



City of Westminster

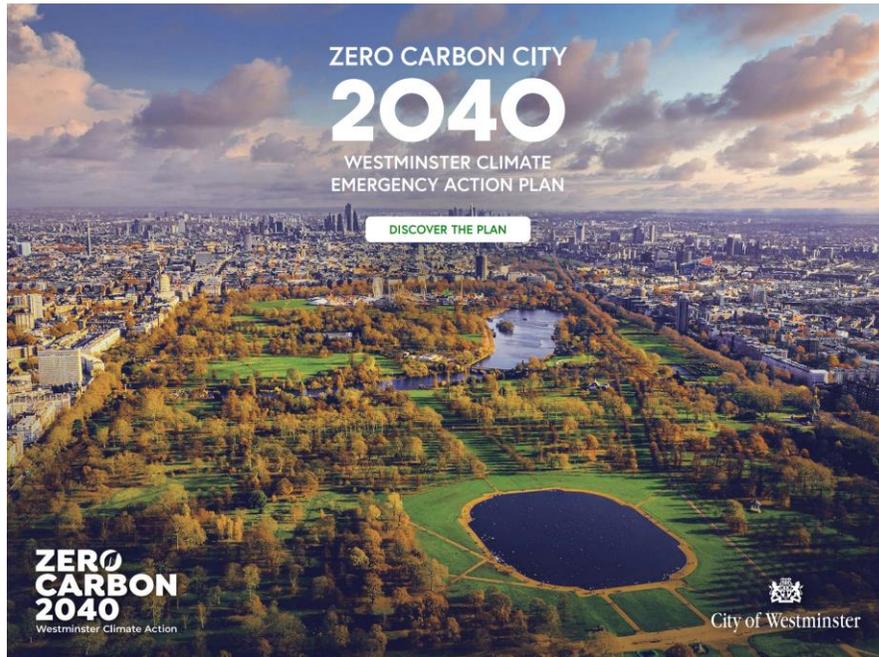


# Climate Adaptation and Resilience

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Daniella Jovanovic, Climate Resilience Manager

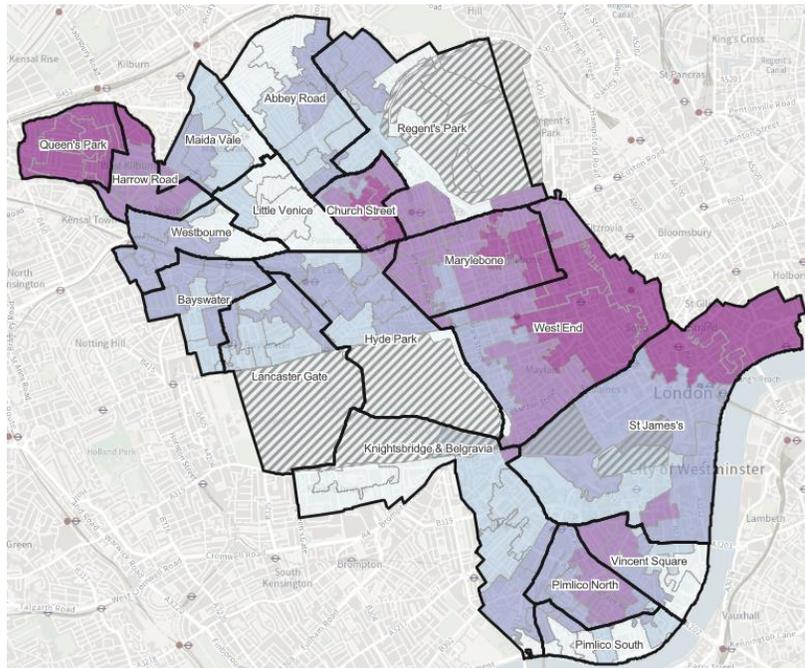
# Climate Emergency Action Plan



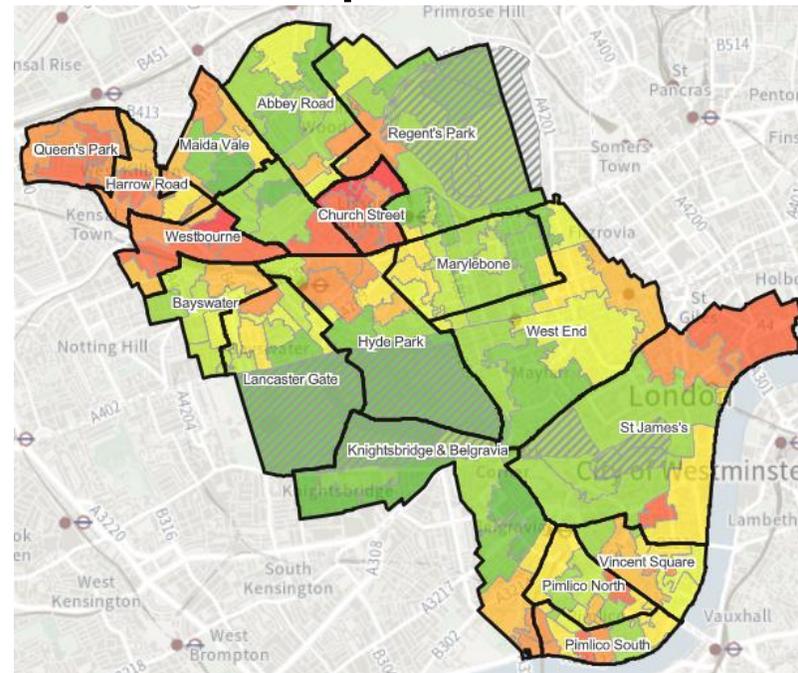
- In 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and set a target for the City of Westminster to achieve net zero emissions by 2040.
- The Climate Emergency Action Plan covers five key priorities, including a Green and Resilient City.
- In October 2022, the Council launched its Fairer Westminster strategy, placing residents at the heart of decision-making to build a more inclusive city that celebrates diverse communities.
- In 2023, the Council declared an Ecological Emergency, emphasising the urgent need to protect and restore nature alongside tackling climate change.

# Westminster's most deprived communities are most at-risk to extreme weather events.

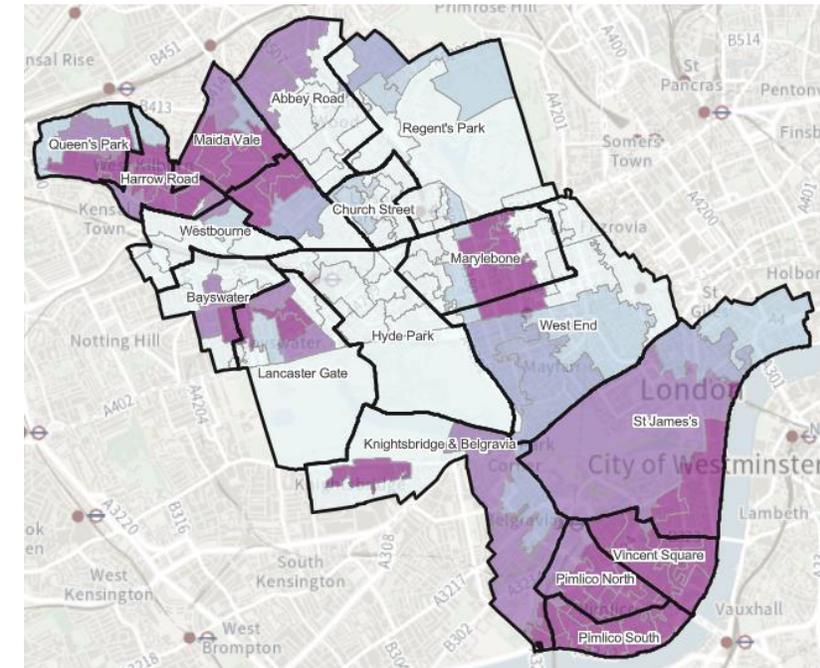
### Heat Risk



### Deprivation



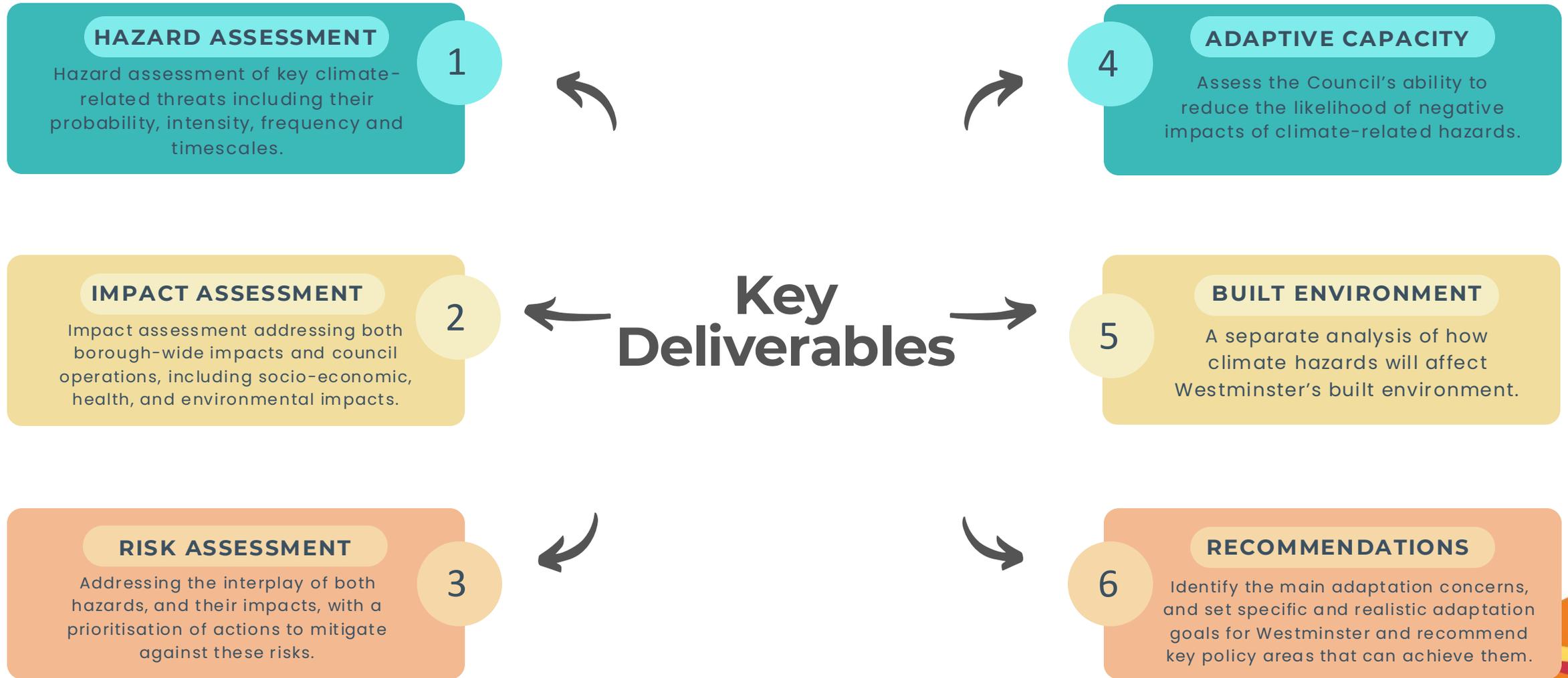
### Flood Risk



# Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment



- The Climate Emergency Action Plan (2021) covers five key priorities, including a Green and Resilient City.
- Within this theme, the Council set out several actions including the development of a Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CARP).
- The CRVA was commissioned to develop a robust, evidence-based understanding of climate-related risks facing Westminster to inform the CARP and engage with stakeholders.



## Resident Engagement Workshop

As part of their tender submission, Arup gave the Council a choice between two social value offers:

### Offer 1: Community engagement with existing group in Westminster

- Arup hosted a focus group to gather insights into residents' lived experiences of extreme weather events, to be reflected into the CRVA.
- Using large printed maps, residents identified any key risk 'hotspots', as well as any key social vulnerabilities.
- Materials were shared with the Council, and we have since replicated the activity with the Westminster Youth Council.

### Offer 2: Climate change resources for local schools



Westminster's Citizens' Climate Action Committee meeting, April 2024.

## Lessons Learned

### **Allow Extra Time for Procurement**

Ensure suppliers have enough time to create quality tender submissions and consider the time of year tenders are opened. Ensure suppliers fully understand and agree to terms during the tender phase, and use pre-tender meetings and Q&A sessions to align expectations - negotiations once the contract was awarded delayed our project by one month.

### **Set Realistic Timelines**

Involve key internal stakeholders early to gather input and maintain buy-in. For the CRVA, six months from start to finish is suggested; anything less than this is tight, as the initial expectation of 4-5 months proved insufficient due to unaccounted disruptions (e.g., Purdah).

### **Stay Aligned with the Scope**

Use KPIs and regular reviews to track progress and provide feedback. The draft report missed key elements from the initial scope of services, requiring extra time to include this in the final report.

A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of overlapping, wavy shapes in shades of pink, blue, yellow, and orange.

# The Assessment

- The CRVA report completed by Arup was commissioned to directly inform the Council's CARP by providing the evidence base for the climate-related risks and impacts facing the City.
- The CRVA is based on the UK Government and the Climate Change Committee's latest climate change risk assessment.
- Key elements of the report include climate change observations & projections in the UK and Westminster, climate risk & vulnerability assessment, and recommendations for addressing risks.



# How climate change affects Westminster now and in the future



Despite its reputation as a rainy city, London receives a similar amount of rainfall each year to Barcelona and Rome – an average annual total of 562mm.



When it does rain heavily, these events are expected to become 35-40% more intense than they were in the 1990s.

These events can cause 'flash' surface water flooding, such as in July 2021 that affected areas including Maida Vale, Paddington and Kilburn.

Less snow and ice

More invasive species and pests

More heatwaves and higher temperatures

Higher risk of wildfire

Drier summers

High winds

More floods



Global average temperatures have increased by ~1.2°C since the pre-industrial era.



During the July 2022 heatwave, temperatures in St James' Park, Westminster broke city record-high temperatures, reaching 40.2°C.



By 2080, Westminster can expect heatwaves every year. These can worsen local air quality, and pose a risk to the health and wellbeing of Westminster's people.

## Extreme weather in Westminster

We know Westminster is already at risk to extreme weather events.



Two major flood events impacted Westminster in 2021, affecting over 250 properties primarily around Maida Vale, Harrow Road, Westbourne and Little Venice..



During the July 2022 heatwave, temperatures in Westminster broke city-high records, reading 40.2°C. Causing ~387 mortalities in London.

We know extreme weather events will become more severe and frequent.



Rainfall is expected to increase by 6 to 15% in winter, increasing the likelihood of flooding.



By 2080, Westminster can expect heatwaves every year.



Rainfall is expected to decrease by 16-40% in summer, increasing the likelihood of drought and water scarcity.

**Citizen's Climate  
Action Committee  
workshop**

**Resident  
focus  
groups**

**Stakeholder  
roundtable**

**Surveying  
businesses**

**Community  
co-design  
workshop**

Spring

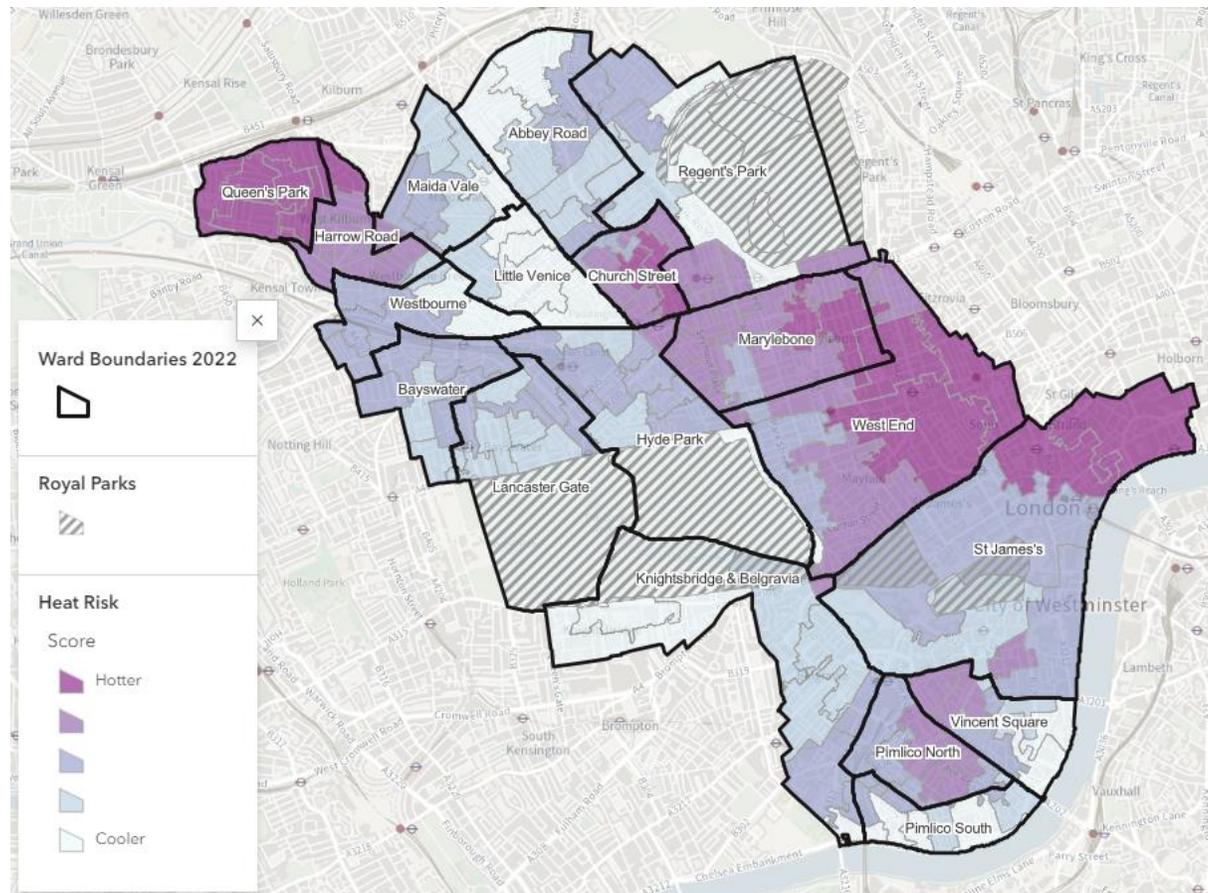
Summer

Autumn

Winter



# Who is the most affected by extreme weather?



## Heat Risk

Average land surface temperature during the day in summer between 2016-2020.

The urban heat island effect, which traps heat in built-up areas, is strongest in Queen's Park, Church Street, Pimlico North, and the East side of St James's & West End Wards. Daytime temperatures can be 10-15°C hotter than Westminster's coolest areas such as Hyde Park

Increased morbidity and hospital admissions associated with heat exhaustion & heat strokes

Health services get busier: more patients, longer ambulance wait times, disrupted care treatment schedules

Worsened local air quality, exacerbating existing health conditions

Affects total wellbeing, including people's sleep, stress/mental health and productivity

Overheating in classrooms can lead to reduced focus, fatigue, ill health and school closures

Stresses transportation networks, damages road surfaces, and affects efficiency of energy systems



## Lived experience of heat

- “The Silent Killer” – nearly 3,000 people died in England in 2022 due to high temperatures. This number could grow to 10,000 lives annually without concerted action.
- Westminster residents expressed impacts to their sleep, stress/mental health, and productivity due to buildings & homes in the city being vulnerable to overheating.
- A large proportion of Westminster were found to have properties vulnerable to extreme heat due to overcrowding, building types, and barriers to opening windows (noise & air pollution).
- Residents sleeping rough do not have the basic items needed to survive on the streets in hot temperatures.

“It was horrible. You feel like you can’t breathe.”  
*HL*

“The tube is awful because, of course, you’ve got the humidity as well.”  
*WER*

“I don’t think schools are very well equipped to deal with extreme weathers, and I feel like, as a parent, you have to adapt.”  
*HL*

“Live on the fourth floor and it’s like, it’s extreme when it’s hot, it’s very hot, doesn’t matter if you’ve got the window, the fan...”  
*MBS*

“I couldn’t be at home. We’re in a third floor flat, so we’re essentially in the roof space and our flat is south facing, so the sun is in the living room all day. And it was just so hot on those two days that we just had to pack up and go be out of the house because it was just suffocating.”

“I bet that’s probably when it was nice to be in the basement because I was in the attic roasting my life away. I felt like I was in the oven, like a chicken.”  
*HL*

## Green space

Only **16% tree canopy cover** – lower than London average of 21%

33% green space but **not always accessible** - people with disabilities and long-term illnesses in the borough are less able to access green spaces, and women and girls are less likely to be active outdoors

**Just 46% of people from low-income households (less than £15,000) have easy access to green space**, compared to 70% of households with an income of over £35,000.

## Air pollution

- **4,000 deaths per year** in London are attributed to long-term exposure to air pollution. (Imperial College London, 2021).
- In Westminster contributes to **7.8% of premature deaths**
- Air pollution **increases the risk of dementia by 20%** and contributes to heart disease, lung disease, and strokes.
- Less advantaged Londoners are exposed to **25% higher levels of air pollution** compared to more affluent residents.

## Social Drivers

- **Low-income households** can't afford cooling solutions (fans or air conditioning).
- **Outdoor workers** very at-risk, regardless of existing health status.
- People **living alone**.
- Age (**elderly and young children**).
- Pre-existing **health conditions and disabilities**.
- By 2072, 27% of UK population will be 65+.
- Those living in **overcrowded or poor-quality housing**.
- **Higher rates of anxiety** (e.g. in Queens Park), triggered by heat
- Violence and aggression

# Nearly 600 heat-related deaths expected in UK heatwave, researchers estimate

Experts used real-time rapid analysis of the UK's soaring temperatures to estimate excess mortality.

Rebecca Speare-Cole • Saturday 21 June 2025 08:08 BST



A person walking on a path through dead grass in Victoria.

Paramedics urge Londoners to stay safe as ambulance service prepares for surge in 999 calls

# UK records new hottest day of year as temperatures soar in heatwave

Amber heat-health warning of rise in deaths remains in place

Tara Cobham • Saturday 21 June 2025 19:37 BST

# Climate crisis Deadly weekend heat in England '100 times more likely' due to climate crisis

High temperatures likely to cause deaths and will worsen in future as global heating intensifies, scientists warn

London may see 45C summers with heatwaves lasting a month or longer, Met Office warns

# NEWS

The UK's climate has undergone a noticeable transformation over the past six decades, particularly in the frequency of extreme heat events.

# UK weather: Amber heat health alert issued across England as hottest day of the year recorded

The UKHSA alert warns there could be "a rise in deaths" among people in health conditions and those aged over 65.

Thursday 19 June 2025 19:08, UK



THE STANDARD

# London weather: 'Killer' heatwave to hit 36C in hottest-ever start for Wimbledon

Sizzling 36C predicted for London as Wimbledon gets under way on Monday



# Temperatures surpass 33C as storm warning kicks in

Map of the UK showing temperatures across various cities: Lerwick (15), Stornoway (15), Aberdeen (21), Edinburgh (17), Glasgow (21), Newcastle (21), Belfast (18), Liverpool (21), Hull (25), Birmingham (22), Norwich (27), Cardiff (20), London (27), Plymouth (20), St Helier (23). Sunday 17:00

# Wildfires break out in London amid scorching temperatures

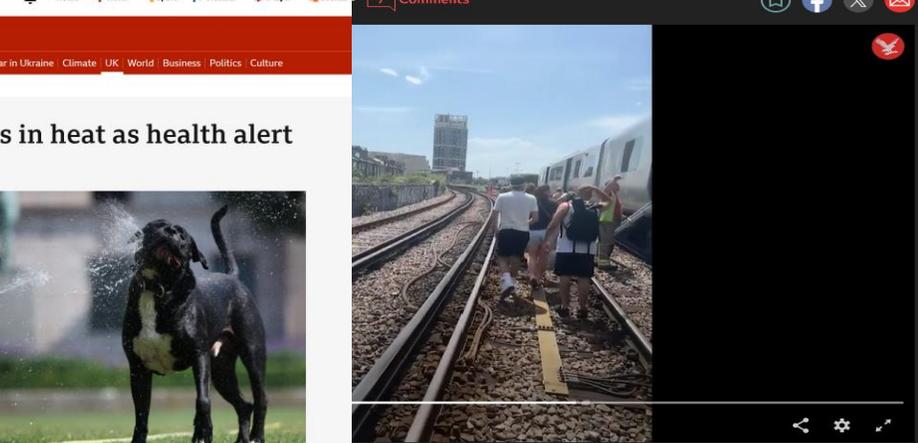
Specialist wildfire-fighting vehicles and dozens of firefighters scrambled to contain blazes



AROUND FOUR HECTARES OF LAND WERE ABLAZE DURING THE LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

# Passengers stuck on broken-down train 'like an oven' on hottest day of the year

A passenger said it was like being 'boiled alive' after the Thameslink train broke down on the UK's hottest day of the year



TimeOut London Another heatwave will hit London this week - with temperatures soaring to 35C

# London bakes in heat as health alert extended



Look out for pets in the heat, Londoners have been told

## Need Case

- In July 2022, **temperatures in Westminster broke city record-high temperatures**, reaching 40.2°C.
  - The London Fire Brigade experienced its busiest day since World War Two.
  - Schools had to close, hospital operations were cancelled, the price of energy surged as power supply struggled to meet demand, trainlines buckled, and there were nearly 400 deaths in London.
- Westminster's people are at present greatly affected by increasingly intense and frequent heatwaves, with impacts to health and wellbeing, interruptions to key service delivery such as health and social care, transport and education.
- There is no national strategy to adapt behaviours, communities, businesses, infrastructure, and nature to the higher temperatures and extreme heat we expect to see with climate change.
- Westminster already has a robust flood response as a Lead Local Flood Authority which requires us to prepare and maintain a strategy for local flood risk management, and investigate all significant flooding events.

Climate Emergency Action Plan

← Updated to include general resilience actions for all hazards.

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2024-2030

Cool Neighbourhoods Strategy

← Targeted strategies to reduce community risk and build hazard-specific resilience.

Bi-Borough Adverse Weather and Health Plan

← WCC & RBKC's public-health-informed response plan to extreme weather events.



## Climate Leadership Group

Expanded focus from Net-Zero to also include resilience, greening and air quality.

*Members: ELT and Cabinet Members*



## Climate Emergency Delivery Board

Expanded focus from Net-Zero to also include resilience, greening and air quality.

*Members: Department Directors*



## Climate Leadership Group

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## Climate Resilience Group

Changing from bi-monthly to quarterly. Provide Council-wide updates, discuss collaboration and build knowledge.

*Members: Heads of Service + Officers*

## Climate Risk and Resilience Workshops

Hands-on, interactive and in-person team-specific sessions to build greater understanding of climate risk, resilience and adaptation. Apply to daily work and co-create actions to embed into existing department-wide 'Net Zero Implementation Plans'.

*Members: Heads of Service + Officers*

# Climate Emergency Action Plan



- In 2025, Westminster City Council published our refreshed Climate Emergency Action Plan, building on our progress so far.
- Through our Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment, as well as insights from our communities, we now better understood the climate threat locally.
- This work has informed the clear set of new climate adaptation actions included in this plan, to help residents, businesses and the Council to build resilience to climate change.
- This action plan is supported by our Ecological Emergency commitment to address systemic environmental degradation through our Greening and Biodiversity Strategy, and our plans to ambitiously reduce air pollution and drive sustainable travel and transport.





# Community Insights: Co-Designing Resilience



*“Flats. I think it's just the way they are designed or made. Extremely cold or extremely hot.”*

*“I don't think schools are very well equipped to deal with extreme weather, and I feel like, as a parent, you have to adapt.”*

*“It was horrible. You feel like you can't breathe.”*

*“Live on the fourth floor and it's like, it's extreme when it's hot, it's very hot.”*

*“The kids, they seemed really, unable to tolerate the weather.”*

*“In London, especially all the buses, they don't have cooling system...”*

*“There's no shade in the park.”*

*“I was in the attic roasting my life away. I felt like I was in the oven, like a chicken.”*

*“We have to get help from Westminster... when the cost of living was coming up, Westminster was very helpful... people could go to different places and sit down and enjoy the heating. Now I think we need to have the same for the heat ... the Westminster libraries or community centres could welcome people in our community to sit and stay cool..”*

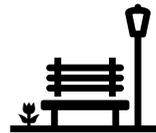
*“The tube is awful because, of course, you've got the humidity as well.”*



**Inadequate, hot housing**



**Concern for children and elderly**



**Hot public outdoor and indoor spaces**



**Lack of consistent knowledge and messaging**



**Hot public transport**



**Lack of green and blue infrastructure**

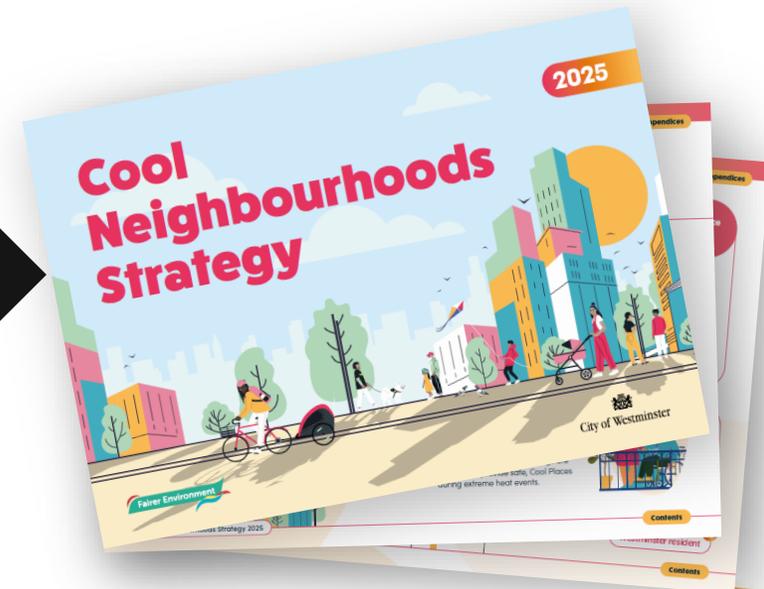
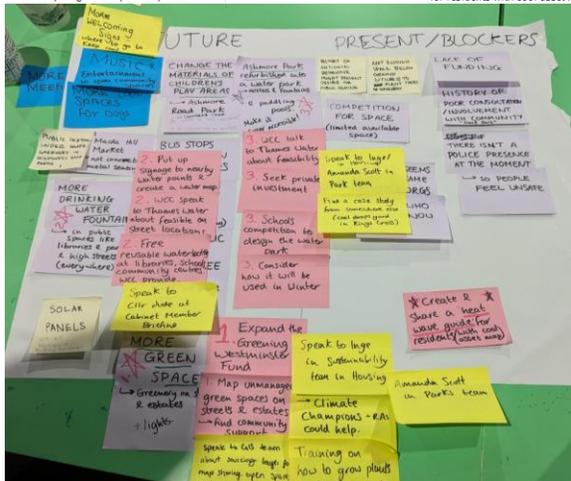
## 106 ideas for action

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
<b>Introduce Renewable Energy in Public Spaces:</b> Allow solar panels for council property.	<b>1. More food growing spaces for community communities that are shaded:</b> Identify potential spaces for more food growing	<b>1. Energy Efficient Cooling</b> Explore solar driven options within council experts	<b>Increase Budget f</b> Advocate for larg maintaining gree amenities.
<b>Provide Essential Public Amenities:</b> Free bottle of water in every bus ground.	Learn from existing community gardens what works well.	Climate tam – heat network	Work with the Pu allocate funds fo Simplify Planning
<b>Free sunscreen (50 SPF) for public access:</b> Free sunscreen (50 SPF) for public access.	<b>2. Retrofit quality homes for all residents (not just private owners)</b> Homes to be cool in the summer and warm in the winter	<b>1. Indoor 'public' cool spaces</b> Funding by council available to explore technical options	<b>Simplify Planning</b> Collaborate with Department to st obtaining permis projects and gree Engage with the I
<b>Expand Green and Shaded Spaces:</b> Plant more trees, shrubs, and greenery in public areas.	Setting standards that homeowners should meet: - Speaking to homeowners and agencies about retrofit and setting uniform standards	Community level surveys and consultations <b>2. New Buildings to have 'green roof and walls'</b>	Involve the Public underutilised spst Improvement.
Increase tree planting and shade around walking paths, bus stops, and schools. Add more shaded spaces for children and community activities.	<b>3. Cool, shaded parks and public spaces for social connections</b> Where are the green spaces?	Jacob's Ladden for green construction	Create a feedback suggest public sp Expand Green Sp
<b>Promote Eco-Friendly Practices:</b> Encourage eco-living with more cycling and car-free zones in parks. Develop green initiatives like composting or recycling bins in public spaces.	Consulting residents to see: - what they use parks for - why they don't use them	<b>More green spaces:</b> • Map unmanaged green spaces on streets and estates – find community • Create and share a 'heat wave guide' for residents with cool asset map	Increase tree plan schools, and urbi Partner with Com and maintain gre Dev

## 9 themes of heat resilience

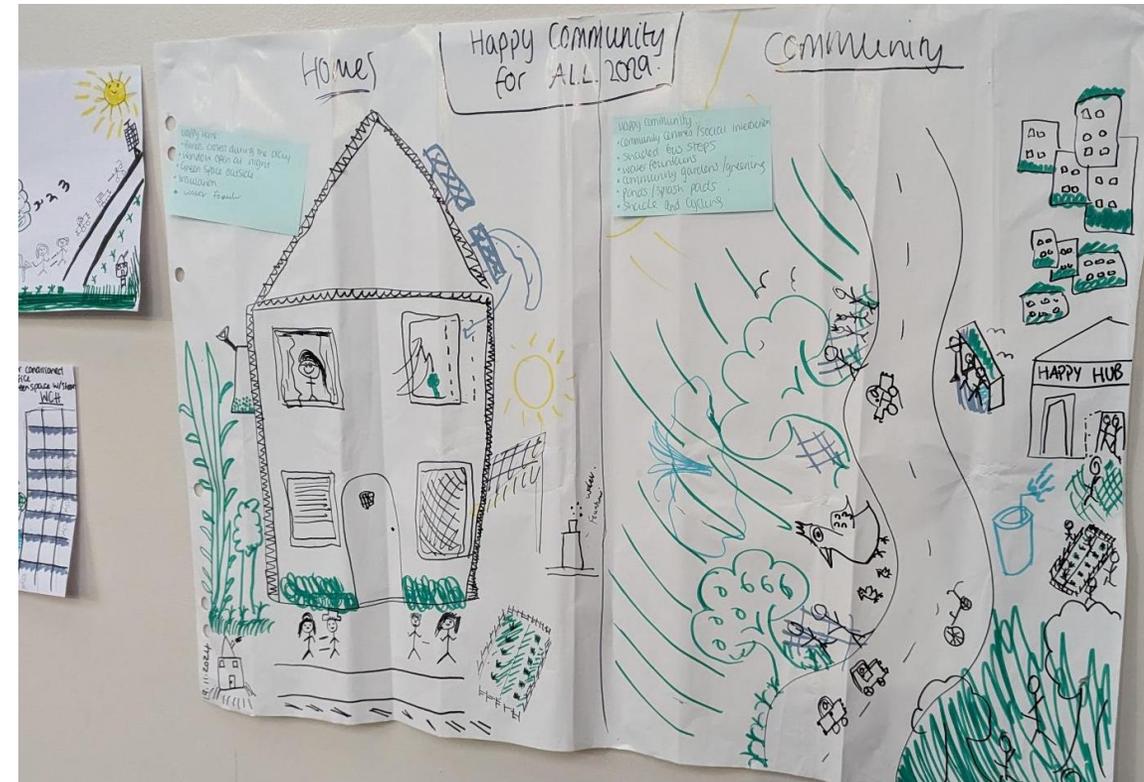


**3 pillars**  
**7 outcomes**  
**18 actions**

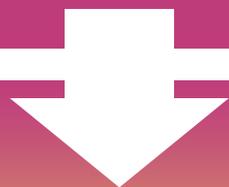


## Learnings

- Work hard to ensure people in the room are (a) those most impacted by your topic, (b) represent historically underserved and disengaged communities, (c) are a diverse, representative collective.
- This may mean having to provide services such as translators, childcare and payment/vouchers for attendance.
- Empower everyone in the room to feel that they have unique and valuable knowledge. Both residents and Council officers were creating useful ideas that fed into our strategy.
- Record and photograph everything. Try and get videos or voice recordings of lived experience. Ensure you have the correct media release forms/permissions.
- Don't underestimate the power of storytelling and qualitative data to persuade internal stakeholders.



Co-designed ideas for action



9 themes for a heat  
resilient Westminster



Cool Neighbourhoods Strategy



# Resident Insights Co-Designing Resilience



Westminster has launched our new

# Cool Neighbourhoods Strategy

Our plan to make Westminster's people and places resilient to rising temperatures.



To learn more and read the strategy scan the QR code or visit:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/cool-neighbourhoods-strategy>



City of Westminster

# Cool Neighbourhoods Strategy

Building a more just, equitable and heat resilient Westminster, while protecting the health & safety of its people.



## Cool Places

*Helping people stay cool outside in the public realm.*

Westminster's public spaces and infrastructure are heat-resilient and provide cool outdoor environments

**4 actions**

Westminster's public spaces are enhanced with green infrastructure and nature-based solutions

**3 actions**



## Cool Buildings

*Helping people stay cool in their homes and public buildings.*

Homes are designed and retrofitted to stay cool and resilient to rising temperatures

**2 actions**

Public and community buildings are adapted to keep people cool and safe during extreme heat

**2 actions**



## Cool Communities

*Helping people know how to stay cool by building their adaptive capacity.*

Improved access to cooling resources and services for vulnerable populations and areas in Westminster

**3 actions**

Increased public awareness and education on heat risks and safety measures across Westminster

**2 actions**

Strengthened community resilience and engagement in managing heat risks

**2 actions**

# Cool Places

*Helping people stay cool outside in the public realm*

## Outcome 1

***Westminster's public spaces and infrastructure are heat-resilient and provide cooler outdoor environments.***

1. Support cooler commutes by working with TfL and other stakeholders to improve heat resilience in public transport, and by promoting measures to reduce heat absorption in highway infrastructure.
2. Support cooler high streets by improving heat resilience in the public realm and encouraging businesses and other organisations to implement shade and cooling solutions, prioritising areas with greatest heat risk and social deprivation.
3. Assess the availability of public water sources and explore the feasibility of enhancing cooling options through water infrastructure.
4. Review public open spaces in Westminster's most vulnerable areas, including playgrounds and recreational areas, to assess heat retention and identify opportunities for cooling improvements.

## Outcome 2

***Westminster's public spaces are enhanced with green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.***

1. Maintain, plant and protect Council owned trees to support a long-term increase in tree canopy cover, targeting a 10% increase of existing cover by 2050.
2. Identify opportunities for nature-based adaptive measures to cool Westminster.
3. Review opportunities for our public realm schemes to green our streets and public spaces.



# Cool Buildings

*Helping people stay cool in their homes and public buildings.*

## Outcome 1

*Homes are designed and retrofitted to stay cool and resilient to rising temperatures.*

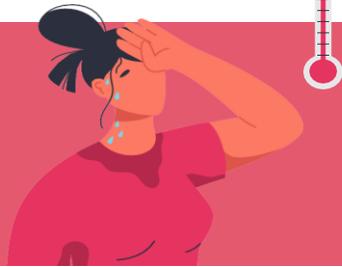
1. Review and revise planning policies, documents and procedures to minimise overheating risk in new and existing buildings.
2. Adopt a holistic approach to improving housing quality by integrating energy efficiency, public health, and climate resilience measures, prioritising areas with greatest social deprivation and heat risk.

## Outcome 2

*Public and community buildings are adapted to keep people cool and safe during extreme heat*

1. Support public, private, and community-sector organisations to assess heat risks and adopt low-carbon cooling solutions.
2. Promote heat resilience in Council-owned facilities by ensuring heat risk assessments are conducted and low-carbon cooling interventions are implemented.





# Cool Communities

*Helping people know how to stay cool*

## Outcome 1

*Improved access to cooling resources and services for vulnerable populations and areas in Westminster..*

1. Establish and promote free-to-access and inclusive cool spaces across Westminster, ensuring alignment with the GLA's Cool Spaces Map.
2. Strengthen peer support networks to help community members check on each other during heatwaves ensuring they have access to cooling resources and support.
3. Distribute cool kits through community partners to support residents in staying cool at home, ensuring resources are distributed equitably in Westminster.

## Outcome 2

*Increased public awareness and education on heat risks and safety measures across Westminster.*

1. Launch a long-term public education campaign to inform residents, visitors and workers about Westminster's heat risks, how to stay cool, and where to access cooling resources.
2. Work with health and care services to embed heat health information into care practices and ensure staff are equipped to support vulnerable individuals during extreme heat events.

## Outcome 3

*Strengthened community resilience and engagement in managing heat risks.*

1. Train local leaders and community champions on heat resilience to promote heat safety and guide residents to available resources.
2. Update and maintain emergency response plans to manage heatwaves, ensuring coordination and support for vulnerable populations.



# Embedding Climate Resilience Across Westminster

- ✓ **Climate adaptation is a strategic & political priority**
- ✓ **Integrated approach across all council services**
- ✓ **Strong governance to ensure accountability**
- ✓ **Building internal capacity and expertise**

Climate  
Leadership Group

Climate  
Emergency  
Delivery Board

Climate  
Resilience Group  
(Officer-Level)



**Climate change is inextricably linked to economic and racial inequality**

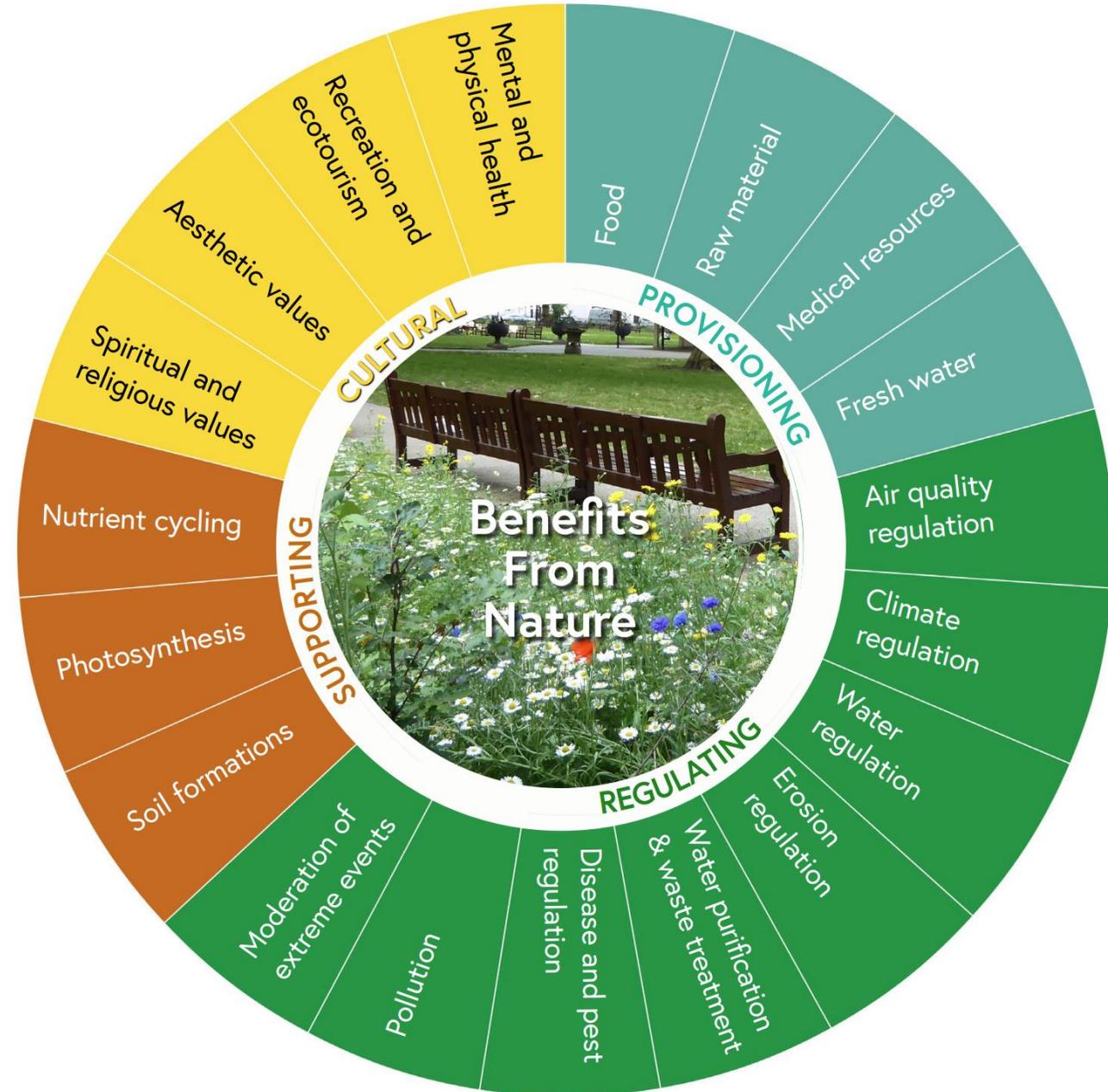
**...and has been described as one of the greatest threats to public health this century.**

**Mitigation** prevents further harm....**Resilience** protects the most vulnerable and ensures recovery

Together, they promote **health equity** and **environmental justice**, ensuring a fairer and more sustainable future for all residents.

**Climate justice is social justice.**

*“The climate and nature crisis is the major threat to global health and the greatest opportunity to improve global health.”  
- Lancet*





# Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan





# Where is Wealden District?



- KEY**
- Wealden District
  - Motorways
  - Rail
  - Rail Stations
  - Administrative Boundaries
  - Main Towns in Wealden
  - Main Towns
  - English Channel

# Introduction to Wealden District

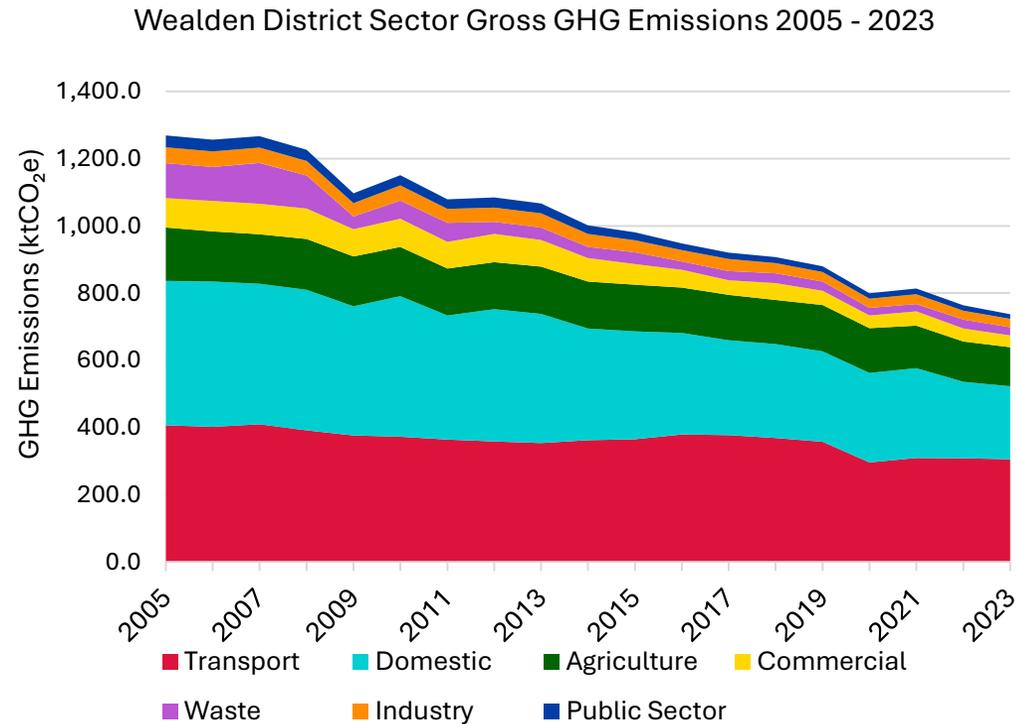
- A large rural District (second largest in the southeast region) of over 320 square miles with 75 defined settlements –incl. 5 towns, villages and hamlets
- Population over 166,900 and rising
- 55% of people live in the five towns with 45% living in more rural areas
- 27 % aged 65+ and 16% aged 0-15 years
- Public transport network is considered poor- no rail access for some towns
- Households have high multiple car ownership 37% - have 1 more -35% 2 or more

# Introduction to Wealden District Continued

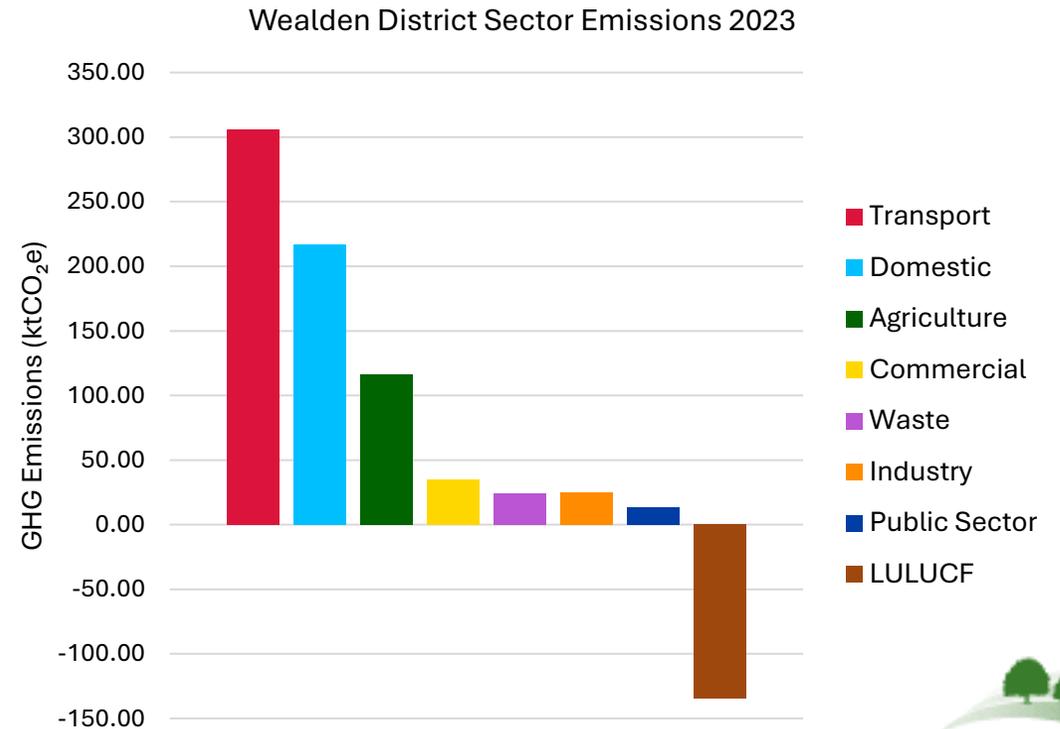
- Employment – largest sector – wholesales and retail trade, health and socialwork/care, construction, education, professional services , agriculture and tourism
- Homes – over 74,000 homes – 12% flats, 31% detached and 22% semi detached, 13% terraced, 17% bungalows
- 65% of homes are gas mains, 7% electric only and 10% oil only
- Natural environment and landscape:
  - One of highest concentrations of ancient woodland in the country- Ashdown Forest and Pevensy Levels ( SSSIs etc)
  - 53% of the District is located in High Weald National Landscape and 7% in the South Downs National Park

# Wealden District sources of emissions

## Gross Greenhouse emission reductions 2005- 2023 by sector



## District Sector Emissions for 2023 by sector



# Climate Change Action in Wealden

- Declared a climate emergency in 2019
- Published a Climate Emergency Plan in December 2019 – target of net-zero by 2050 or sooner
- Explored pathway to net zero with AECOM consultants which modelled and reflected national grid decarbonisation, energy efficiency measures, switch to electric heating and transport etc – reported progress until December 2025
- **May 2023 local elections** – political change:
  - New direction for the Council including a new Council Strategy – Climate Change and Nature one of three key priorities and a new way of working for the Council – community engagement

# Development of the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

- Commissioned a joint **study** with the Local Plan team - climate change mitigation and adaptation study (ARUP)
- Held internal '**climate change conversations**' with all WDC services – actions planning to take and 'what if' question?
- **online surveys** for residents and organisations
- Held **early conversation** with local partners and groups
- First time the Council had engaged with the local community in this way

# Resident and Organisation Survey highlights – summer 2024 and Winter 2024

## Residents

- **Impact of Climate Change:** 81% aware, 74% concerned about Climate Change impacts.
- **Key focus areas:** protecting nature, biodiversity and addressing flooding/extreme heat.
- **Strong support for:** green travel infrastructure, tree planting, flood management, energy efficiency.
- **Positive resident behaviour changes:** Many are already adjusting travel and purchasing habits.
- **Commitment to climate action:** 76% motivated to help; 17% actively involved in climate initiatives.
- **Engagement opportunity:** 40%unaware of local efforts—showing need to raise awareness of what is happening at local scales.

## Organisations

- **Impact of Climate Change:** 81% of organisations are concerned about the impact of Climate Change on operations
- **Energy:** 90% worried about consumption and costs
- **Transport:** 58% concerned about emissions
- **Commitment to Change:**
  - 94% of organisations are willing to act to reduce emissions and 35% already engaging directly with suppliers
- **Low Carbon Economy:** High level of support for this transition and strong desire for WDC to support businesses through community workshops

# In December 2024 – held the BIG Climate change conversation

- Over 90 local groups and organisations took part the day
- We tested the draft themes and objectives of the Green paper following an inspiring morning showcasing projects and initiatives underway in the District
- We captured the conversations and feedback to inform the drafting of the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
- Online survey supported the Green paper consultation



# And then....an announcement

- Mayoral Combined County Authority and Local Government Reorganisation Announcement for Sussex – January 2025
- Impacted the strategy and action plan – focus delivery plan for 3 years – creating community resilience, networks and legacy projects

# New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

1. Empowering and Supporting Communities
2. Buildings and Energy
3. Energy Generation
4. Travel and Transport
5. Maximising Resource Use and Reducing Waste
6. Nature Biodiversity, Soil, Food and Health
7. Green Low Carbon Economy
8. Governance and Leadership



# Highlight co-benefits of taking climate action



## HEALTH

Decarbonising transport and buildings can significantly enhance public health by improving air quality through reduced reliance on petrol and diesel vehicles, increasing physical activity from active travel, and alleviating fuel poverty through more energy efficient homes.



## CITIZEN AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Climate change can feel overwhelming, which is why it's important to build community connections and resilience. By building awareness about the challenges, opportunities, and benefits of climate action, we can show how everyone can contribute and build more resilient communities.



## EQUITY & INCLUSION

Working together on climate action helps ensure a fair and inclusive transition. Climate change doesn't affect everyone equally – people who are already vulnerable, such as older adults, low-income families, and those with health conditions, often face the greatest risks. That's why it's so important to make sure our climate efforts are fair and inclusive, giving everyone a voice and a role in shaping a safer, more resilient Wealden.



## COMMUNITY/SOCIAL COHESION

Bringing a diverse range of residents together to tackle climate change will encourage stronger community relationships, reduce isolation and empower people to drive local change.



## LOCAL ECONOMY & JOBS

Climate action can benefit the local economy, creating opportunity for green skills and jobs. Prioritising local suppliers in procurement decisions also promotes a more sustainable and resilient local economy.



## LONG TERM FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

Many interventions which reduce energy and emissions will also save money for residents, businesses and organisations.



## EDUCATION

Climate initiatives can create opportunities for local schools, colleges, and businesses to develop programs and training that empower people to take action and give them key green skills for the future.



## NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY

Nature – such as trees, plants, and soil absorb carbon. Actions that create more space for nature will not only enhance climate resilience but also support and benefit biodiversity.



## RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

Actions that increase our ability to withstand the impacts of climate change, to cope with future instability in energy prices, and our ability to transition to sustainable transport.



## ENERGY SECURITY

This can be achieved by diversifying energy sources and increasing energy efficiency. Generating renewable energy locally will reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and enhance energy security, especially given rapid changes in oil and gas prices.



## RESOURCE USE

Reducing consumption can reduce emissions and help to conserve scarce natural resources, such as water and foster a more sustainable economy. By cutting demand for energy and raw materials, we lessen the environmental impact of their production and preserve vital resources for future use.



# Climate and Nature Projects

- **Community Transport**  
supporting two community transport schemes, Cuckmere Buses and Wealdlink, to transition their buses from diesel to electric using CIL funding
- **Active Travel**  
Improving the Cuckoo Trail infrastructure to help people enjoy safe walking and cycling opportunities (active travel) and learn about local biodiversity and nature along the trail.
- **Wilder Wealden and Wilder Ouse Project** nature restoration partnership with Sussex Wildlife Trust – over £1million committed to supporting Sussex Wildlife Trust and other partner organisations to support nature recovery in the district. Community volunteer days, workshops and skills
- **Community Orchards**  
The Community Orchards funding programme is offering grants to create, restore, and enhance community orchards providing spaces for people to connect with nature, learn new skills, grow food, and strengthen community ties.
- **Decarbonisation of our own housing and grants for Private sector – e.g.** installation of triple glazing, air source heat pumps and solar panels to social housing properties. 2024-2025: completion of work on over 160 properties and deployment of HUG 2 grant funding to local home owners
- **Food waste collection**  
Introducing Food Waste Collections as part of the new government regulations on recycling. Small electric fleet and HVO fuelled Waste Fleet

# Projects continued

- **EV chargers**

installed over 30 7 kw EV charge points in 10 public car parks across the District. During 2026 an additional 12 rapid EV charge points will be installed. Wealden now has the highest number of publicly available chargers in East Sussex.

- **Crematorium Electrification**

Installed solar panels with battery storage on the roof of the Wealden Crematorium generating 80% of the crematorium's electricity demand in 2024/25. The 25 acres of grounds include wildflower meadows and woodlands- recently awarded bronze award from the Greener Globe Funeral Standards. New hybrid- electric cremator being considered

- **Community Sports Hub**

a new state-of-the art Community Sports Hub – providing 3G pitches and indoor facilities and play park – will include solar carport, roof top solar and battery storage, air source heat pumps, and EV Charge points The site will support biodiversity with significant tree planting onsite including 273 mature and semi mature trees.

- **Leisure Centres Decarbonisation**

working in partnership to install solar panels on our Leisure Centre. Two sites completed so far.

- **Ground Mounted Solar project** to support a new Business park and new waste depot

- **New Infrastructure** e.g. development of new Medical Centres in partnership with HNS – built to BREEAM excellent

# Empowering and Supporting Communities for Climate Action

- Nature Photo Competition for adults and children to drive traffic to refreshed Let's Talk Wealden Climate Hub
- Social Media engagement-promoting local events and national campaigns
- Internal staff engagement and events e.g. Climate Champions, clothes swap, Plastic Free July competition, nature walks
- Climate literacy e.g. APSE Climate Adaptation – Urban Green Spaces, Greening Community Buildings with CSE

## Lets Talk Wealden Climate Hub

### Get involved



#### Upcoming Sustainability Events

A wide range of sustainability and eco-friendly events.

Get involved



#### Nature Photo Competition

View the winning, runner up and highly commended photos from our Nature Photo Competition.

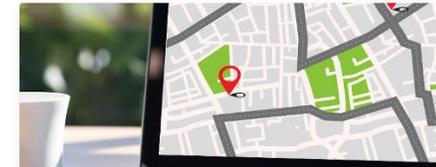
Get involved



#### Act for Nature: Wealden Youth Hub

Welcome to the youth hub, where young people in Wealden can learn, take action, and connect wi...

Get involved



#### Wealden Community Climate Action Map

Put your community groups, local organisation or initiative on the map!

Get involved



Social media example- promote climate and nature events



*Laughton*

Nature Photo competition winning entry



Secondhand September clothes swap for staff

# Community Engagement Continued

- Developing **community workshops** on topics including:
  - EVs pros and cons (with Energy Saving Trust and Sussex EVs)
  - Wildlife Friendly Gardening
- **Climate and Nature themed community film nights** with panel discussions:
  - Eg Power Station with OVESCO, Energise East Sussex and Citizens Advice
- Jointly launching a '**Community Climate and Nature Network**' with Wealden Community Action - to share skills and knowledge and build local resilience and connections



# Providing Grant Funding

- **Community Led Infrastructure Fund** – capital funding (£1.5m CIL and £0.5m climate reserve) for retrofit on community buildings, greening the district, skate parks, play areas and cultural infrastructure – up to £200k per project with a minimum of £5k
- **Wealden Community Lottery** – online fund raising for local organisations to diversify their fundraising streams
- **Ward Budgets** – all ward councillors can support community projects, events and organisations in their ward – must deliver the Councils priorities - £10k budget this year
- **Community Orchard Grant Funding** - up to £3500 funding to create new or enhance existing community orchards

# Future Projects

- **Launching a new Crowdfunding platform** – later this year to include a Climate and Nature Fund for grass roots projects – up to £5k match fund from WDC
- **A new iteration of Solar Together initiative** – Sussex wide tender published for a new contractor
- **Car Club** – exploring options for the District and Local Plan policies
- **Tree Woodland Strategy for the District** – hopefully a new strategy and action plan to guide woodland management, tree planting, conservation of existing woodlands and habitat restoration now and into the future
- **Climate adaptation**...more to follow

# Thank you and any questions?

