the council only implemented committed policies.

¹ EPA (2022). Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator.

Click these to navigate to different sections

Click these to switch between subsections

Interactivity

Throughout the report, look out for the icons below to navigate and explore more content.



Open



Clickable Boxes

Click these to explore different content

“As is so often the case, Climate Change is hitting hardest for those on lowest incomes and in the most vulnerable position. Our Climate Plan is about taking bold action but it is also about fairness. Our plan means lower bills and warmer homes for all, but we will work hardest for those most in need.”

Cllr Grace Williams
Leader



“Our Climate Action Plan is about lower carbon emissions and better lives for our residents. Not one or the other. We have always been clear that we cannot do this alone – so we will give residents, businesses, employers and community groups the tools and support they need to help us all tackle the Climate Emergency together.”

Cllr Clyde Loakes
Deputy Leader of Climate and Air Quality



Summary

This Climate Action Plan sets out 20 actions, across four areas, which we will take to make this happen.

This is a huge challenge, and one that will need disruption, but we need disruption that is fair. Therefore, in each of the four areas, we also highlight a key disruption which will tackle the Climate Emergency, whilst improving the lives of our residents most in need. But more than that, our climate plan will change the life of residents and the look of the borough for the better.

The four action areas and the key disruption in each area are summarised below.

We, as a Council, are also committed to **Leading and Inspiring Collective Action**. Across each theme, we will take action to reduce our emissions from our own operations. Most importantly, we commit to placing climate action at the heart of everything we buy and undergo a culture shift in our procurement.

But we will also need your help. This is a huge challenge, and one we can only do together. Our aim is for Waltham Forest to be the UK's leading borough for collective climate action.

Click the icons on the right to skip to each section





Climate change is happening now and is happening locally

The need to act now

We are facing a Climate and Environmental Emergency.

Climate change is happening now and is happening locally. We have already started to see the local cost of climate change but, more than ever before, with the energy crisis we also see the local benefits of taking climate action. We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last who can do something about it.

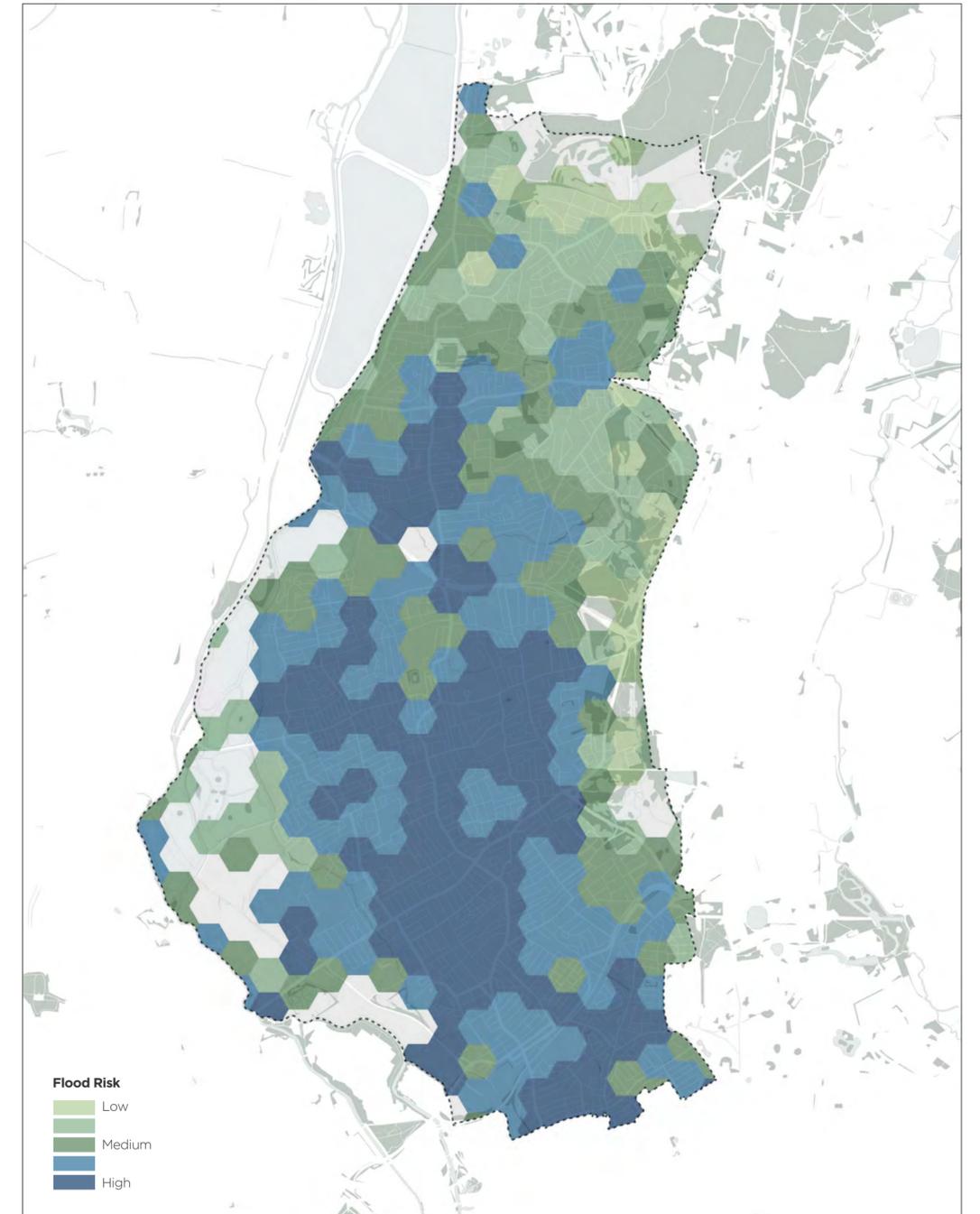
Emissions from human activities have increased dramatically over the last several decades. These emissions, primarily the burning of fossil fuels for electricity, heating, and transportation, are accelerating climate change, and have increased climate risks in the UK, more locally in London and Waltham Forest¹.

Waltham Forest is in the top 30 worst affected Local Authorities from heatwaves in England². The unprecedented heatwaves of summer 2022 led to fires across London, including in Epping Forest and Bushwood, Leytonstone. The heat also threatened lives. A spike in 999 calls put extra pressure on the NHS. Care services supporting the elderly and vulnerable were particularly put under increased stress.

Besides heatwaves, Waltham Forest has also been hit by flash floods in Brooke Road, Higham Hill and in the Highams Park district, on local roads like Waterhall Lane. The floods inundated homes and businesses all over London, and submerged several London Underground Stations, including Earl's Court, Kentish Town and Turnpike Lane Tube.

The following maps created by the Greater London Authority (GLA) in partnership with Bloomberg Associates show the heat and flood risks across the whole borough³.

Flood Risk in Waltham Forest



¹ UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022

² London World

³ Greater London Authority and Bloomberg Associates: Climate Risk Mapping

High levels of air pollution affect our residents' health, causing serious respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses. In London, 9,400 premature deaths are attributed to poor air quality.⁴

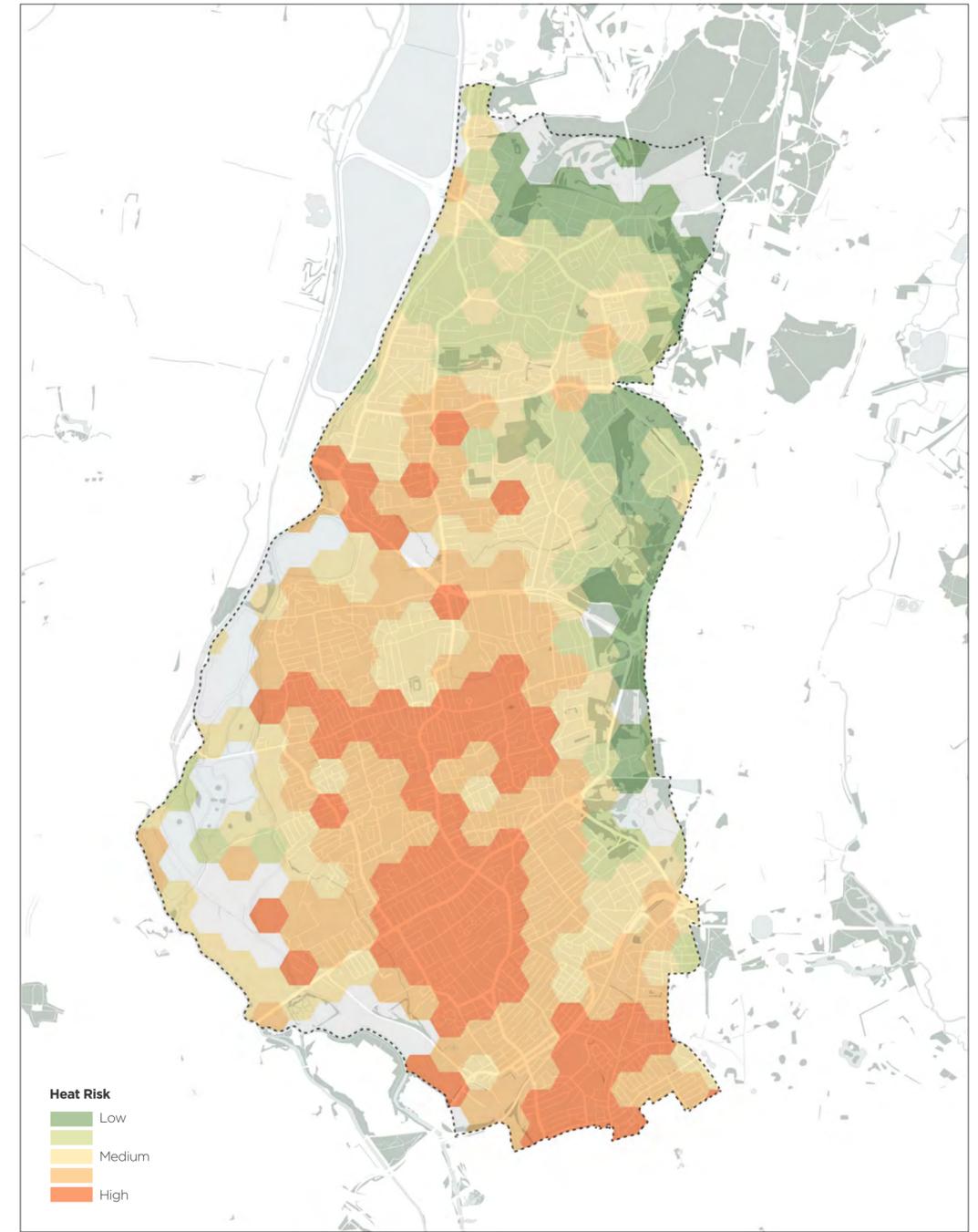
Sadly, these disastrous effects are just the beginning, but each of these effects is the result of our human choices: how we heat our homes; how we travel; what we buy and what we eat, highlighting the importance of acting now to tackle climate change.

National governments cannot tackle climate change alone. Local Authorities have a vital role to play. Our local area is the place where many people live, work, rest, and play. We can tackle the sources of our carbon emissions in a way that works for the local strengths and challenges of the borough. As a borough, we must work hard to both adapt to and become more resilient to these climate impacts, while reducing our emissions to avoid the worst of them.

Waltham Forest has created this Action Plan to set out how we can all play our part in reducing emissions and improving climate resilience across the borough.

⁴ London Councils: Air pollution and the effect on our health

Heat Risk in Waltham Forest 



Benefits of taking local climate action

Taking action to tackle climate change also has real benefits, and many of those benefits are local. The energy crisis that has taken hold in 2022 has exacerbated fuel poverty which is likely to disproportionately impact lower income households,⁵ with an alarming two-thirds of UK households potentially being pushed into fuel poverty by January 2023 because of rising bills.⁶ The climate crisis and the energy crisis are connected. The same solutions to tackle the rising energy crisis are also key solutions to tackle the climate crisis, such as insulating homes to reduce the demand for energy and generating more energy from local and renewable sources.

Local climate actions will not only help with the energy crisis - they have a wider range of benefits, which will improve the health and prosperity of Waltham Forest residents, enabling a better quality of life for all. From green jobs and growth of the local economy to more active and happy lives, and cleaner air and water, climate actions have an immediate tangible impact on residents' lives⁷.

Saving Money

Residents would benefit from reduced electricity and gas bills. Moreover, less congestion can also make it easier for people to walk or ride a bicycle, which allows them to save money they might otherwise spend on fuel and car expenses.



Local Economy

The local economy would benefit through the creation of new revenue streams such as renewable energy generation and a circular approach to resources.



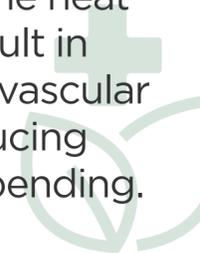
Jobs

Green jobs -skilled, unskilled, and professional- would be created through the procurement of new services or deployment of technologies, including retrofitting hundreds of buildings, with the multiplier benefits of employees' spending in the wider economy.



Health and Wellbeing

Residents' health will benefit from better air quality from less fossil fuel burning and minimisation of the heat island effect. This would result in reduced respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses, therefore also reducing absenteeism and healthcare spending.



⁵ Office for National Statistics

⁶ CarbonBrief

⁷ C40Cities: Benefits of urban climate action

To act on climate, we need to disrupt – but ensure that it is done in a fair and equitable way.

Creating a net zero future will require a substantial change in many of the ways we live our lives and will require action by all. Waltham Forest is proudly taking the bold actions set out in this Climate Action Plan. To reduce the disastrous consequences of climate change, we need action to be taken by all residents, central government, and businesses alike to radically reduce carbon emissions over the next decade.

Social justice and climate justice are interlinked; disadvantaged residents are both more vulnerable to the impact of climate change and have the least resource available to deal with its impact. This means that any solutions to tackle climate change should consider the needs of communities and contribute to tackling inequalities. We need to disrupt to achieve this change, but we need to disrupt in a fair way, to ensure that we support those most in need. We see this Climate Action Plan as a unique and important opportunity to ensure that our net zero future can work for all residents, creating new social value, and improving health, safety, wellbeing, and resilience across the borough.

While this is a single document that lays out our plan, it's important to see our climate action as an evolving, living and breathing journey. Together we can shape our path to a thriving net zero future.





**We cannot do this without the engagement of
all Waltham Forest residents**

What you think

We cannot do this without the engagement of all Waltham Forest residents. We have built this plan based on what you have told us. This is what we have heard.

From your views, one thing is clear: we must do more to act on climate change. To achieve this requires continued forms of collaboration and engagement with diverse groups that call Waltham Forest their home. We'll speak more about future collaboration and engagement in Part 3 of this Climate Action Plan. Importantly, we see this Climate Action Plan as a continuation of working together: we needed your input to make the plan and we will need more of your input to make it a reality.



⁸ Online survey conducted between November and December 2019 which engaged 3,090 Waltham Forest residents. LBWF Climate Emergency Research Report.

⁹ An engagement with over 1,400 children and young people carried out across November and December 2019. Kaizen Report Waltham Forest Climate Emergency Youth Consultation.

Timeline with Progress to Date¹⁰

Waltham Forest strives to be an ambitious and innovative Council when it comes to acting on climate change. While we have taken important steps along our transition to become a net zero and thriving borough, our journey is not yet over. We see this climate action plan as a key bridging point to continue our pathway as a borough. It lays out the actions that will be built upon over the coming years.




Waltham Forest established London's first independent Climate Emergency Commission.

- Engaged nearly 4,000 residents (including 1,400 young people)
- Provided recommendations to address the climate emergency.
- In 2021, a five year £1m per year funding announced to bring Climate Emergency Commission recommendations to life.

The award-winning 'Enjoy Waltham Forest' scheme resulted in:

- 50km of segregated cycle tracks; 642 cycle hangars with 3852 spaces, 172 blended crossings and 66 new and improved crossings - but also real outcomes - a 45% increase in the average daily number of cyclists and a 95% reduction in number of households exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution¹¹



These initiatives are a start but reaching net zero by 2030 is ambitious and there is a lot more to be done if we are to be successful. This Climate Action Plan sets a vision for Waltham Forest and presents some of the climate actions required to achieve net zero by 2030.

¹⁰ Waltham Forest website: Climate Change

¹¹ Department for Transport - Gear Change: One Year On, 2021

Where do our emissions come from?

To reduce our carbon emissions, it is important to understand where they come from. As part of this Climate Action Plan, we analysed the key sources of carbon emissions that are generated across the borough. In 2020, activities in Waltham Forest generated a total of 692 kilo tonnes (kt) of carbon (CO₂e).

The graph shows the amount of carbon emissions from each sector.

Sources of Emissions



Waste - 13%

Waste is an important source of emissions. These emissions occur from the greenhouse gases that are produced when our waste is collected, handled, and disposed. Although these waste management activities may occur outside the boundaries of Waltham Forest, they are driven by the waste that is generated by residents and businesses.

Businesses - 17%

The buildings of businesses, including shops, warehouses, and offices, are also a big source of emissions in Waltham Forest. These emissions originate from the energy required to heat, cool, light and power these buildings and the activities within them.

Waste
13%

Business
17%

Transport
28%

Homes
42%

Homes - 42%

The largest source of these emissions came from heating, cooling, and lighting our homes. These emissions are from the gas that we use for heating and cooking, as well as the electricity used for lighting and powering appliances, from washing machines to televisions and everything in between.

Transport - 28%

Transport is also a key source of carbon emissions across Waltham Forest. This includes the emissions from businesses and deliveries across the borough, as well as residents' travel. What's more, this share doesn't include the flights that residents of the borough take for holidays and other trips - if we were to take these into account, the full figure of the impact of residents of Waltham Forest would be even larger. Transport emissions, alongside those coming from heating homes, are the main causes of air pollution. Therefore, decreasing the carbon emissions from these two sectors will also improve air quality and the health of our residents.

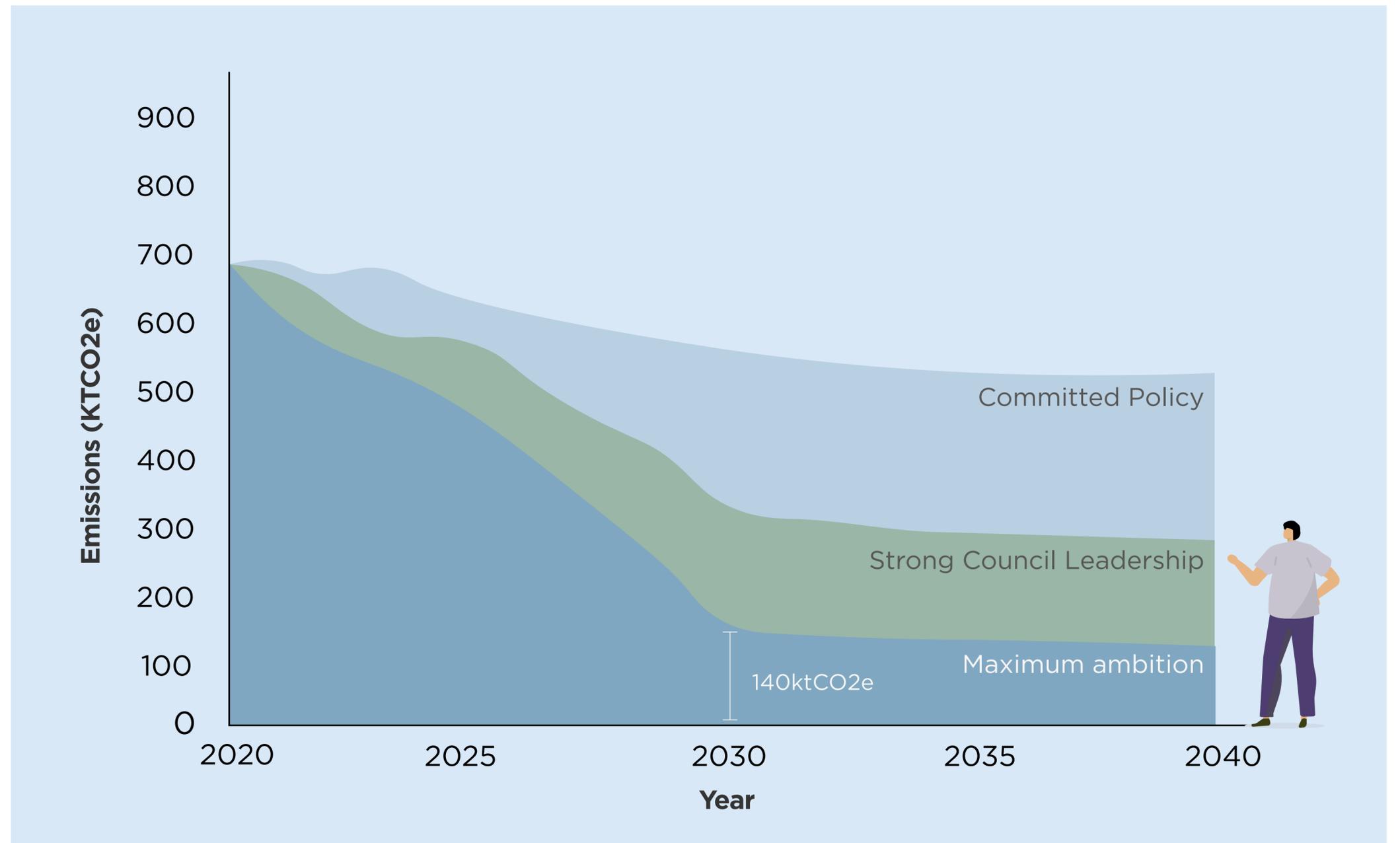
We need to accelerate commitment for climate action to reach net zero by 2030

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These pathways highlight the need for all stakeholders across the borough to take significant climate action. Meeting the target of becoming net zero by 2030 can only be achieved through acting upon the highest level of ambition and commitment.

The graph depicts the three pathways analysed for reducing the emissions.

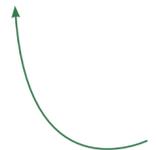
Our Path to Net Zero



Pathway 1: Committed Policy



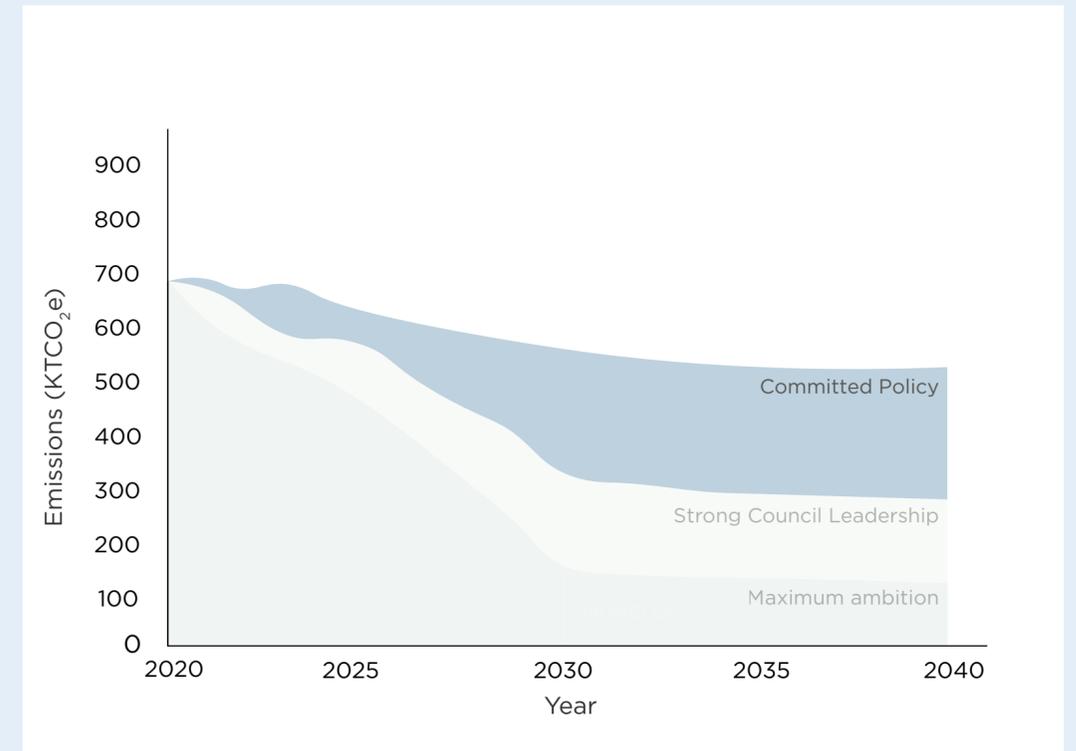
What if we only implemented already committed policies?



Click to toggle between Pathways

What if we only implemented already committed policies?

At the national level, across the Greater London Authority (GLA) and within Waltham Forest, a range of climate policies have already been committed to, such as national plans to decarbonise the electricity grid through renewable energy. These already committed policies will only reduce Waltham Forest's emissions by about 20% in 2030, leaving a significant gap to bridge.



Graph shows the amount of carbon emissions if the council only implemented committed policies.

¹² EPA (2022). Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator.

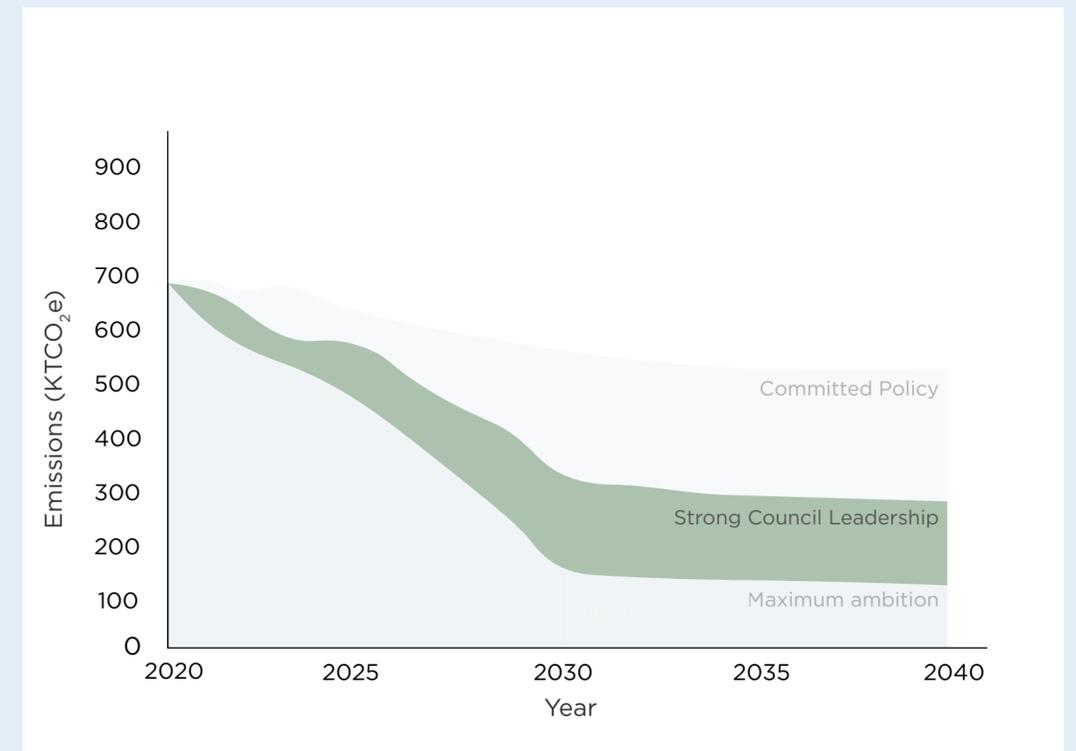
Pathway 2: Strong Council Leadership



What if the Council took strong leadership to directly influence emissions through new policy?

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The Council can influence a share of these emissions more directly through the toolkit of policy instruments like retrofitting all fuel poor homes and setting low carbon standards on everything the Council buys. The influence of these range of policy instruments that the council has more direct control over can further reduce emissions to about half by 2030.



Graph shows the amount of carbon emissions if the council took strong leadership.

Pathway 3: Maximum Ambition

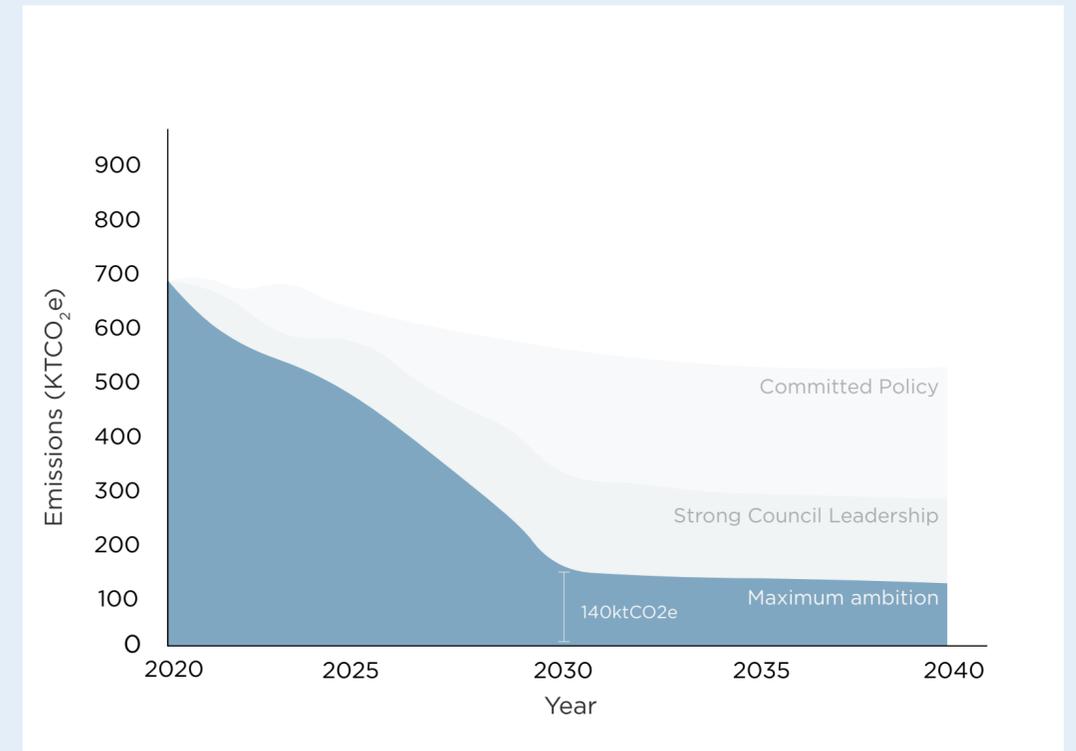


What if Waltham Forest pursued its maximum ambition for climate action?

What if Waltham Forest pursued its maximum ambition for climate action?

To make the most significant reduction in carbon emissions, action must be taken collectively. This scenario is achieved through a combination of local leadership and supportive action from all stakeholders across the borough like residents, businesses, and charities. But this will also require central government to play its role and help drive decarbonisation. Pursuing this maximum ambition can help the borough slash its emissions by 80% by 2030. Even then, some emissions remain (called residual emissions), and to reach net zero emissions these will need to be offset through, for example, the planting of trees which can absorb carbon.

Using the maximum ambition scenario, we estimate that 140 ktCO₂e of residual emissions will still be generated each year. This is equivalent emissions to driving approximately 30,000 petrol cars for a year and would take over 2 million tree seedlings grown for 10 years to sequester this amount of carbon emissions¹². While these residual emissions will need to be offset in 2030, Waltham Forest will continue to reduce these emissions over the decades to come. We will update our emissions trajectory over time to ensure that we are progressing towards absolute zero emissions.



Graph shows the amount of carbon emissions if the council pursued maximum ambition.



We need to accelerate commitment for climate action to reach net zero by 2030

Energy Efficient Buildings

2030 Vision: All buildings in Waltham Forest are energy efficient, making them affordable, comfortable and adaptable to the changing climate.

Key target: 80% of homes in Waltham Forest have achieved an EPC level of B (or equivalent) or higher by 2030.

▶ [Climate Actions](#)

▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples](#)

ACTION 1

Key Disruption for Climate Justice
Retrofits for all fuel poor homes across the borough

Providing targeted support to retrofit households that are living in fuel poverty across the borough can help to reduce energy bills and be a first step to lifting families out of fuel poverty. This will involve large capital changes (e.g new heating systems, new wall insulation) but we can start with lower-cost changes (e.g draughtproofing, LED bulbs) that can be introduced quickly and so help lower people's bills.

ACTION 2

Build like it's 2030: go further on the standards of our own developments

We've made great progress improving the energy efficiency of buildings in the borough, but we need to go further. We commit that all our new developments will be built to an even higher standard (such as BREEAM Excellent) or commit to specific measures (like no gas boilers, and always triple glazing).

ACTION 3

Encourage quick-win energy improvements for households

Helping households to improve energy efficiency, such as providing energy 'MOTs' to pinpoint the best actions to improve the performance of a house, or through a 'DIY insulation challenge' to create a movement around making these low-complexity, high return improvements that can help lower energy bills quickly.

ACTION 4

Create a Waltham Forest Retrofit Company

To develop the skills, approaches and techniques to provide great quality and value retrofits across the borough, to cater to the increasing demand with confidence and develop training and employment opportunities for local residents.

ACTION 5

Launch a retrofit loan for homes

To help households act sooner, we will launch a zero- or low-interest loan, focused on retrofitting to improve the energy efficiency of buildings, such as insulation and double glazing.

ACTION 6

Provide tailored support for the top 20 business carbon emitters in the borough

The high share of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across the borough can make addressing emissions a challenge due to the distribution of emissions sources. We will provide targeted support to the top emitting organisations in the borough to help reduce their emissions through energy efficiency and other measures. But we recognise this is a small share of businesses, so we will then provide a network to share experiences and ideas - often the best champions will be other businesses themselves.

Energy Efficient Buildings

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Key target: All buildings in Waltham Forest have achieved an EPC level of B (or equivalent) or higher by 2030.



Leading and Inspiring Collective Action

As a Council, we are responsible for many buildings and land across the borough, which themselves can be a source of carbon emissions. We have a great opportunity to make the most of these assets, making them as energy efficient as possible and showcase the range of tools, techniques and technologies that can be used.

Retrofit all Council owned, occupied or developed buildings to an average of EPC level B or higher by 2030 - We will improve the energy efficiency of each of our buildings to make sure they are compatible with a net zero future, such as improving double or triple glazing, adding insulation, and more.

Install solar panels on all viable Council-owned buildings by 2030 - The rooftops of our buildings could be great places to generate renewable energy. We will carry out a feasibility study to understand which are the most viable to install solar panels.



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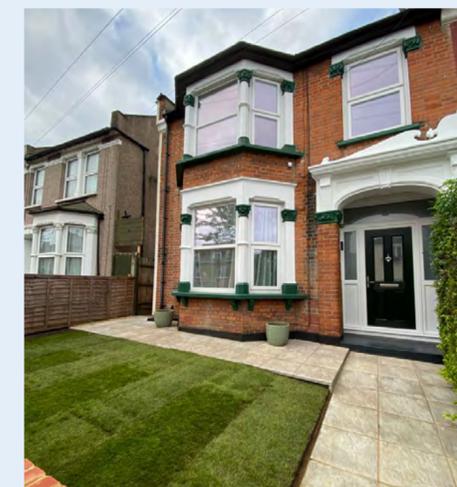
▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples](#)

Examples

47 Greenleaf Road Eco Show Home - The Council has retrofitted a Victorian terraced property on Greenleaf Road to reduce its carbon emissions, moving from an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating E to EPC rating A. This has resulted in the property's fuel bills being cut by two thirds. The retrofit and refurbishment works were completed at the end of August 2021 and the property was made available for visitors to view as an 'Eco Show Home', as part of the 2021 Open House London Festival.

Sixty bricks Ltd - This is the Council's wholly owned property company. Through Sixty bricks we intend to build to Zero Carbon standards. All the developments in Phase 2, currently 5 sites totalling c300 units at various stages of the design and planning process, will be delivered as part of a fully zero carbon compliant scheme in 2024.



A Place for People not Cars

2030 Vision: The safe streets and great pedestrian and cycling infrastructure means that most resident journeys are made by walking, cycling or taking zero emissions public transport that is accessible to all. Waltham Forest is a great place to live, with less traffic, less noise, and less pollution. Creating places for people rather than cars will support and strengthen the communities who need it the most.

Key target: At least 80% of journeys in Waltham Forest are made by walking, cycling or other public transport modes.

▶ [Climate Actions](#)

▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples](#)

ACTION 9

Expand EV charging across the borough

Make it possible for all residents to charge electric vehicles by **providing enough public chargers within a short walk** of their homes and making it easier for residents to use off-street (home) charging points.



ACTION 7

End the waiting list for cycle hangar spaces

Not having a safe space to store a bike can discourage cycling. We want to **increase cycle storage spaces** particularly for priority residents (those with no garage or shed space) across the borough to promote cycling.



ACTION 10

Reclaim streets for people

Pedestrianising the town centre or high-street roads on Sundays **promotes walking and active travel** and opens up the potential to use this space for other social and creative activities.

ACTION 12

Develop 15-minute neighbourhoods to ensure the needs of residents and businesses can be met locally

By further expanding the ability to move around via active travel, including more **dedicated cycle paths across the borough** and expanding the 'Enjoy Waltham Forest' programme.

ACTION 8

Key Disruption for Climate Justice Break free from our dependence on the private car

We will help residents who can move away from expensive car ownership by expanding access to car sharing, for when they really need access to a car. Private car ownership rises steadily with household income, whilst poorer households and those from a diverse background are more likely to suffer the consequences of air pollution.

We will promote, expand but also subsidise where necessary, access to car sharing (car clubs, peer to peer lending), and encourage new developments to include **shared transport options like cargo bikes**.



ACTION 11

Repurpose borough car parks for other uses

The nine car parks across Waltham Forest owned by the council will be repurposed and transformed into alternative uses such as affordable housing and **parks to create new spaces for people** to enjoy the borough.



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▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples](#)

Leading and Inspiring Collective Action

Like most businesses, our employees who use fossil fuel vehicles to commute on a daily basis generate carbon emissions. We also have our own fleet that we use to provide services across the borough. We want to make the Council a place that is for people and not cars.

Halve commuting emissions of Waltham Forest employees - We can do this through a range of measures like introducing car-free days (unless car-pooling), an EV salary sacrifice scheme, car sharing schemes and reducing the number of parking spaces available.

All Council's fleet (including leased vehicles) to be fully electric by 2030 - We will replace all of our fleet vehicles with EVs and make the most of cargo deliveries where possible like the ZED courier service.



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▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples](#)

Examples

Enjoy Waltham Forest - The multi-award winning and nationally recognised Enjoy Waltham Forest programme is leading the way in designing streets, especially residential and minor roads, so that they experience less vehicle traffic and are more enjoyable for walking and cycling. While major roads can be responsible for moving traffic, residential streets benefit from being quieter, less polluted and more pleasant places to live. As a result, local streets are safer, especially for children to cross the road and walk and cycle to school.

Zero Emission Deliveries (ZED) - ZED is the Council's zero-emission delivery service that utilises cargo bikes and trikes to make deliveries around Waltham Forest and beyond for local and national businesses. The service is run as a partnership between Zedify and Waltham Forest Council. Since the ZED service was launched in September 2017, it has:

- Delivered over 224,000 packages
- Travelled over 222,500 km
- Saved an estimated 48 tonnes CO₂ equivalent emissions, which is comparable to recycling over 2,000 rubbish bags instead of sending them to landfill¹⁴.

📖 School Streets programme

School streets are roads outside schools which have a temporary restriction for motorised traffic during school drop-off and pick-up times. Waltham Forest now has 20 School Streets in place. The introduction of a School Street at Willow Brook Primary School, Leyton, saw a 20% increase in active modes of travel, with 10% more pupils walking, 5% scooting and 5% cycling.



Consuming Less, Recycling More

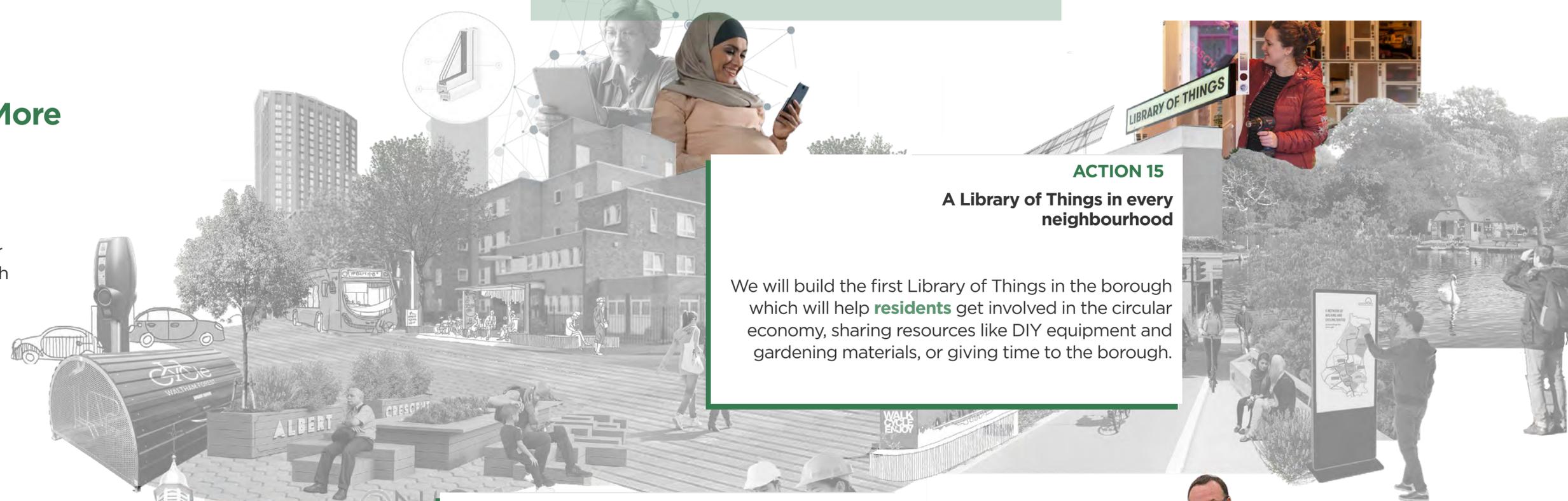
2030 Vision: Waltham Forest is a zero-waste borough, following the “reduce, reuse, recycle” approach. Our residents make sustainable choices about what they buy, and businesses support repair and refurbishment. All residents have access to fresh healthy and sustainable food which is affordable.

Key target: Increase recycling rates to 50% and reduce food waste by 50% per person by 2030.

▶ [Climate Actions](#)

▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples](#)



ACTION 15

A Library of Things in every neighbourhood

We will build the first Library of Things in the borough which will help **residents** get involved in the circular economy, sharing resources like DIY equipment and gardening materials, or giving time to the borough.

ACTION 14

Consult residents on introducing separate food waste collection and increasing recycling through fortnightly residual waste collection

Develop a new collection strategy based on the results of the consultation on improving and **expanding the recycling collection system**. We will combine any changes with **new communication campaigns and a strategy for flats**, where it can often be hardest to recycle.



ACTION 16

Increase and support access to reuse and repair initiatives

To promote a culture of reuse and repair, we will help **re-establish Repair Cafes** by helping to find the skills that are in highest demand, like electricians. We will add to the network of water refill stations to **cut the use of single use plastic bottles** and add to the materials that can be accessed for reuse at our Household Waste & Recycling Centres.

ACTION 13

Key Disruption for Climate Justice Reduce food poverty and food waste

We will **redistribute surplus food** to minimise avoidable food waste, via the Food Distribution Hub to community provisions such as food banks, social supermarkets, pantries, and community cafes. **Reducing food waste** is good for climate but it also helps households save money and face the cost-of-living crisis.



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▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples](#)

Leading and Inspiring Collective Action

To keep the Council running, we purchase and consume a range of items, from food in canteens, to the desks in our offices and the buildings we operate. We can use our purchasing powers to ensure that we are procuring the most sustainable options. Through this, we can work with local suppliers across Waltham Forest and help them to create new low carbon goods and services that others throughout the borough can access too.

Place climate at the heart of everything that the Council purchases - Help to create a culture shift to acknowledge the importance of climate. We will develop criteria and social value measures to integrate climate and carbon considerations into our procurement processes, helping us to work with local suppliers to develop low carbon choices.

Eliminate single use packaging from all Council operations - We will work with suppliers to cut the use of single-use plastics across all Council operations in favour of reusable options, especially in our events and catering.

Showcase sustainable choices across Council-run events and destinations - Through the range of events that take place across the borough, like the ones that take place in Fellowship Square, we can ensure that sustainable options are promoted, such as meat-free food options. Dedicated events can also be hosted to highlight the climate emergency to encourage all residents to engage with the climate.



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▶ [Examples](#)

Examples

Community Fridge in Leytonstone - A solar-powered fridge is helping Leytonstone residents stop food from being wasted. The Leytonstone Community Fridge enables residents and businesses to share surplus food and for anyone to help themselves to quality food that would otherwise be wasted.

Also known as ‘Solidarity’ or ‘Honesty’ Fridges, Community Fridges have been successfully introduced in Spain, Germany and other parts of the UK. There are currently 33 Community Fridge Network Fridges open across the UK, which on average redistribute half a tonne of food per month.

Library of Things - A Library of Things enables residents to borrow items, such as power tools, for a small fee, instead of buying them. This helps to save money, as you don’t have to buy things you rarely use and reduce waste by cutting down on clutter. Using a service like this can also bring your local community together by sharing and learning skills like DIY and repair together. Library of Things Ltd is a company doing just this, lending you useful things for your home, projects and adventures at 11 locations across London.



The Green School Menu League

Waltham Forest has been recognised as having the greenest school menus in the UK, following The Green School Menu League competition. A total of 50 schools in the area are catered for by the Waltham Forest Catering team, with around one million meat-free school meals being served a year.



A Greener, More Resilient Borough

2030 Vision: Waltham Forest is one of the greenest boroughs in London. Residents have access to high-quality green space within 15 minutes of their homes to support their mental and physical well-being. The air is clean, and the local wildlife thrives.

Key target: 40% of the total area of the borough will consist of open spaces (such as natural and semi-natural greenspace, green corridors, allotments, civic spaces, playgrounds and sports facilities).

▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples 1 & 2](#)

▶ [Example 3](#)



ACTION 17

Key Disruption for Climate Justice Collective action to build flood resilience

Some of the most vulnerable homes in the borough are also at risk of flooding, but we can all take action to build better flood resilience. The Council will continue to seek funding for new and improved infrastructure, but as part of this action plan we will start a new initiative to work with residents to take action at home. This will involve **increasing the permeability of driveways, adding water storage and planting greenery which retains rainwater.** This will only succeed with a collective effort.

ACTION 18

Extend our schemes to increase drainage in flood risk areas

We will implement **Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)** through planning requirements – SuDS are drainage solutions that mimic natural drainage regimes, **using green and blue infrastructure to reduce surface water flooding**, while also improving water quality and **enhancing the amenity and biodiversity value** of the environment. SuDS provide an alternative to traditional drainage networks of pipes and sewers.

ACTION 19

Extend tree planting schemes

Establishing 'forests within the Forest' will benefit all residents. Waltham Forest has the fourth highest canopy cover in London, but we need to go further. This is why the Council will work to **identify areas with greater tree planting opportunities**, such as **Lea Valley and Epping Forest**, and partner with other London Boroughs to increase the amount of trees in, but also near, the borough. But we will also **protect mature trees**, which typically absorb more carbon than younger trees but also absorb water to reduce the risk of flooding.

ACTION 20

Use development and planning to make Waltham Forest a haven for nature

Carbon emissions are very important, but they are far from our only goal. When we build, and when we retrofit buildings, we must use these opportunities to **increase biodiversity**. 'Biophilic' design is the idea of getting **closer to the natural environment** in what we build – a block of flats, and a park do not necessarily need to be separate things. The Council will use planning tools to help us prevent developments which hinder our goal to be a greener and more resilient borough. We will build a **leading example of biophilic design** in the borough. We will also explore requiring a percentage of floor space in new developments to be green space.

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▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples 1 & 2](#)

▶ [Example 3](#)

Leading and Inspiring Collective Action

As a Council, we own land across the borough, and we are therefore responsible for managing it properly to build resilience and protect environmental quality across Waltham Forest.

Boost biodiversity across the Council estate

- We will introduce green roofs and retrofit street furniture to ensure we manage our spaces in a way that can support biodiversity and wildlife.

Expand Biodiversity expertise within the Council

- The Council will establish a Senior Leadership Team lead for biodiversity expertise and appoint an ecologist to deliver the Biodiversity Action Plan and coordinate work with partners across the borough, ensuring that biodiversity is mainstreamed into decision-making.



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▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples 1 & 2](#)

▶ [Example 3](#)

Examples 1 & 2

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London, Sustainable Development - This project transformed a 2.5km² brownfield site into a stage fit for the Olympics, while creating a resilient and sustainable public space for everyone to enjoy.

The park's embodied carbon was significantly reduced by using recycled soil from the Olympic soil hospital. Large volumes of site material were remediated and reused to construct the site's new infrastructure, and 8.5km of riverside were transformed to create tranquil, sustainable waterways.

After the Games ended, the temporary venues and structures have been dismantled and a permanent parkland was created for residents and visitors to take a break from the bustle of city life.

Bee Friendly Streets, Waltham Forest -

#BeeFriendlyStreets allows the Council to ditch the chemical sprays that are often used on our roads, and replace them with traditional hand weeding methods to create greener streets for our pollinators that allow them to thrive. This is an example of our approach of collective action: communities working together to take action. We already have 57 'Bee Friendly Streets' but we want many more to follow.



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▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples 1 & 2](#)

▶ [Example 3](#)

Example 3

Taikoo Green Ribbon, Hong Kong, Biophilic Design - Biophilic design means that nature plays a meaningful role in the design and experience of the world we build. The Taikoo Green Ribbon is a design for an office building in Hong Kong intended to revolutionise the future workplace. It blurs the boundaries between life and work, inside and outside, manmade and nature, creating a local ecosystem with human experience, greenery, and biodiversity at its heart.

This biophilic design was guided by eight principles, four of which are highlighted on the right:



Positive Social Impact



Enhanced Biodiversity



Human Focused



Leisure & Amenities



This Climate Action Plan is just the beginning

How do we make this plan a reality?

We need to dramatically reduce our carbon emissions in the next 8 years.

But we also need to ensure Waltham Forest is a great place to live, for all residents. This will be difficult. We will need a huge amount of collective energy and commitment. This will involve collaboration between all of us here in Waltham Forest, from community groups, the Council, households, schools, and businesses big and small.

We have outlined some of the key actions that we will take as a borough in the coming years to reduce our environmental impact and adapt to our changing climate. But how can we make this Plan a reality? We see this plan as a starting point to accelerate action. We must test these actions and learn from our successes and challenges, helping us to scale up actions across the borough over time.

We will work across four key areas to propel climate action in Waltham Forest.

Community Engagement

The transition towards net zero emissions will only be successful if it works for everyone across the diversity of Waltham Forest. To ensure that we are pursuing the right actions, in the right way, deep and ongoing engagement with people all over Waltham Forest is crucial.

We will continue to engage residents and businesses to build a movement around climate action. We will create a resident climate panel to gather thoughts and opinions from a representative group to steer our collective action to tackle climate change. We will create a crowd-funding scheme for residents to determine priorities for investment in their local area. Finally, we create a public platform to track our progress on specific actions and targets, and help you to hold us accountable for taking the action we need.

Funding

Delivering all the actions laid out in this Climate Action Plan will take a significant amount of money. The pursuit of a net zero and thriving future by 2030 is a top priority for Waltham Forest. The Council is committed to investing in the delivery of these actions.

While this will play an important part in the overall journey, it is not possible to fund everything from the Council budget alone. We also need public and private funding to come together, as well as businesses and residents themselves to take action, where possible. This is a great opportunity to invest in our future. The next stage of work will involve a more detailed financial analysis. We will approach government departments, energy companies and other partners to invest in the future of Waltham Forest, and will explore all finance options available, such as decarbonisation funds, social impact bonds, and other forms of blended finance.



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Responsibility

We need to put a structure in place to ensure we deliver the action committed in this plan, to ensure that the changes benefit the full range of residents in the borough and to ensure the money is spent appropriately. The responsibility for achieving this plan lies with all of us but will be driven by 3 groups.

- First, inside the Council, we will set up a Climate Emergency Delivery Board, chaired by our Deputy Chief Executive.
- Second, from your elected Councillors, through the Climate Scrutiny Committee and the Waltham Forest Cabinet where necessary.

- Third, from residents, through the Resident Climate Panel and scrutiny committee meetings, which are all open to the public. Finally, we will be creating a simple online public platform showing our progress to make it easier for residents to provide this oversight.

Monitoring

The actions in this plan are ambitious. To make sure that we are heading in the right direction, we will need to keep track of how we are doing, and we invite residents to do the same. We will create a public platform for residents to be able to engage with and track our progress and performance so we can ensure we remain accountable.



What can I do now?

This is just the beginning.

Achieving net zero by 2030 is extremely ambitious and we will need everyone in the borough to play their part. Many of the actions presented here that can achieve the greatest impact on reducing our carbon emissions are in the hands of the residents of Waltham Forest, the businesses and other public sector institutions. Tackling the Climate and Environmental Emergencies will be a collective effort.

Over the coming years, we will work hard to further develop the supporting advice, tools and finance for delivering this plan, including a detailed financial analysis for funding the climate actions necessary to reach net zero by 2030 and a resident engagement plan.

In the meantime, we need your help to get started. We need your help to create the fair, thriving but low-carbon future for Waltham Forest. Below are 3 things you can do right now:

Spreading the word and influencing others to join in is just as important. Every little help and every person joining the movement can make a difference. We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last who can do something about it.



Click the boxes to explore resources!

What do we mean by Net Zero?

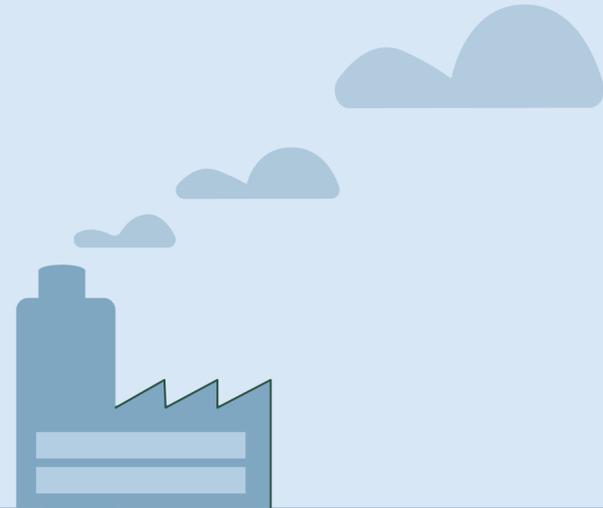
Net Zero means our borough makes no overall contribution to climate change.

This means dramatically reducing our carbon emissions – from how we heat our buildings to how we move around. Any remaining carbon emissions will then be matched, or ‘offset’, by absorbing carbon, for example through trees, or reducing carbon emissions elsewhere, for example selling clean energy outside the borough.



What do we mean by Remaining Emissions?

Net zero means that the carbon emissions generated in Waltham Forest will equal the amount taken out of the atmosphere by trees and other carbon sinks. So net zero does not mean zero emissions – the small amount of carbon emissions remaining in 2030 are called residual emissions.



What do we mean by Resilience?

Resilience is the capacity of our infrastructure, services, businesses, and communities to prepare for, absorb and recover quickly from shocks and stresses, including (for example) incremental changes in average temperature or sudden severe flood events.



What do we mean by Fuel Poverty?

A household is classed as being in fuel poverty if the home energy efficiency rating is Band D or below and their disposable income (after housing and fuel costs) is below the poverty line*.



*BEIS, 2020

Why ‘retrofit’?

Homes are the biggest source of emissions in Waltham Forest. As 80% of the houses we will live in in 2050 already exist, we need to make them more energy efficient. Improving the energy efficiency of our homes requires better access to financial support and suitable suppliers.



ARUP