Climate & Biodiversity
Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council

Tuesday, 19th May, 2026 at 6.00 pm

To members of the Climate & Biodiversity Committee - S Simpson, A Mubin, D Newcombe, J Robertshaw, J Aitman, G Meadows, R Smith and J Doughty (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

Admission to Meetings

All Council meetings are open to the public and press unless otherwise stated.

Numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk in advance.

Recording of Meetings

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, public meetings may be filmed, audio-recorded, or photographed. Anyone intending to record the proceedings is asked, as a courtesy, to inform the Committee Clerk before the meeting begins.

This meeting will be broadcast live via Microsoft Teams and recorded; by attending or participating, you consent to the recording and public sharing of audio and video, which may be made available for later viewing. For details on how personal data is handled, please see the Privacy Notice

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Agenda

1. **Apologies for Absence**

   To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

   Committee Members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk **prior** to the meeting, stating the reason for absence.

   Standing Order 8(e)(v) permits the appointment of substitute Councillors to a Committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a Committee if ordinary Councillors of the Committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer **before** the meeting that they are unable to attend.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

   Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any of the items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's code of conduct.

3. **Election of Vice-Chair**

   To elect a Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

Date of Publication 13 May 2026

4. **Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item.

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of five minutes each during the period of public participation, in line with Standing Order 25. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

5. **Minutes** (Pages 4 - 8)

To receive and consider the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Minutes held on 13 January 2026;

Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Questions on the progress on any item).

6. **Finance Report** (Pages 9 - 15)

To receive and consider the report of the R.F.O concerning the financial position of items under the remit of this Committee.

7. **Committee Terms of Reference** (Pages 16 - 17)

To review the Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) if appropriate. The current TOR's are attached.

8. **Annual Residents Survey Results** (Pages 18 - 22)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the results of the 2026 annual residents satisfaction survey for this Committee.

9. **Climate Action Plan Report** (Pages 23 - 111)

To receive and consider the report of the Compliance & Environment Officer.

10. **Seasonal Planting Schemes** (Pages 112 - 116)

To receive and consider the report of the Head of Estates & Operations regarding the Autum 2026 planting scheme.

11. **Biodiversity Update** (Pages 117 - 119)

To receive and consider the report of the Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer.

12. **Lake & Country Park Report** (Pages 120 - 122)

To receive and consider the report of the Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer.

13. **National Emergency Briefing** (Pages 123 - 124)

To consider the showing of the National Emergency Briefing film in the Corn Exchange. (Full Council Minute 206 13.04.2026 Refers)

14. **DEFRA Biodiversity Consultation** (Page 125)

To receive correspondence from NALC and consider a response to the DEFRA Biodiversity Net Gain for brownfield consultation.

Town Hall, Market Square
Witney
Oxon
OX28 6AG

Mrs Sharon Groth FSLCC FCMI
Town Clerk

T: 01993 704379
E: info@witney-tc.gov.uk

w: www.witney-tc.gov.uk

15. **Annual community payments from renewable energy** (Pages 126 - 127)

To receive and consider a response to the consultation on a proposed policy aimed at ensuring local communities benefit from new renewable and clean energy projects through financial contributions and shared ownership opportunities, and to provide feedback to help shape the final policy.

Town Clerk

Town Hall, Market Square
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Oxon
OX28 6AG

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Town Clerk

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E: info@witney-tc.gov.uk

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CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday, 13 January 2026

At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor S Simpson (Chair)

Councillors:	D Temple (In place of J Robertshaw)	R Smith
	A Bailey	J Treloar
	A Mubin	R Crouch (In place of D Enright)
	D Newcombe	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	None.	

CB21 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Enright & J Robertshaw, Councillors R Crouch & D Temple attended as substitutes respectively.

CB22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members or officers.

CB23 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Climate & Biodiversity Committee meeting held on 9 September 2025 were received.

C505 – The Committee received an update to advise of the ongoing work in respect of a nature walk around Witney which was being carried out in collaboration with West Oxfordshire District Council and local residents.

C513 – Members were provided with a response provided by the Project Officer which addressed their questions regarding the Photovoltaic array and battery configuration for the West Witney Projects.

Resolved:

1. That, the verbal updates be noted and,

2. That, the minutes of the Climate & Biodiversity Committee meeting held on 9 September 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

CB24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

CB25 **CLIMATE ACTION WORKING PARTY MINUTES**

Members received the minutes of the Climate Action Working Party held on 25 September 2025.

15 - The Compliance & Environment Officer advised Members that the Eco Fair held on 9 October 2025 had been successful. It was proposed that any future Eco Fair should be held on a Saturday in order to attract a greater audience of residents.

Resolved:

1. That, the verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the minutes of the Climate & Biodiversity Working Party meeting held on 25 September 2025 be noted.

CB26 **CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Compliance & Environmental Officer, which provided an update on the draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

The Committee noted that, although overall emissions had remained broadly the same as the last review in 2019, the grounds maintenance services was now delivered in-house meaning a greater amount of data on fleet emissions was now captured and reflected in the emissions data. The Council had doubled both its fleet and workforce during that period, resulting in more accurate data for the Council to focus on. Members asked that the infographic be shared with all Councillors to inform them of the established new baseline.

In relation to next steps for implementation of the Action Plan, Members were advised that a comparison of the Council's building data and EPC ratings was underway. EPCs completed in December 2025 showed that Burwell Hall had improved from a Grade C to a Grade B, while the Corn Exchange had changed from a Grade B to a Grade C. It was noted that a further report would be provided on the reasons for this change at the Corn Exchange, however the primary reason identified for the change was the commencement of Café 1863 and it's greater use as a facility. It was advised that improvements would be made within existing approved budgets.

The Committee noted that Low Carbon Hub had surveyed the Windrush Cemetery building and that a number of "quick wins" had already been identified and implemented, including the installation of timers on the electric heating system. These works were undertaken within existing maintenance budget parameters.

On the subject of benchmarking, Members were advised that the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) had enquired as to whether Witney Town Council could take a leading role, as SLCC did not currently hold benchmarking data, having not previously undertaken work in this area.

Members were informed that the implementation roadmap would be developed, with dates to be set once further detail was available, in order to provide accurate guidance to the Committee.

It was further noted that a Climate & Biodiversity Working Party would be arranged soon and that the revised Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan would be shared with all Council Officers for review and input from their respective areas of responsibility.

The Committee noted that the Action Plan included a traffic light system and a clear separation between emissions reductions attributable to the Council and those relating to the wider community, in line with the Committee's previous request.

Members thanked the Compliance & Environmental Officer for her work and expressed their desire for the Council to continue to lead by example and to focus further on reducing emissions.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the infographic contained within the report be shared with all Councillors.

CB27 **LAKE & COUNTRY PARK REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer, who provided an update on works carried out at the Lake and Country Park.

The Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer outlined completed works, including flood mitigation measures, some of which had been part-funded through grant support, and path improvements around the lake, which had received positive feedback from the public.

Members were advised that a separate water testing report would be brought to a future meeting, and it was agreed that this report would be shared with WASP (Windrush Against Sewage Pollution).

Members were informed that steps would be taken to reduce the potential for anti-social behaviour in the area of the community orchard on the former railway line at the Country Park, where issues had been identified.

The Committee noted that an £87,000 grant application had been submitted to fund further path improvements around the lake, with an update on its success to be provided in future reports.

Members heard that the B&GSO continued to monitor avian flu and outlined the measures and actions that would be taken should any further cases be reported.

Members were also informed that opportunities to recruit additional volunteers would be pursued, including engagement at the forthcoming volunteer fair.

The Committee noted the positive engagement and strong collaborative working with the Witney Flood Group, with both parties providing mutual support and sharing information effectively.

Resolved:

That, the report and verbal update be noted.

CB28 **NATURE VERGE UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the reports concerning the application for the establishment of Road Verge Nature Reserves in West Witney.

Members heard that Officers would liaise with the resident who had brought forward the proposal in order to monitor biodiversity changes and to consider the potential introduction of Road Verge Nature Reserves in other areas across Witney.

In response to a Member's question regarding signage, the Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer advised that standard Oxfordshire County Council signage would be used, which is already well recognised by the public and local residents.

Members were unanimous in their agreement to support the application.

Resolved:

That the reports be noted.

CB29 **SEASONAL PLANTING SCHEMES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Estates & Operations regarding the proposed summer bedding.

Further to the report, the Compliance & Environmental Officer provided a verbal update on matters for consideration in relation to the proposed planting.

Members were advised that decisions regarding summer bedding needed to be progressed promptly. An option was therefore proposed to replace dahlias with antirrhinums, which would provide better value for money, similar colour displays, and comparable height, while also offering high pollinator benefits. It was noted that dahlias may be more appropriate for use in future once space becomes available at the new depot to allow for out-of-season bulb storage.

Officers requested guidance on moving towards a more perennial planting approach, while retaining some higher valued seasonal bedding in key locations, such as war memorials.

The Committee unanimously agreed to move towards a mixed planting arrangement and approved the removal of dahlias and their substitution with antirrhinums where Officers felt this was appropriate.

Recommended:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, Officers proceed with a mixed planting arrangement with a full review of planting being presented to a future meeting.

CB30 **TREE POLICY**

The Committee received and considered the revised Tree Policy, together with a verbal explanation of the amendments from the Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer.

The Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer explained the rationale behind the policy, highlighting the importance of having a clear and easily understood framework to support consistent decision-making, protect the Council's financial position, and ensure public funds were used responsibly.

Members noted that the primary purpose of the policy was to ensure the safe, sustainable, and cost-effective management of trees under the Council's control, balancing environmental stewardship with public safety and long-term maintenance responsibilities for the benefit of residents. Some members expressed concerns that the policy would not adequately support the most vulnerable members of the community.

A vote was taken on the acceptance of the policy without further amendment, with the following result:

For:7
Against: 1

Recommended:

That, the revised Tree Policy be approved by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at its meeting on 2 February 2026.

CB31 **MEMORIAL TREE POLICY REVIEW**

The Committee received and considered the revised Memorial Tree Policy.

Members welcomed the policy which was noted to be very clear and were unanimous in agreement with its approval.

It was requested that the policy be reviewed after two years.

Recommended:

That, the revised Memoprial Tree Policy be approved by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at its meeting on 2 February 2026.

The meeting closed at: 7.23 pm

Chair

CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item: Finance Report

Meeting Date: 19 May 2026

Contact Officer: Responsible Financial Officer

Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 12 noon on the day of the meeting to allow for a full response at the meeting.

Background

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are enclosed. The period to which this report relates is 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Current Situation

The Committee is responsible for cost centres 206 - Witney Lake and Country Park; 250 – Amenity Areas and 403 – Planning.

The draft management accounts being presented are those for 2025-26. Steady progress is being made on closing down the 2025-26 accounts ahead of the Annual Governance and Accountability being drafted for approval at the Council meeting on 22 June. However there are likely to be further adjustments to be made which will affect the final management accounts for the cost centres which are the responsibility of this committee. In particular there is further work to undertake in relation to accruals and earmarked reserve movements and this will particularly affect cost centre 206 – Witney Lake and Country Park.

A full commentary on the budget lines was undertaken as part of the budget process.

<u>Committee terms of reference</u>

The major change which took place during 2025-26 in relation to this committee related to its expanded terms of reference. The additional items were:

(b) To manage the Council's Environmental Spaces, including Amenity Areas, Witney Lake and Country Park, Tiny Forest and Community Orchards (except recreation grounds);

c) To oversee the management of the Council's tree stock across the town;

h) To oversee the maintenance of the Council's infrastructure concerning planting displays (including hanging baskets).

The Committee also has an overarching responsibility for climate/biodiversity matters and these include, again quoting from the committee terms of reference:

a) To work to achieve energy efficiencies and net zero carbon emissions in the Council's operations and facilities by 2028, in line with the Council's Climate Emergency resolution made in June 2019;

d) To engage with Central Government, West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, local Oxfordshire organisations, relevant stake holders and other organisations to initiate local action on climate change (towards achieving net zero carbon emissions) air & water pollution, and other environmental issues within the town; e) To encourage biodiversity and healthy recreation in the environmental spaces;

f) To explore and promote the expansion of community energy to keep the benefits of our local energy generation in our local economy;

g) To identify ways for event's organisers to reduce the carbon footprint of events held on council ground. Any financial or policy change implications should be recommended to the Council.

As a result of the changes the cost centre 250 – Amenity Areas – was created, the budgets having been transferred from the Stronger Communities Committee.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality – no implications directly resulting from this report.
b) Biodiversity - no implications directly resulting from this report.
c) Crime & Disorder - no implications directly resulting from this report.
d) Environment & Climate Emergency - no implications directly resulting from this report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The provision of regular financial reports is part of the Council's risk management system.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Social value is no quantified in the financial reports but clearly the creation of social value is dependent on setting adequate budgets to meet the Council's objectives.

Financial implications

This report forms part of the Council's due diligence and a process in line with its Financial Regulations. The financial implications are detailed above and also in the attached income and expenditure statements.

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control, as it enables income and expenditure incurred to be reviewed and to be compared with the Council's budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited:

To approve the report and the draft management accounts of the Committee's services to for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Witney Town Council Current Year

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 12)

Note: Draft management accounts - year to 31 March 2026

		2024-25 Final		2025-26 Draft				Estimate 2026-27		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
Climate & Biodiversity										
206	**WITNEY COUNTRY PARK**									
1030	FISHING RIGHTS	978	978	1,000	0	0	0	1,038	0	0
1170	GRANTS RECEIVED	0	10,893	0	1,500	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Income	978	11,871	1,000	1,500	0	0	1,038	0	0
4001	SALARIES	58,848	58,844	63,211	63,386	63,106	0	66,956	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	5,585	5,610	7,982	8,007	7,966	0	8,543	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	12,731	12,707	13,716	13,694	13,694	0	11,334	0	0
4007	PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	400	1,076	1,000	691	1,000	0	1,038	0	0
4008	TRAINING	0	2,860	2,000	485	2,000	0	2,076	0	0
4017	CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	0	0	1,000	0	1,000	0	1,038	0	0
4026	BOOKS/PUBLICATIONS	100	55	100	72	100	0	104	0	0
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	2,000	4,207	2,040	1,284	2,040	0	2,118	0	0
4037	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	0	0	7,000	9,022	7,000	0	7,266	0	0
4038	OTHER MAINTENANCE	0	205	0	215	0	0	0	0	0
4040	ARBORICULTURE	1,000	825	1,000	3,533	1,000	0	1,038	0	0
4041	EQUIPMENT HIRE	0	0	500	909	500	0	519	0	0
4042	EQUIPMENT INC. FURNITURE	11,000	4,223	2,000	3,125	2,000	0	2,076	0	0
4043	SMALL TOOLS & EQUIPT	0	0	2,500	2,423	2,500	0	2,595	0	0
4044	FUEL	0	0	1,000	1,293	1,000	0	1,038	0	0
4050	VEHICLE MAINTENANCE	0	0	1,000	3,022	1,000	0	1,038	0	0
4059	OTHER PROF FEES	5,000	340	1,500	1,551	1,500	0	1,557	0	0
4064	HEALTH & SAFETY	1,000	528	1,500	287	1,500	0	1,557	0	0
4066	TREE REPLACEMENT	0	0	1,300	0	1,300	0	1,349	0	0

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Witney Town Council Current Year

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 12)

Note: Draft management accounts - year to 31 March 2026

		2024-25 Final		2025-26 Draft				Estimate 2026-27		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4099	MISCELLANEOUS	250	420	250	373	250	0	260	0	0
4163	GREEN FLAG APPLICATION	0	430	0	60	0	0	0	0	0
4222	TINY FOREST EXPENSES	0	0	200	0	200	0	208	0	0
4495	TFR FROM EARMARKED R	0	0	0	-1,250	-1,250	0	0	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	24,612	10,878	15,000	19,646	26,461	0	16,715	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	2,832	2,049	977	1,238	1,941	0	988	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	2,304	2,227	2,670	2,501	2,604	0	2,539	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	652	775	705	721	652	0	727	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	4,156	1,460	2,133	3,330	3,993	0	2,478	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	132,470	109,719	132,284	139,618	145,057	0	137,155	0	0
	206 Net Income over Expenditure	-131,492	-97,848	-131,284	-138,118	-145,057	0	-136,117	0	0
6001	less Transfer to EMR	0	10,887	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(131,492)	(108,735)	(131,284)	(138,118)	(145,057)		(136,117)		
250	**AMENITY AREAS**									
1170	GRANTS RECEIVED	0	0	0	2,925	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Income	0	0	0	2,925	0	0	0	0	0
4017	CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	0	0	6,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
4037	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	0	0	0	57	0	0	0	0	0
4039	HORTICULTURE	0	0	19,500	17,883	22,500	4,945	20,200	0	0
4040	ARBORICULTURE	0	0	20,000	11,700	10,000	0	20,000	0	0
4066	TREE REPLACEMENT	0	0	4,000	767	2,000	0	4,000	0	0
4067	Tree Survey	0	0	7,500	0	7,500	0	7,500	0	0
4068	FLOOD ALLEVIATION	0	0	0	5,861	5,861	0	1,250	0	0

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Witney Town Council Current Year

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 12)

Note: Draft management accounts - year to 31 March 2026

		2024-25 Final		2025-26 Draft				Estimate 2026-27		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	0	0	135,000	109,924	87,666	0	150,439	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	0	0	8,792	7,753	3,607	0	8,889	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	0	0	10,681	7,439	10,418	0	10,160	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	0	0	2,820	2,059	2,609	0	2,909	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	19,198	10,356	13,230	0	22,300	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	0	0	233,491	173,799	165,391	4,945	247,647	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	0	0	(233,491)	(170,874)	(165,391)		(247,647)		
403	**PLANNING**									
4028	I.T.	0	0	0	294	294	0	0	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	25,342	24,508	29,371	27,507	28,647	0	27,937	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	7,170	8,526	7,755	7,929	7,174	0	7,999	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	32,512	33,034	37,126	35,730	36,115	0	35,936	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(32,512)	(33,034)	(37,126)	(35,730)	(36,115)		(35,936)		
	Climate & Biodiversity - Income	978	11,871	1,000	4,425	0	0	1,038	0	0
	Expenditure	164,982	142,753	402,901	349,147	346,563	4,945	420,738	0	0
	Net Income over Expenditure	-164,004	-130,882	-401,901	-344,722	-346,563	-4,945	-419,700	0	0
	less Transfer to EMR	0	10,887	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(164,004)	(141,769)	(401,901)	(344,722)	(346,563)		(419,700)		
	Total Budget Income	978	11,871	1,000	4,425	0	0	1,038	0	0
	Expenditure	164,982	142,753	402,901	349,147	346,563	4,945	420,738	0	0
	Net Income over Expenditure	-164,004	-130,882	-401,901	-344,722	-346,563	-4,945	-419,700	0	0

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Witney Town Council Current Year

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 12)

Note: Draft management accounts - year to 31 March 2026

	2024-25 Final		2025-26 Draft				Estimate 2026-27		
	Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
less Transfer to EMR	0	10,887	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(164,004)	(141,769)	(401,901)	(344,722)	(346,563)		(419,700)		

CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item: Terms of Reference

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 19th May 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is for Members to review and recommend terms of reference for the Committee for the forthcoming municipal year.

Background

At the Annual Council Meeting held on 6th May 2026, it was resolved that terms of reference for each Committee would be reviewed at each meeting in the current meeting cycle.

Current Situation

The current terms of reference for this Committee are:

a) To work to achieve energy efficiencies and net zero carbon emissions in the Council's operations and facilities by 2028, in line with the Council's Climate Emergency resolution made in June 2019;
b) To manage the Council's Environmental Spaces, including Amenity Areas, Witney Lake and Country Park, Tiny Forest and Community Orchards (except recreation grounds);
c) To oversee the management of the Council's tree stock across the town;
d) To engage with Central Government, West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, local Oxfordshire organisations, relevant stake holders and other organisations to initiate local action on climate change (towards achieving net zero carbon emissions) air & water pollution, and other environmental issues within the town;
e) To encourage biodiversity and healthy recreation in the environmental spaces;
f) To explore and promote the expansion of community energy to keep the benefits of our local energy generation in our local economy;
g) To identify ways for event's organisers to reduce the carbon footprint of events held on council ground. Any financial or policy change implications should be recommended to the Council;
h) To oversee the maintenance of the Council's infrastructure concerning planting displays (including hanging baskets);
i) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 6 Members plus the Town Mayor and the Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights;
j) The quorum of the committee shall be 4 members.

The Committee is asked if it would like to make any amendments to the terms for the forthcoming municipal year The Committee may like to consider the following changes/additions:

k) To oversee the work of the Council's Climate Action Working Party.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

7. A Green & Resilient Town

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality - no direct implications.
b) Biodiversity - see text in the report.
c) Crime & Disorder - no direct implications.
d) Environment & Climate Emergency - see text in the report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Without clear terms of reference, Council committees risk role confusion, weak accountability, legal challenges, inefficient decision-making, and poor alignment with Council objectives. Clear and regularly reviewed terms of reference are essential for accountable, transparent, and effective committee operations.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial implications

- The work of the Committee is funded from pre-defined budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and;

1. Review the terms of reference; and
2. Consider any changes to the terms of reference; and
3. Recommend such changes be made to Full Council on 13th July 2026.

CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item:	Annual Resident's Survey 2026
Meeting Date:	Tuesday, 19 May 2026
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is to present Members with the results of the annual residents' satisfaction survey, conducted between February and May, regarding services overseen by this Committee.

Background

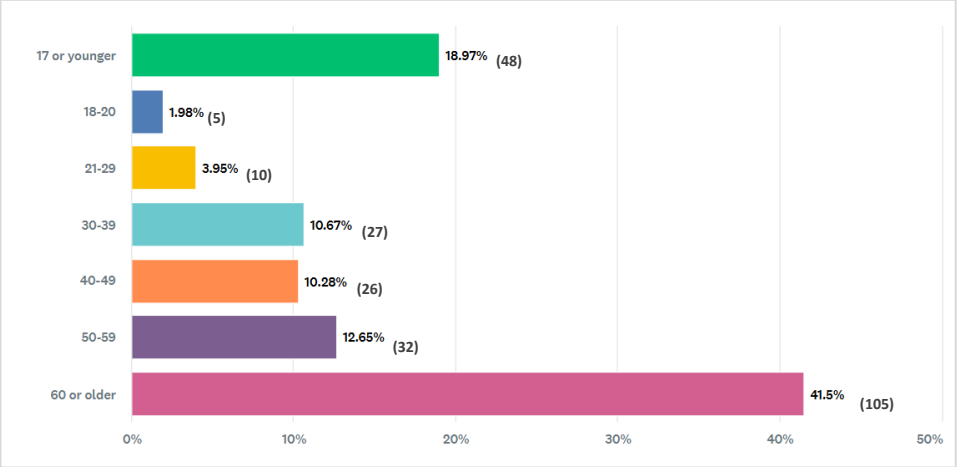
The survey was sent to every household in the post and was promoted online via social media and in the local secondary schools; 272 responses were received in total.

While the number of responses is a very small percentage of the population, the results are still an important resource in advising the Council in which areas projects, communications, and future spending should be considered and what matters to residents.

Current Situation

Responses from younger residents were noticeably lower this year, with participation from school-aged respondents (18 and under) decreasing from around 186 responses in 2024 and 122 responses in 2025 to 48 responses in 2026.

Respondent Age Demographics



Survey Scores Overall

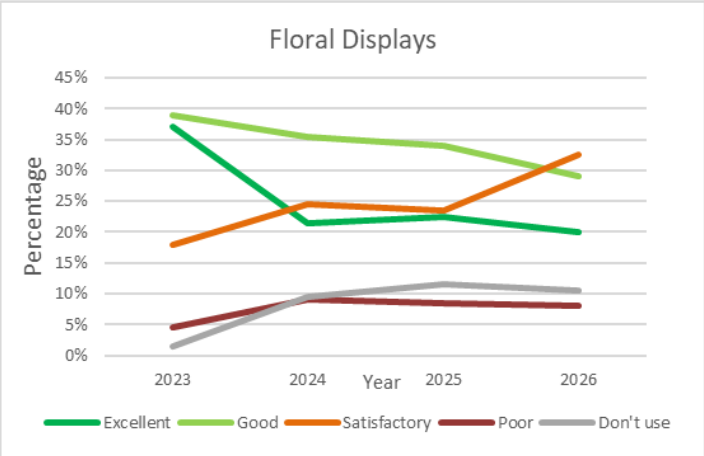
The following table shows how the services scored overall in the survey (with percentages rounded).

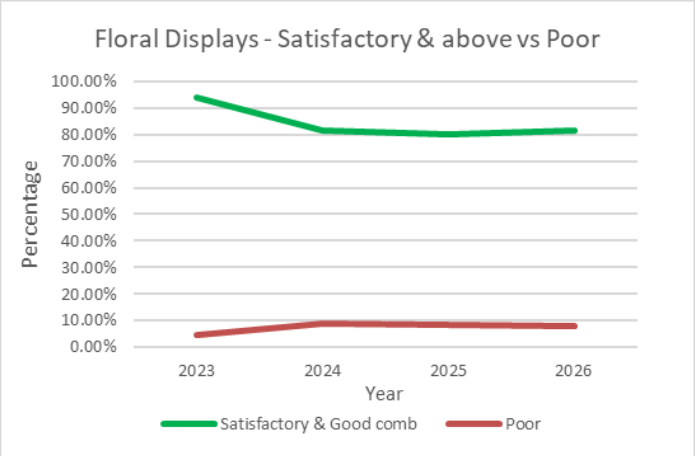
As a comparison, the figures/percentages from the previous three years' surveys are included.

Service		Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	% comb	Poor	Don't use	Resp
Floral Displays (including Hanging Baskets)	2026	20% (55)	29% (79)	32.5% (88)	**81.50%**	**8% (22)**	10.5% (28)	272
	2025	22.5 (77)	34% (116)	23.5% (80)	**80.0%**	**8.5%** (29)	11.5% (39)	341
	2024	21.5% (92)	35.5% (153)	24.5% (107)	**81.5%**	**9%** (40)	9.5% (42)	434
	2023	37% (80)	39% (85)	18% (39)	**94.0%**	**4.5%** (10)	1.5% (3)	217
Witney Lake & Country Park	2026	16% (53)	32% (86)	26.5% (72)	**74.50%**	**13% (35)**	24% (66)	272
	2025	14.5% (50)	36% (123)	19% (65)	**69.5%**	**7.5%** (25)	23% (80)	343
	2024	12.5% (54)	34.5% (150)	22.5% (99)	**69.5%**	**6%** (27)	24.5% (106)	436
	2023	17% (37)	40% (88)	16.5% (36)	**73.5%**	**5.5%** (12)	21% (46	219

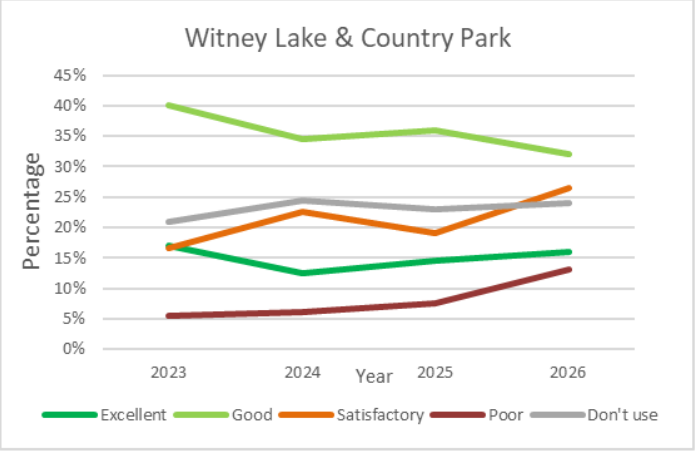
The following graphs track performance over the previous four years for these services in the previous three years.

Floral Displays infographics





Witney Lake & Country Park infographics



Comments

In addition to the results above, the survey also welcomes specific comments, all of which relating to this Committee can be seen below:

- “I’m a student at Woodgreen, I have lived in Witney since I was born. I’ve found that it is so much nicer going on walks here than I thought, because of the gorgeous places to walk like Witney lake, and the flowers that just liven up everything in a wonderful way. I’m really grateful that everyone in town is so kind and approachable and I like to go to the park all the time with my friends”

- “I think the grass cutting was a better standard when the contractors did it with reel mowers. The lake was better when bikes were banned. Putting picnic tables there has encouraged people to set fires/BBQs. The churchyard was much nicer when it was cared for properly -now it just looks neglected, which is disrespectful to those interred there. Money spent on flowerbeds would be better spent on mowing verges & weed killer for pavements, even if it isn't really your job - it is our town. Every year the hedge on Station Lane blocks the footpath. Please cut it back, it is perfectly legal to do so, the ban only applies to farmers.”

- “Witney floral displays are lovely. Tasteful colours. Not garish. Well done to those involved!”

- “Floral displays are fine, but need more on roundabouts - they're a mess! Tower hill and Deer Park specifically. Town council need to get their finger out of the country park and make our town look pretty again.”

- “A number of the planters in the town filled with water over winter. Witney Lakes obviously faces challenges with spill over from the river this makes using the path on a mobility scooter or wheelchair uncomfortable and difficult. I'm also concerned at the ecology of the lake given the amount of sewage in our rivers. Access to Witney Lake from the town is unpleasant and off putting/feels unsafe to a woman on her own.”

- “Everything is good but we don't shout about it. Things could be better, like the lakes signage to and from, events in Witney to get involved in”

- “The Lake & Country Park need rethinking.”

- “Due to flooding Witney Lake isn't accessible during periods of heavy rain. It would be appreciated if this could be looked at so that the lake walk is accessible all year round.”

- “Please stop spending my money pollarding trees that belong to the Church, whilst those on council land are left to fall & block the river, increasing the flood risk. Please also [stop filling the potholes at the lake] with sand is a waste of time & money.

- “Really [need] somewhere to lock your bike up at Witney Lake”

- “The flower baskets and displays always make my day when I see them”

- “Would love to see more creative use of formalised flower beds from rows of annuals constantly replaced to borders using perennials and shrubs as well. Lovely wildflowers on Welch way island!”

- “We are fortunate in having several open/natural grassed spaces nearby and we hope they are maintained for the future. It is however a huge disappointing that these grassed areas and wildflowers are regularly mown down by over-zealous council contractors during the summer discouraging wildflower growth and the support of pollinators, insects, birds and small mammals.

Corporate Strategy

The Council’s Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council’s long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to ‘make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.’ This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

2. An Engaged & Supported Community

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council’s Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality - The residents’ survey helps identify service inequalities and amplify underrepresented voices, supporting fairer, more inclusive decision-making. It may also highlight items which need addressing under the Equality Act 2010.
b) Biodiversity - The Council must ensure any issues are dealt with in line with biodiversity legislation and its own policy.
c) Crime & Disorder - The survey provides the ability to highlight concerns about safety and anti-social behaviour. The survey can inform targeted responses, resource allocation, and partnership working with police and community safety teams. It may help identify hotspots, vulnerable groups, and areas needing intervention such as the cemeteries.
d) Environment & Climate Emergency – The survey supports the Council’s climate emergency commitments by ensuring resident feedback can help shape relevant policies and actions.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

There is a reputational risk if the Council does not address comments received in its satisfaction survey as it will be seen as not listening to residents.

The Council’s committees will have competing demands on the overall Council budget, so any

additional project funding has to be balanced and proportionate. Additions should be in line with Councils objectives and adopted policies/strategies.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Listening to residents' feedback on Council services delivers significant social value by showing empowerment, inclusion, trust, and community wellbeing; It affirms that their opinions matter and helps build a sense of respect and transparency. This is especially important for the Council, where inclusive decision-making ensures diverse needs are reflected in service design and delivery.

Internally, it supports continuous improvement across the Council's services and helps identify future objectives thereby demonstrating meaningful change.

Financial implications

- There are no new implications from the contents of this report at this point. The Committee may like to consider further projects based on the feedback or increasing/ creating budgets for any item.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. What action is required from the results of the survey for services under the remit of this Committee.

CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item:	Climate Action Plan
Meeting Date:	Tuesday 19 May 2026
Contact Officer:	Compliance and Environment Officer

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Witney Town Council's Climate Strategy and Action Plan.

Background

At its meeting on 26 June 2019, Witney Town Council formally declared a Climate Emergency. In response, the Council committed to taking all necessary measures to address climate change, setting a target to achieve carbon neutrality by 2028 in pursuit of a cleaner, more sustainable future for its residents.

Current Situation

While progress on climate-related initiatives has been slower than originally anticipated over the past few months, this reflects a period of necessary focus on key operational priorities.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Corporate Strategy 2025-2029 has been reviewed to ensure the draft Climate Change Strategy a-lines with the document. Woven through all six pillars that guide the Council's decision-making and resource allocation is the commitment to substantiality and resilience which also forms the foundation of the seventh, overarching objective:

7. A Green and Resilient Town *- Rooted in the Council's 2019 Climate Emergency declaration. We are committed to embedding environmental responsibility into everything we do. We aim to achieve carbon neutrality for the Council by 2028, while supporting wider efforts to create a thriving, low-carbon future for Witney.*

Key actions, committee delivery plans, and priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy have been incorporated into the draft Climate Change Strategy.

Draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

The third draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (Appendix A) has been prepared following the preliminary roadmap presented to the Climate and Biodiversity Committee on 20 May 2025 and the Climate Action Working Party on 25 September 2025 where further direction from Members was given to officers. A detailed Action Plan, including key performance indicators (KPIs) and timelines, will now be further developed to accompany the

Climate Change Strategy. This will allow the Council to track progress and link strategic objectives directly to measurable outcomes.

Implementation Roadmap & Estimated Reductions

Following the completion of the 2024–25 baseline emissions assessment, clear carbon reduction priorities have now been established, highlighting the most significant opportunities for impactful change. The next phase will focus on calculating the estimated tCO_2e savings for each measure to finalise this component of the plan, with Scope 1 delivering the greatest impact. Scope 1 refers to the direct emissions from Council owned operations, excluding any buildings leased to third parties. e.g. Liquid fuel for vehicles (petrol and diesel). A breakdown of Scope 1 emissions sources details heating emissions at 26.91 tCO2e and the Council's fleet use at 24.48 tCO2e.

The Operations Manager is now in post and will review the Council's fleet, plant and machinery, making recommendations on where electric alternatives are suitable. However, due to the specialist nature of certain operations, it will not be possible to replace all vehicles, plant and machinery with electric alternatives.

Council Carbon Emissions Assessment 2025-2026

With the establishment of the 2024-2025 Council carbon emissions, officers will undertake a detailed review of its carbon emissions for the period April 2025 - March 2026, using the local authority industry recognised GHG Accounting Tool. The accounting tool has been developed by The Local Government Association and is widely used by local authorities to establish their baseline greenhouse gas emissions over a single reporting year. This assessment will enable the Council to determine progress on the established total Council emissions for 2024-2025 of 65.08 tCO2e.

Carbon Reduction Recommendations Reports and Grant Funding

Energy Solutions Oxfordshire have undertaken the Carbon Reduction Recommendations Reports for Burwell Hall, Windrush Cemetery Depot and the Corn Exchange. Energy Solutions Oxfordshire have a Green Fund which can match funding up to £10,000 for energy efficiency measures or renewable energy projects that have been recommended within their reports. The Green Fund application deadlines for 2026 are:

- June Board – application deadline 10 June 2026
- September Board – application deadline 9 September 2026
- December Board – application deadline 2 December 2026

Windrush Cemetery Depot: The building is located within the Eynsham and Cassington Ward, where Low Carbon Hub is currently delivering the CAP Zero project. An energy assessment was undertaken in December 2025 and is included as Appendix B.

Several of the recommendations identified can be delivered through the existing general building maintenance budget. Further investigation, including detailed project costing, could be undertaken in relation to the installation of solar PV panels and the potential use of an air-to-air heat pump system.

The building is fully electric, with electricity used for both heating and lighting. The annual electricity cost for the period 2024–2025 was £2,357.

A summary extract of the recommended energy-saving measures, along with their associated carbon impact, is set out below for consideration.

Energy savings recommendations - summary				
Opportunity	Payback (years)	Savings current & future energy prices (£ / yr)	Estimated costs (£)	Carbon impact (tCO_2e / yr)
1) Take and submit meter readings	-	0	0	0.00
2) Add heating controls	0.9	129	120 to 310	0.11
3) Add loft insulation	5.4	103	560	0.08
4) Add timer to hot water	4.3	42	180	0.03
5) Upgrade lighting to LEDs	7.6	230	1,750 to 2,100	0.19
6) Add draught proofing to external door	-	0	20 to 40	0.00
7) Investigate fridge use	-	See details	See details	0.00
8) Provide signage for disabled toilet door	0.1	18	1 to 2	0.02
9) Add solar PV panels	9.5	442	4,186 to 4,508	0.26
10) Consider an air to air heat pump system	11.6	519	6,000 to 8,000	0.42
	TOTAL	£1,483 per year	£12,817 to 15,70	1.11 tCO_2e per year

Corn Exchange:

An energy assessment was undertaken in April 2026 and is included as Appendix C. No information on existing insulation measures was available for review by the assessor, and additional investigation may be necessary by officers.

The Corn Exchange represents the Council's largest source of water, gas and electricity consumption. The annual electricity and gas cost for the period 2024–2025 was £17,349. Water consumption was 1859m3.

A summary extract of the recommended energy-saving measures, along with their associated carbon impact, is set out below for consideration.

Energy savings recommendations - summary				
Opportunity	Payback (years)	Savings current & future energy prices (£ / yr)	Estimated costs (£)	Carbon impact (tCO_2e / yr)
1) Manage heating	1.1	271	300	0.63
2) Conduct an out of hours survey	-	See details	0	0
3) Upgrade lighting to LEDs	9.9	844	8,400 to 9,800	0.69
4) Add draught proofing to external doors	-	See details	50 to 70	0
5) Investigate glazing solutions	44.6	271	12,100 to 16,500	0.63
6) Manage summer heat	-	See details	1,500 to 2,000	0
7) Add solar PV panels	8.7	3,573	31,096 to 35,880	2.34
8) Consider an air to water heat pump system	-	See details	35,000 to 45,000	8.02
	TOTAL	£4,959 per year	£88,446 to 109,550	12.30 tCO_2e per year

Burwell Hall

The energy assessment was undertaken in 2022 and is included as Appendix D. Since the report the gas boiler system has been upgraded.

The report concludes that Burwell Hall has clear opportunities to reduce both running costs and carbon emissions through a combination of heating system replacement (completed 2023), fabric improvements, improved controls, and renewable energy. Savings are achievable in the short term through low-cost measures, with larger long-term benefits from heating and renewable upgrades.

Several of the recommendations identified can be delivered through the existing general building maintenance budget. Further investigation, including detailed project costing, could be undertaken in relation to the installation of solar PV panels and the installation of ceiling insulation below the main hall to retain heat in the building.

Benchmarking

Following confirmation from the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Environmental & Sustainability Advisor that no published benchmarking data is currently held for town councils, officers have undertaken a limited benchmarking exercise.

Further research to assess the Council's performance against comparable town councils identified that four councils have published emissions data online via Carbon Data Intelligence (www.carbondi.com). The reported emissions have been independently verified by Carbon Footprint Ltd, which was commissioned by the respective councils to undertake carbon reporting.

Town Council	Report Period	Emissions tCO2e
Corsham	2024-2025	25.89
	2022-2023	63.33
Cirencester	2024-2025	62.18
Shrewsbury	2023-2024	484.03
Woodley	2023-2024	151.70
Witney	2024-2025	64.08

The comparative data shows that Witney's performance is broadly aligned with Cirencester during the same reporting period, while also illustrating the more significant reductions achieved by Corsham from 2022-2023 to 2024-2025. There would be value in sharing learning and best practice with both of these councils to support the Council's carbon reduction ambitions and officers will progress this further.

Eco Fair 2026

The first Council Eco Fair took place on Thursday 9 October 2025, supported by local organisations and officers from West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. At the Climate Action Working Party meeting on 22 July 2025, it was proposed that a future Eco Fair be held on a weekend to enable residents who are unable to attend weekday events to participate. This proposal was approved and resolved by the Climate & Biodiversity Committee (Minute CB508).

Members are now invited to consider the format and focus of this year's Eco Fair to inform further officer investigations. The event may be hosted by the Council in collaboration with partner organisations who are responsible for the main organisation and delivery.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

7. **A Green and Resilient Town** – Rooted in the Council's 2019 Climate Emergency declaration, with a commitment to embedding environmental responsibility into all Council activities and achieving carbon neutrality by 2028.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality – The impacts of implementing a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for Witney will have equal impact on all services, customers, and staff as there is shared benefit.
b) Biodiversity – Climate change action plans can include measures to protect and restore biodiversity, which in turn can help with climate adaptation and mitigation as detailed in the report.

c) Crime & Disorder - No direct crime and disorder impact with regards to the content of this report.
d) Environment & Climate Emergency – The information and suggested targets within the report will have a direct, positive impact on the Council's plan for the wider positive benefits towards climate change mitigation and adaptation across the town.

Risk

In decision making Members should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability. Any recommendations will be reported to the appropriate Committee and Full Council for approval.

Delivery of the estimated emission savings is ambitious and dependent on securing sufficient financial resources and Council approval within the required timeframe.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will have multi-dimensional impact across various areas including social, economic, and environmental benefits. Stakeholder engagement will be crucial including the public, communities, and local businesses. Consideration of the effects on local communities, including economic development, social inclusion and environmental sustainability will form the draft documents.

Financial implications

- Any costs associated with the Climate Emergency Action Plan incorporating the reduction of the carbon footprint for Witney will follow Council process and be reported to appropriate committees for approval or from existing budget allocations.
- The 2026–2027 budget allocated for capital projects for carbon reduction is £50,000.
- All external funding opportunities will be explored to support climate action costs.
- Officers will maximise the use of support by the various organisations and agencies available.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and:

1. That a Climate Working Party meeting is arranged to further discuss the projects identified within the Carbon Reduction Reports to enable officers to proceed with obtaining quotes.
2. Members are invited to consider the format and focus of this year's Eco Fair to inform further officer investigations. The event may be hosted by the Council in collaboration with partner organisations who are responsible for the main organisation and delivery
3. Share feedback and recommendations to help shape the final version of the strategy.

Appendix A

WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Contents

1. Introduction

Guided by our motto, Ingenio Floremus – 'With Ingenuity We Flourish' – Witney Town Council's Climate Change Strategy reflects our commitment to innovative and forward-thinking environmental action. We recognise that flourishing as a community means embracing sustainable practices, empowering local stakeholders, and investing in creative solutions to address the climate emergency.

This document sets out what Witney Town Council is doing to reduce the impact of climate change on our community through reducing carbon emissions, improving biodiversity, building resilience to extreme weather and supporting a greener economy.

This document explains the roles, opportunities and drivers for Town Council-led action and sets out the benefits for local people and places.

2. Our Commitment to Action

On 26th June 2019, Witney Town Council declared a climate emergency stating:

1. Witney Town Council joins other Councils in declaring a Climate Emergency, and commits to the vision of carbon neutrality by 2028 at the latest, and;
2. calls on Westminster to provide the necessary powers and resources to make local action on climate change easier, and;
3. explores the expansion of community energy to keep the benefits of our local energy generation in our local economy, and;
4. works with partners anchored in the area to deliver carbon reductions and grow the local economy, and;
5. holds a public meeting made up of a representative range of our community members to establish the facts and make recommendations for our council, and;
6. establish a council working party to respond to the recommendations of the public meeting and establish a strategy to act on the vision of carbon neutrality by 2028 at the latest.

Actions already taken:

- A public meeting was held on 28 July 2019 enabling the public to share ideas and visions for change, ant to explore ways in which we can all work together to make Witney net-zero carbon as soon as possible.
- Climate and Biodiversity Committee and Climate Action Working Party established with clear Terms of Reference.

Beyond the Town Council's own assets and services and clear environmental improvements, there are co-benefits of taking action on climate change including economic - job creation, and social - equity and social cohesion, health and wellbeing, resilience and community engagement.

3. How we will achieve our Objectives

Society is dependent on our climate and biodiversity; we need to acknowledge the impact that the decisions we make have on these natural systems.

Our goal is to ensure that the climate emergencies are at the centre of all our decisions, so we reach carbon neutrality by 2028 at the latest.

Our key decision-making processes include listening and engaging with our community; establishing and maintaining partnerships; empowering people and groups; providing support, funding and information; representing, through advocating for change, and looking after the interests of vulnerable people. We will provide transparency and accountability about our goals, actions and progress against targets.

Our key decisions involve considering how we will help meet national and local net zero carbon targets, reduce air pollution and protect and restore nature.

All Councillors and staff will be required to complete carbon literacy training.
This training is essential to ensure that everyone has the knowledge and understanding needed to reduce carbon emissions in their roles and make informed, sustainable decisions. Embedding carbon literacy across the organisation supports our commitment to climate action and responsible governance.

4. Finance and Resources

Our objective is to have sufficient resources to invest in the changes needed to meet carbon reduction and biodiversity goals. Many of the environmental solutions offer long term investments such as saving money on energy bills through better insulation. The majority of the changes we need to make to reduce our environmental impact will require initial resources and funding. We will seek to identify grants and external funding opportunities to help us deliver our ambition.

As well as the Town Council's own resources to reducing our climate impacts, we will use planning mechanisms such as Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy to fund climate actions and biodiversity improvement projects within our town boundary.

We will continue to seek to procure locally sourced services and products, or Fairtrade alternatives where available.

We will review our bank accounts to access where possible their environmental credentials.

5. Community Engagement

Active engagement with residents and businesses is essential in realising the benefits of adapting and responding to the challenges of climate change and in the creation of a low carbon and climate-resilient community.

There are significant opportunities for coordinated action to help deliver local priorities, improve health, save money, boost the local economy, improve the transport system and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment.

Impact, the community carbon calculator, shows the average household footprint in Witney is 12.1t carbon dioxide equivalent. This is below the West Oxfordshire District of 14.1t carbon dioxide equivalent and the GB national average of 13.3t carbon dioxide equivalent.

An understanding of Witney Parish's carbon footprint is essential for developing an effective emissions reduction strategy. Carbon calculators can be used to measure emissions from energy consumption, transport, and waste. Establishing a baseline through a carbon audit will help identify key areas for improvement across the community.

An early priority will be to engage and educate the community on how to interpret and use the Impact tool's insights. The footprint data can guide strategic efforts to reduce emissions and support the Council in setting meaningful change targets.

Each section of the report includes suggested targets and reflective questions to help the Council identify potential areas for action. The data is intended to raise awareness and deepen understanding of the activities contributing to emissions, thereby encouraging both individual and collective action.

The carbon footprint report will be reviewed annually to monitor progress, benchmark against regional and national averages, and inform future Council decisions.

6. Collaborative Working

Addressing climate change requires action across the whole of society. By working together, we will be able to share resources and expertise and have a greater impact on cutting carbon emissions locally. Our goal is to encourage, support, showcase and bring people together to help with their contribution to addressing the climate emergency.

We will continue to promote community sharing and reuse to reduce waste and unnecessary consumption.

Residents - Engagement and support from residents is essential in constructing plans and we will involve a diverse range of residents from our community to help ensure a wide variety of ideas are heard and that solutions to problems are found collectively.

Businesses - We will support local businesses towards lowering their carbon emissions and will direct them to sources of information, expertise and funding to help cut energy, water and resource use.

Schools – We will foster partnerships with our local schools to support climate initiatives.

Community Groups – We will work collaboratively with community groups to drive forward climate, environmental and biodiversity projects that will also create material benefits to Witney.

We will build on our relationship with other local town and parish councils and work closely with West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council in exploring opportunities for collective action and collaboration.

We will work collaboratively with groups and organisations to host events that encourage our residents, businesses and organisations to take a positive action for the environment.

7. Buildings

We acknowledge the challenges with gaining permission for energy improvements to our listed buildings that we own and long-term lease through Witney Town Hall Charity. We will seek to overcome these through innovative retrofit solutions and close working with Witney Town Hall Charity and West Oxfordshire District Council, as the local planning authority.

Any lighting replacements will utilise the latest technology, prioritising high-efficiency LED units wherever feasible. Installation or optimisation of lighting control, including motion sensors where appropriate will be considered for all buildings.

Any refurbishment of Town Council buildings or new building projects will be designed to achieve our target of net zero carbon by 2028.

As part of our commitment to sustainability, we will work with long-term leaseholders of Council-owned buildings to promote positive environmental action, by signposting them to relevant grants and external funding opportunities.

As part of our emergency response efforts, we will work closely with partner organisations and community groups to ensure our public hall venues are available as safe, warm or cool spaces for vulnerable residents during extreme weather events or other local emergencies.

8. Transport

Our goal is to significantly increase the proportion of people that travel by walking, cycling, public transport, car share schemes and electric vehicles through support of lower carbon travel initiatives. The benefits of this include improving local health and wellbeing,

encouraging investment by promoting sustainable transport and creating a cleaner environment.

We are committed to supporting West Oxfordshire District Council and businesses with the deployment of electric vehicle charging infrastructure within our town.

We will promote the use of public transport to our events and activities and ensure we provide cycle stands in our parks.

The Council offers staff the Cycle to Work scheme for employees to help them purchase cycles and accessories at a reduced cost.

9. Fleet and Machinery Commitment

The Town Council is committed to reducing its environmental impact by transitioning its vehicle fleet and operational machinery to electric alternatives wherever feasible. This initiative supports our broader sustainability objectives, including lowering greenhouse gas emissions, reducing air and noise pollution, and promoting cleaner technologies in public service delivery.

As part of the vehicle renewals programme, each asset will be evaluated based on its operational lifespan and the availability of suitable electric replacements. We acknowledge that due to the specialised nature of certain operations, not all vehicles, plant, and machinery can be replaced by electric alternatives. Officers will continue to monitor specialised equipment as new models and advancements become available in the UK.

In support of this commitment, all small machinery and equipment used across our operations will be replaced with electric versions where practicable. This shift will contribute to improved air quality, reduced carbon emissions, and a quieter working environment, benefiting both our workforce and the wider community.

10. Energy

The Town Council will purchase 100% renewable electricity from utility companies for its electrical energy use of Council property, buildings and electrical vehicle fleet. The current gas energy provider supplies 100% green gas which is from anaerobic digestion. It is worth noting that the price of purchasing renewable energy is usually higher than the price associated with a normal tariff. The purchasing of renewable energy requires ongoing financial commitment from the Council. There is currently no official gas impact measurement.

We will work to reduce energy use in all Council owned and long term leased buildings and switch to renewable energy systems such as solar panels, heat pumps, etc. where and when feasible.

Promoting Community Use of Thermal Imaging Technology

The Town Council will actively promote the community use of its thermal imaging camera to support residents in identifying areas of heat loss within their properties. By enabling property owners to make informed decisions about insulation and energy efficiency improvements, this initiative aims to:

- Enhance the overall energy performance of homes,
- Reduce household energy bills,
- Lower carbon emissions associated with domestic heating.

This community-focused approach aligns with our commitment to environmental sustainability and empowers residents to contribute to local climate action efforts.

11. Water

Water is a valuable resource. We seek to avoid wasteful practices and reduce our use of water. We will explore water-saving devices in all Council owned and long term leased buildings and install these where practicable.

Our aim is to further reduce consumption in our floral displays by greywater harvesting from The Leys Splash Park. This greywater will be used to water the towns floral displays and newly planted trees. We have reduced the amount of water needed for our summer hanging baskets and window boxes by using containers that have self-watering facilities and using more drought-resistant plant varieties.

Best available technology to reduce water consumption will be incorporated into Council building refurbishment programmes and new building projects.

12. Waste

The Town Council is committed to building a sustainable community by minimising waste and embracing circular economy principles. We recycle our business waste throughout all our operations including food waste, ink and toner cartridges and specialist waste recycling of electronics (WEEE). We will continue to minimise waste sent to landfill and explore options for reuse.

We provide public litter recycling bins in our parks, Lake and Country Park and play areas. Any wood waste from our maintenance operations is chipped where possible and used as a weed suppressant on shrub beds or hedge lines.

We actively encourage hirers of our premises and land to adopt sustainable alternatives and limit the use of single-use plastics.

We offer the public free water refills at the Corn Exchange to reduce plastic bottle waste. We will explore the installation of a public water refill station at The Leys Recreation Ground.

We want to engage with residents, businesses and organisations to reduce waste in our town and promote community sharing and reuse.

13. Land Use

We will manage Town Council owned land in an environmentally sensitive way. This includes minimising pesticide use wherever possible. However, we acknowledge that due to the specialised nature of certain operations in providing sporting facilities, this may not always be possible.

The Witney Lake and Country Park Management Plan 2024-2034 will continue to protect and enhance biodiversity of the site.

Our Tree Planting Policy sets out our commitment to planting trees on Witney Town Council land. The Council has also created a Tiny Forest at Eton Close amenity area.

We will continue to protect our existing tree stock in order to store carbon, support nature, aid flood protection and deliver mental health benefits. Trees will only be felled where they pose an identifiable risk to people or property.

Our goal is to ensure everyone has access to nature and to restore nature to help draw down carbon pollution from the atmosphere.

We will support and encourage the major landowners within or adjoining the Witney town boundary in restoring land for wildlife.

The Council will continue to support the Witney Allotment Association who administer and manage the four allotment sites in Witney. These are located at Lakeside, Hailey Road, Newland and Windrush Place.

Allotments are valuable community assets, boosting health & wellbeing, providing sustainable growing spaces and creating biodiverse green corridors. The Council will continue to look for an additional site (or sites) to meet demand for allotments.

The Council actively supports the development of community gardens and orchards on our amenity land, recognising their value in promoting biodiversity, improving mental and physical wellbeing, strengthening community ties, and providing access to fresh, locally grown produce.

14. Adapting to the effects of Climate Change

Adaptation to climate change will protect people from higher temperatures, flooding, more extreme weather events and impacts on health and well-being. The community of Witney are vulnerable to a range of effects of climate change and are likely to experience an increase in flooding, droughts and possible wildfires as summers are predicted to get hotter and winters are expected to get wetter.

Witney Town Council is working to adapt the town to the effects of climate change by implementing the following measures:

- **Flooding**
  - Witney has several areas that are at high risk of flooding. A Community Emergency Plan will be developed and maintained for the town in conjunction with West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.
  - The Council will continue to support and work with Witney Flood Group.
  - Creating ponds and wetlands within our green spaces will also help absorb floodwaters.
- **Droughts**
  - Hotter, drier summers are expected because of climate change. This will mean increased care for the vulnerable and increased care of the Council's outdoor spaces such as parks, country park, etc.
  - The Town Council will need to consider creating cooler spaces for people by creating tree shade in our parks and green spaces. Green canopies provide shade from direct sun and cooler air through transpiration.
  - The Town Council will need to review the type of planting that is used in green spaces and floral displays and changing to more drought resistant species.
  - The health of the Council's existing tree stock will be monitored against new threats such as disease caused by warming weather.
- **Grassfires**
  - Areas of long grass within the Council's green spaces may become at risk of fire during heatwaves. The Town Council will need to review the location and management regime of wildflower meadows and areas of rewilding.

15. Planning and Development

The Planning and Development Committee shall undertake an annual review of its Terms of Reference and submit recommendations for any amendments required for the forthcoming municipal year. The current Terms of Reference are published on the Town Council's website. In relation to the Climate Change Strategy, the following provisions within the Terms of Reference are applicable:

b) To consider any planning decisions, appeals, planning briefs and tree preservation orders, and recommend, if appropriate, any views that should be expressed by the Council, or any action that should be taken, in respect of these;

f) To consider and submit appropriate representations on behalf of the Council concerning the potential impact of flooding in Witney, including requests for mitigation measures and comments on sustainable drainage solutions. Due to the serious nature of flooding events, any incidents will be referred to Full Council for further consideration, response and escalation with other agencies;

g) To consider the impact on the green environment and biodiversity of all planning applications and comment in the name of the Council accordingly;

h) To promote sustainable and active travel in the future planning of the town;

16. Transparency and Community Engagement

The Town Council is committed to transparency and accountability in its climate action efforts. We will provide clear, accessible updates on our website and other communications to ensure residents are informed about the initiatives we are undertaking and planning. By sharing our progress openly, we aim to build trust and encourage community involvement in our sustainability journey.

17. Delivery and Monitoring

Witney Town Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will be aligned with all other Council plans, policies and guidance. The Council's Corporate Strategic Plan 2025-2029 has a focus on dealing with the effects of climate change and this will weave throughout all Council objectives.

Our Climate Change Action Plan will include SMART objectives with measurable carbon reduction objectives to enable the Climate Change Strategy to be monitored for its impact.

The Council's Climate & Biodiversity Committee will receive regular progress reports on the delivery of the action plan. The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

The Council recognises that it could offset its remaining carbon emissions through a certified UK Tree Planting Scheme and will initially focus on carbon offsetting that derives local benefit as a priority over investing in schemes further afield.

18. Baseline Emissions Assessment

Historical emissions data for 2019–2020 was submitted to the Council as part of the initial assessment. The Council carbon footprint for 2019-2020 was calculated to be 64.08 tCO_2e. Following this initial assessment, the Council internalised the grounds maintenance contract in 2022, resulting in a material change to operational scope. The 2019–2020 assessment cannot be considered directly comparable to the 2024–2025 baseline due to the substantial expansion of Council activities. Nevertheless, historical building data on water, heating, and electricity consumption will be reviewed.

The Council has undertaken a detailed review of its carbon emissions for the period April 2024 - March 2025, using the local authority industry recognised GHG Accounting Tool. The accounting tool has been developed by The Local Government Association and is widely used by local authorities to establish their baseline greenhouse gas emissions over a single reporting year. This assessment has established total Council emissions of 65.08 tCO_2e.

Scope	Emissions tCO_2e	Percentage of Total Emissions
Scope 1	51.39	79%
Scope 2	0.55	1%
Scope 3	13.14	20%

Scope 1: Direct emissions from Council owned operations, excluding any buildings leased to third parties. e.g. Liquid fuel for vehicles (petrol, diesel).

A breakdown of Scope 1 emissions sources details heating emissions at 26.91 tCO_2e and the Council's fleet use at 24.48 tCO_2e.

Scope 2: Indirect emissions from purchased energy e.g. gas used in Council buildings.

A breakdown of Scope 2 emissions relates to the electricity supplied via Oxfordshire County Council's street lighting for the Town Councils Christmas Lights display.

Scope 3: Other indirect emissions where data is reasonable available e.g. water.

A breakdown of Scope 3 emissions relates to the supply and treatment of water 2.46 tCO_2e and emissions associated with the extraction, refinement and transportation of fuel prior to combustion (Well to Tank) 10.63 tCO_2e.

Out of scope for reporting are supply chain emissions from procurement and waste from properties and sites.

Calculations only cover Council owned operations or long term leased building e.g. Town Hall and Admin Offices. The assessment currently excludes any buildings leased to third parties e.g. Langdale Hall, Madley Park Hall, Towerhill Cemetery Lodge, West Witney Sports and Social Club etc.

The baseline helps the Council to identify key opportunities and challenges as the Council moves towards the 2028 carbon neutral target.

19. Carbon Reduction Plan Summary

2024-2025 Baseline Emissions (65.08 tCO_2e)

- **Scope 1:** 51.39 tCO2e
  - Heating (Buildings): 26.91 tCO_2e
  - Fleet fuel: 21.39 tCO_2e
  - Other Scope 1: 3.09 tCO_2e
- **Scope 2:** 0.55 tCO_2e (Christmas Lighting)
- **Scope 3:** 13.14 tCO_2e
  - Water use & treatment: 2.46 tCO_2e
  - Other Scope 3: 10.68 tCO_2e

20. Implementation Roadmap & Estimated Reductions

Clear carbon reduction priorities have been established, highlighting the main opportunities for impactful change.

Year	Key Measures	2028 Net Zero tCO_2e Reduction Target
2026–2027: Foundation & Infrastructure	• Council Building Retrofits & Upgrades - *Lighting, heating, insulation improvements, secondary glazing* • Building Efficiency Enhancements - *HVAC optimization, rooftop PV feasibility studies* • Water Efficiency Initiatives • Depot EV Charging Infrastructure • Fleet Transition – *Further EV adoption* • Sustainable Energy Integration • Waste, Water & Procurement Improvements	25 tCO_2e
2027–2028: Expansion & Optimisation	• Continued Building Retrofits & Upgrades • Advanced Efficiency Measures - *HVAC optimisation, rooftop PV implementation* • Water Efficiency Initiatives • Fleet Transition -*Further EV adoption* • Waste, Water & Procurement Improvements	20 tCO_2e
2028: Consolidation & Completion	• Final Building Retrofits • Fleet Transition - *Complete EV replacement program where feasible.* • Waste, Water& Procurement Improvements	10 tCO_2e

Total Estimated Reductions: ~55 tCO_2e by end of 2028, residual (~10 tCO_2e) offset providing local benefit alongside recognised off set schemes like the Woodland Carbon Code projects.

Appendix 1 – Climate Change Action Plan – Witney Town Council

Note: Projects and ideas presented may require budget or utilise existing Council budgets. All new projects to be agreed by Committee or Council.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Witney Town Council Total Carbon Footprint 2024-25 65.08 tCO2e.	**ALL**	**High**	**ALL**		**2026-27 Target: 60-70% reduction on 2024-25 baseline**	**Net Zero by 2028**
Finance and Resources						
1. Annually review the WTC Procurement Policy.	HEO/OM/CEO/VEO/BGSO	High	3	Nil	Policy reviewed and updated on an annual basis. All staff involved with procurement have read and understood their responsibilities to deliver the policy.	Review current policy and determine if changes are required. Report to Council on policy review.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
2. Aim to reduce the calculated supply chain emissions by purchasing locally sourced and environmentally friendly goods and services, wherever possible, in line with the Procurement Policy.	CEO	High	3	Nil	Emissions from supply chains.	Establish a method for reporting supply chain emissions. Review annual supply chain carbon emissions and look where reductions can be made.
3. Main contractors hired by WTC to have an Environmental Policy.	HEO/CEO/PO /OM	Low	3	Nil	2026 – 75% 2027 – 100% % of main contractors (any contractor paid over £30k per annum or a Capital Project exceeding £30k) to have an Environmental Policy.	Align with WTC Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and Supplier/Contractor Vetting.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
4. Review use of all chemicals used by WTC (e.g. cleaning products) and seek environmentally friendly alternatives where feasible.	OM/CEO/BGSO/VEO	Low	3	Existing	% of harmful chemicals replaced by environmentally friendly alternatives where feasible. 2026/27 - 80%	Review all chemicals being used are environmentally friendly where feasible. Continually review best alternatives as suppliers review and develop products available.
5. Review WTC banking arrangements	RFO	High	3	Nil	WTC partners 100% with ethical organisations to deliver trusted banking and investment solutions.	Confirm banking and investment arrangements with RFO.
6. External grants and funding opportunities identified and applied for to support and implement delivery of the action plan.	CEO	High	1, 2 & 3	Nil for application of grant to support budgeted projects.	Grant funding successfully applied for to support WTC budgets.	Grant funding researched for each major element of climate action proposed.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Buildings						
7. Commission energy feasibility reports for WTC buildings: Corn Exchange, Burwell Hall, Town Hall, Admin Office and Windrush Cemetery Depot.	CEO	High	1 & 2	Existing	Reports on 5 buildings commissioned.	Reports commissioned for Windrush Cemetery Depot, Burwell Hall & Corn Exchange.
8. Improve the energy efficiency of the WTC buildings by undertaking the recommended actions from the energy feasibility report.	HEO/CEO/PO	High	1 & 2	Proposals to be submitted.	2026/27 – specific project proposals identified.	Projects to be discussed with WODC as Planning Authority to agree feasibility of implementing recommendations. Review reports and agree actions/timelines at CBC and submit proposals to Full Council for consideration.
9. Building refurbishment and new building projects designed with energy efficiency systems.	HEO/PO	High	1 & 2	Existing	Report on energy saving measures incorporated into refurbishment /building works project.	West Witney Sports & Social Club refurbishment works, and the new Works Depot have incorporated energy efficiency measures. Works commenced.
Transport						
10. Encourage staff to use lower carbon forms of	CEO	Low	3	Nil	2026-27 replace at least 50% of current staff work	Establish a method of reporting.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
transport for work travel or car share for journeys outside of Witney.					trips made by car with lower carbon transport options.	
11. Reduce Town Councillor travel emissions for Witney Town Council business.	CEO	Low	3	Nil	Reduce Councillor town council related travel.	Establish a method of annual reporting.
Fleet and Machinery Commitment						
12. Transition vehicle fleet and operational machinery to fully electric alternatives.	HEO/OM/CEO/BGSO	Medium	1	Proposals to be submitted.	Vehicle and machinery renewals plan to be reviewed. Suitable alternatives to be researched and options detailed. % of Council owned vehicle fleet and operational machinery that are low-emission.	Electric alternatives to be considered and if none are feasible this will be recorded. Continually review suitable alternatives as industry review and develop choices.
13. Transition small machinery and equipment to fully electric alternatives.	HEO/OM/CEO/BGSO	Low	1	Proposals to be submitted.	Small machinery and equipment to be reviewed when replacement is required. Suitable alternatives to be researched and	Electric alternatives to be considered and if none are feasible this will be recorded. Continually review suitable alternatives as industry review and develop choices.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
					options detailed for consideration.	
14. Where feasible hired vehicles and equipment to be electric.	HEO/OM/CEO/BGSO	Low	1	Existing	Annual report on number of hired vehicles and equipment detailing % electric.	Electric alternatives to be considered and if none are feasible this will be recorded.
Energy						
15. Renewable energy to be used in all Council owned buildings and properties.	HEO/PO/RFO/CEO	High	2	Existing	100% renewable electricity and gas.	Review all WTC energy providers.
16. Town Centre Christmas Lights Display	HEO/PO/COE	High	2	Existing	100% renewable electricity	Investigate with OCC the energy provider for Christmas Lights.
17. Encourage staff to identify and reduce energy use and wastage.	COE	Medium	1 & 2	Existing	Regularly monitor and inform staff of energy usage against target. Identify and implement energy saving/reduction actions.	Ongoing general awareness of where energy is being used and potentially wasted. Lights and heaters being switched off when not necessary.
Water						
18. Reduce carbon emissions from water usage and waste water. Reduce water consumption by installation of water saving	HEO/OM/CEO/PO/VEO	High	3	Existing or proposals to be submitted for larger schemes	Implement annual reductions in water use and waste to reduce carbon emissions.	Monitor water consumption regularly and set measurable targets to drive continuous reduction. Total Council water consumption 2024-2025 = 8021 m3

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
devices in Council buildings.				outside of maintenance budgets.		
Waste						
19. Reduce emissions from waste.	HEO/OM/CEO/VEO/BGSO	Medium	3	Existing	% of annual waste recycled compared to waste to landfill reported.	Establish a method of reporting the annual emissions of waste from Council operations. Investigate ways to reduce amount of waste produced throughout all service areas and buildings. Maximise the amount of waste that can be recycled.
20. Wood waste and green waste	HEO/OM/CEO/BGSO	Medium	3	Existing	% of annual green and wood waste reused compared to waste to landfill reported.	Wood waste is chipped and reused as a weed suppressant on shrub beds and hedge lines. Green waste is composted and reused to enrich soil on Council amenity land and flower beds.
21. Completely reduce the use of single-use plastic in Council offices and premises.	HEO/OM/CEO/VEO	Low	3	Existing	Identify single use plastics and target reduction of single use plastic to zero.	
22. Reduce the use of single-use plastics and waste at all internal and external events.	VEO/CEO	Low	3	Existing	Annual review of hire forms and Events Policy.	All external events on WTC land to provide recycling and food waste recycling. Events Policy to detail the number of attendees e.g. 400 that requires recycling

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
					Reports to be provided in Event Management Plans by event organisers.	facility provision. Reviews and reports submitted to the CBC.
23. Ensure all waste bins have the facility to recycle within WTC amenity land, play areas, Lake & Country Park and cemeteries to reduce landfill waste.	HEO/OM/CEO/BGSO	Low	3	Proposals to be submitted following review.	Ongoing review of the potential for installing more bins.	Undertake audit of public waste bins on WTC amenity areas, Lake & Country Park, Play Areas and Cemeteries. Maximise the amount of waste that can be recycled.
24. Aim to move to paperless offices and meetings.	CEO	Low	3	Existing	% reported annually to reduce paper buying and waste produced.	Review processes for reducing paper use. All paper purchased is recycled.
Land Use						
25. WTC Witney Lake & Country Park.	HEO/CEO/BGSO	Low	N/A	Existing		Continue to manage the area in line with the Witney Lake and Country Park Management Plan 2024-2034.
26. WTC amenity land.	HEO/CEO/BGSO	Low	N/A	Existing		Continue to manage WTC land in line with the Biodiversity Policy. Reviews and reports submitted to the CBC.
27. Review use of all pesticides used by WTC and seek environmentally friendly	OM/CEO/BGSO	Low	1 & 3	Nil	Review current Pesticides Policy.	Review all pesticides being used. Continually review best alternatives as suppliers review and develop products

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
alternatives where feasible.						available. Reviews submitted to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee.
28. Support the development of community gardens and orchards within Witney on WTC land.	HEO/OM/CEO/BGSO	Low	3	Proposals to be submitted when required.	Number of community gardens and orchards on WTC land.	Seek adequate spaces for growing food and garden areas within the community on WTC land. Reviews and reports submitted to the CBC.
Adaption						
29. Create a Community Emergency Plan.	HEO/CEO	N/A	N/A	Nil	2025/26 Community Emergency Plan created and adopted by Council and shared with relevant organisations/groups. Comms plan in place during extreme weather events and local emergencies.	Community Emergency Action Plan drafted and with WODC Officers for review.
30. Review location and management regime of wildflower meadows and rewilding areas.	HEO/BGSO	N/A	N/A	Proposals to be submitted when required.	Areas and regime reviewed on an annual basis.	Reviews submitted to Climate & Biodiversity Committee.
31. Create an Environmental Emergency Plan.	CEO	N/A	N/A	Nil	Community Emergency Plan created and adopted by Council and shared	Ensure staff are trained in emergencies such as wildfire, drought, flood, storms focussing

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
					with relevant organisations/groups.	on prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery.
Transparency						
32. Provide clear, accessible updates on the council's climate action progress through the Council website and other communications.	CEO	Low	N/A	Nil	Updates provided as agreed.	Not yet started
Delivery and Monitoring						
33. Establish WTC Climate Action Working Party.	WTC/CEO	High	N/A	Nil	Terms of Reference agreed. Reporting into CBC with recommendations.	CAWP established.
34. Review and update the Town Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan so that it delivers the Town Council's net zero goal.	WTC/CBC/CEO	High	N/A	Nil	Annually updated and approved by the Council and presented to Councillors and staff	Review, and if necessary, update the Strategy each year.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
35. Create an annual Carbon Emissions report that shows year on year reduction in the Town Council's carbon emissions in line with achieving net zero by 2028.	CEO	High	N/A	Nil	Annual plan completed showing year on year reductions, based carbon emissions from baseline year of 2024-25, in line with net zero.	A summary of historical information to be provided to the CAWP. Initial assessment information for 2019-2020. Assessment completed for 2024-25.
36. Staff and Councillors are knowledgeable about the climate emergency.	CEO	High	1, 2 & 3	Proposals to be submitted.	Percentage of staff and Councillors who have undertaken a climate literacy course. All staff and Councillors climate literate by end of 2026.	Carbon literacy training delivery to be progressed with WODC partnership working.
37. All staff encouraged to identify and implement changes to reduce WTC's greenhouse gas emissions.	CEO	High	1, 2 & 3	Existing	Record the number and type of staff-initiated ideas that are implemented.	To be incorporated into staff meetings.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
38. Benchmark WTC against other successful carbon-neutral town councils.	CEO	N/A	N/A	Nil	Increase in ranking against other successful carbon-neutral town councils.	Investigate an annual list of town councils who are reporting on their carbon emissions.
39. Off set WTC's emissions locally planting trees, hedges and shrubs to achieve the Net Zero target.	BGSO/CEO	High	1, 2 & 3	Existing	Detail target numbers for planting projects. 2026/27 - * 2027/28 - *	Detail planting undertaken since reporting on climate impact. Which has absorbed * carbon.

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Community Engagement					
40. Witney Parish Impact Carbon Footprint Report to be undertaken.	CEO	High	Nil	2025 – Report undertaken. Undertake annual report comparison for:	Analysis of 2025 report and make recommendations to CBC.

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
				2026 2027 2028	
41. Facilitate a Eco Fair to promote climate action taking place in Witney, with WODC, OCC, eco-friendly businesses, organisations and community groups.	CEO	High	Nil	Monitor the impact in terms of number of stall holders and local community response.	Eco Fair held on 9 October 2025. Consider whether an annual Eco Fair is facilitated by WTC by the CBC.
42. Engage with local schools within Witney to support environmental activities and initiatives.	CEO	Medium	Existing – may need revising	Number of primary schools participating.	Witney primary schools are invited to participate in Schools in Bloom. Consider whether this is extended to all educational facilities with a specific eco theme.
43. Creation of a Climate Emergency webpage to enable discussion, idea sharing and extended public awareness of the issues.	CEO	Low	Nil	2025/26 - Council website is up to date with climate information. Number of visitors per year to webpage. Social media content planning to allow for regular	

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
				programme of climate action.	
44. Sign post local businesses to grants and advice on climate initiatives.	CEO	Medium	Nil	2025/26 - Council website is up to date with climate information. Number of visitors per year to webpage. Social media content planning to allow for regular programme of climate action campaigns and initiatives.	
Collaborative Working					
45. Work with and support OCC and WODC on climate initiatives within Witney Town boundary.	All	High	Nil	Partnerships formed with OCC & WODC.	

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
46. Support and encourage local major landowners within or adjoining the Witney town boundary in restoring land for wildlife.	BGSO/WTC/ WODC	High	Nil	% number of local landowners supported & encouraged with projects.	
47. Support community groups with sharing and to reduce waste and unnecessary consumption	CEO/WTC/W ODC	Medium	Nil	Number of groups supported.	
Buildings					
48. Council Public Halls: Promote as cold and warm spaces during extreme weather events.	WTC/CEO/VE O	N/A	Existing	Number of social media posts reported in event of extreme weather.	Comms plan in place during extreme weather events.
49. Work with long term leaseholders of Council owned buildings e.g. Madley Park Hall Trust, to promote positive environmental action on energy efficiency.	WTC/CEO	N/A	Dependent on lease agreements.		Energy efficiency measures and funding opportunities will be shared with long term leaseholders.

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Transport					
50. Promote the use of public transport to Council events and activities.	WTC/CEO/VEO	Low	Nil	Actively promote and inform community of public transport routes available to events using social media, etc.	
51. Encourage users of our amenity areas and buildings to cycle.	WTC/CEO/VEO/OM	Low	Proposals to be submitted following review.	Actively promote and inform community of cycling routes to Council facilities using social media, etc.	Review cycle stand provision.
52. Promotion of walking in Witney.	WTC/CEO/BGSO	Low			Walking trails in and around Witney regularly promoted along with healthy outdoor activities e.g. outdoor gym.
53. Sustainable transport investment.	WTC/OCC/WODC	High	Nil		Support OCC and WODC cycling initiatives, EV charging networks, active travel, public transport and expanding network of local footpaths.

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Energy					
54. Promotion of Community use of WTC thermal imagining camera to identify areas of heat loss within their properties.	WTC/CEO	Medium	Nil	Promotion at events and through communication platforms.	Review TIC Policy & Public Use and TIC User Agreement. Adopted by Policy, Governance & Finance Committee Minute F680 24.11.25. Hiring commenced to Witney residents.
55. Renewable energy projects	WTC/OCC/WODC				Support OCC and WODC initiatives including community energy schemes.
Waste					
56. Provision of public water refill station at The Leys Recreation Ground.	Officers to work with Courtside Hubs CIC.	Low	£4.5k Capital budget requested 26/27	Installation completed	Removed from budget request PGF 24.11.25 minute F690.
57. Support local community fridge projects with redistributing food going to waste.	WTC/CEO	Low	Nil	Number of projects supported.	
58. Support litter picking initiatives within the community.	WTC/CEO	Low	Existing	Number of events per year.	Community litter picking kits are available from the WTC Admin office.

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Land Use					
59. Allotments – Work with Witney Allotment Association to promote positive environmental action.	WTC/CEO	Low	Nil	Number of environmental actions supported.	Support Witney Allotment Association.

Key:	
Grey	WTC Net Zero emissions reduction action
Blue	Not started
Red	Unlikely to be achieved
Amber	In progress/likely to be mostly achieved
Green	Complete/likely to be achieved

Abbreviations:

*t – KPI figure to be agreed

WTC – Witney Town Council

CBC – Climate & Biodiversity Committee

CAWP – Climate Action Working Party

Existing – This means that existing budgets or Ear Marked Reserves may be used to deliver the target/project

Lead officers:

RFO – Responsible Finance Officer

HEO - Head of Estates & Operations

OM - Operations Manager

CEO - Compliance & Environment Officer

BGSO - Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer

PO - Project Officer

VEO - Venue and Events Officer

Partner Organisations:

WODC – West Oxfordshire District Council

OCC – Oxfordshire County Council

Appendix 2 – Explanation of Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions

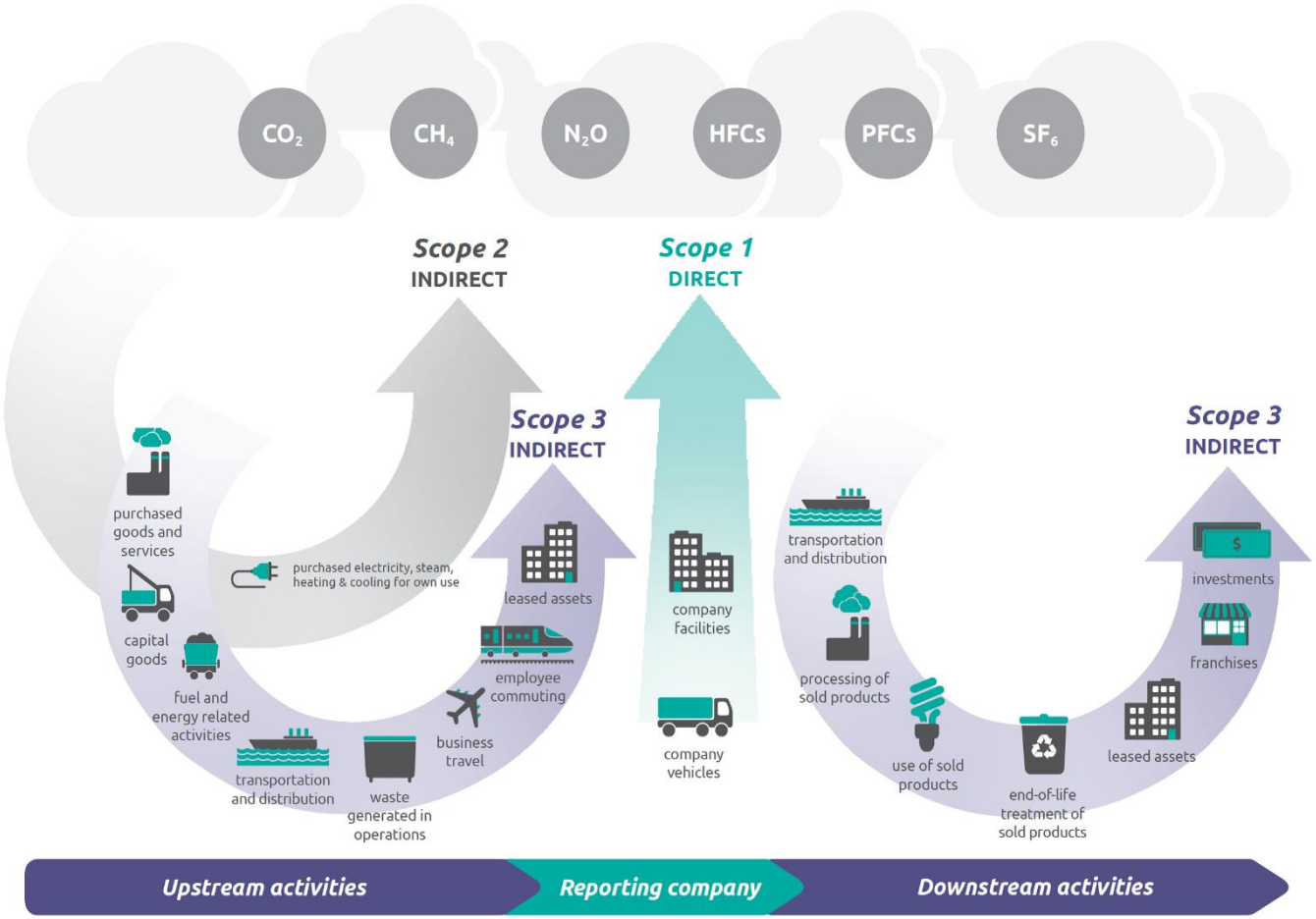
What are Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions?

Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions are ways to categorise where a company or organisation's emissions are coming from. While the first scope comes from direct emissions owned or controlled by a company, Scope 2 and 3 are indirect emissions that come about because of what that company does. These emissions come from sources not owned or controlled by the company.

These categorisations first appeared in the Greenhouse Gas Protocol in 2001, the world's most widely used greenhouse gas accounting standard. The scopes are a useful tool for businesses to discover and understand their entire value chain emissions so as to put their resources behind the best reduction opportunities.

Measuring Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions provides a comprehensive view of a company's total greenhouse gas impact, supports regulatory compliance, and helps identify risks and opportunities. It enables strategic planning, enhances corporate reputation, and drives competitiveness by meeting stakeholder expectations. Accurate measurement also aids in setting and tracking sustainability goals, improving efficiency, attracting investment, and fostering innovation.

Breakdown of Scope 1, 2, and 3 emission sources



Source: Greenhouse Gas Protocol (WRI & WBCSD), Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Accounting and Reporting Standard, page 7

Carbon Reduction Recommendations Report

for

Witney Parish Council

December 2025

Carbon & energy assessment of

Windrush Cemetery Depot Building

Witney OX29 6UT

ENERGY SOLUTIONS OXFORDSHIRE®

Funded by UK Government

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

Report overview

Helen Watts from EiE met Janine Sparrowhawk on 16 December 2025. Recommendations in this report are based on our site visit & information obtained; we consider finances, carbon impact, and ease of implementation. Savings and costs are estimated using data provided and from our recent work. Below is a summary of the opportunities recommended; further pages provide detail on each opportunity.

Energy savings recommendations - summary

Opportunity	Payback (years)	Savings current & future energy prices (£ / yr)	Estimated costs (£)	Carbon impact (tCO_2e / yr)
1) Take and submit meter readings	-	0	0	0.00
2) Add heating controls	0.9	129	120 to 310	0.11
3) Add loft insulation	5.4	103	560	0.08
4) Add timer to hot water	4.3	42	180	0.03
5) Upgrade lighting to LEDs	7.6	230	1,750 to 2,100	0.19
6) Add draught proofing to external door	-	0	20 to 40	0.00
7) Investigate fridge use	-	See details	See details	0.00
8) Provide signage for disabled toilet door	0.1	18	1 to 2	0.02
9) Add solar PV panels	9.5	442	4,186 to 4,508	0.26
10) Consider an air to air heat pump system	11.6	519	6,000 to 8,000	0.42
	TOTAL	£1,483 per year	£12,817 to 15,70	1.11 tCO_2e per year

Site details

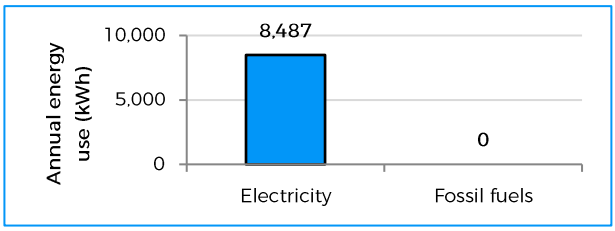
The depot was built in 2003 and consists of a mess room, toilets, visitor seating area, garage and drying/ storage room. It has an indoor area of 122m^2 and is owned by Witney Parish Council, who would like to make their buildings as sustainable as possible. Walls are likely to have some insulation based on construction date; the loft has a limited amount of insulation and windows are double glazed. There are electric panel heaters in the toilets, drying room and mess room. There is no gas on site. Most meter readings are estimated according to bills seen. The building is occupied Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm throughout the year. There is no Energy Performance Certificate (EPC).

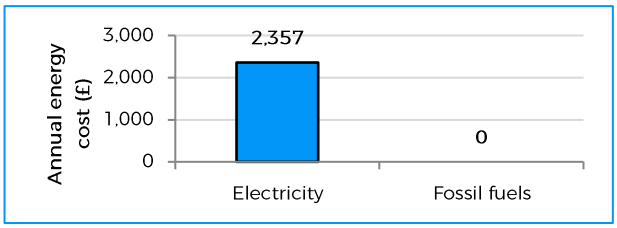
ENERGY PROFILE

Energy consumption annual profile

Fuel type	Annual Energy use (kWh)	Cost per kWh (p)	Standing charge (p/day)	Approx. annual cost (£)
Electricity	8,487	21.7	141.22	2,357

Energy profile breakdown for Windrush Cemetery Depot Building consumption (left) and costs (right)

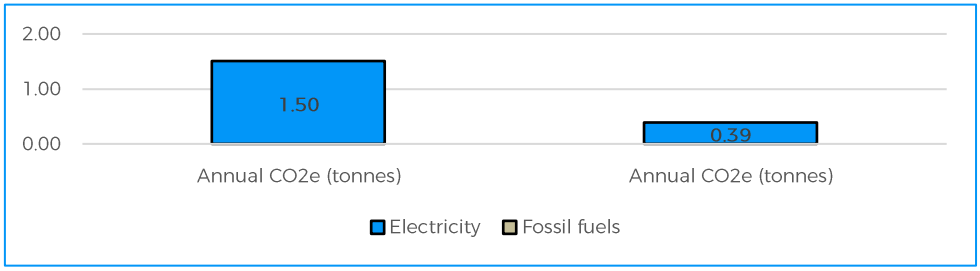




Consumption is based on information provided.

11.11 tonnes avoided CO_2e over 10 years by implementing recommendations (based on tonnes of CO_2e per year)

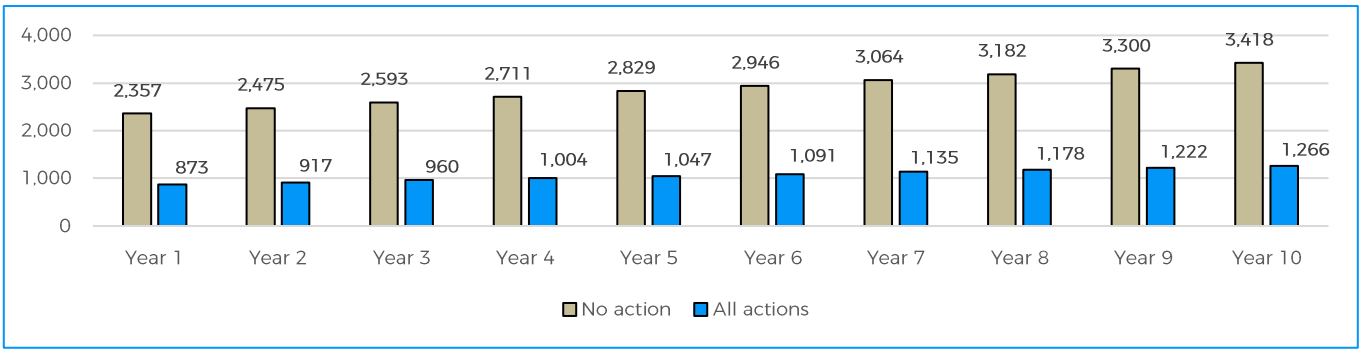
1.50 tonnes CO_2e from current annual energy consumption
0.39 tonnes CO_2e from implementing recommendations



Based on current annual CO_2e minus CO_2e implementing all actions using 2025 UK greenhouse gases coefficients.

£18,182 energy savings over 10 years by implementing all report recommendations

Windrush Cemetery Depot Building energy spend in the next 10 years



Savings are 'no action' minus 'all actions' using Laser mid-range predicted UK electricity price rises.

ENERGY SAVINGS RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Take and submit meter readings

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
0	0	0

Many of your electricity bills are based on estimated readings. The meter is easily accessible. There is an opportunity to improve billing accuracy. By recording and submitting energy meter readings to your energy suppliers regularly and accurately, energy bills will be correct. Knowing annual kWh of electricity helps budget for new energy contracts. Meter readings build an energy profile that will help identify unexpected changes in energy use. This will be particularly useful to monitor the success of energy improvements you make. We recommend appointing someone to take monthly meter readings and submit them to energy suppliers.

Upgrading to a meter that submit automatic readings may be possible through your suppliers. These will automatically send readings so bills are not estimated.

Actions

- Arrange to record actual meter readings on the same day once per month. Enter these into a spreadsheet and calculate usage by subtracting the previous reading from the current reading.
- Submit meter readings to your energy suppliers prior to billing (the timing of this will differ for each supplier). Depending on your supplier, readings can be submitted via website, email, or by telephone.
- Use monthly energy consumption to form a baseline of use so that you can easily detect and act upon unexpected rises in use, as well as savings from implementing saving measures.

Costs and savings

There may be savings from more accurate billing. There is no cost to this action.

2) Add heating controls

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
594	129	120 to 310

The OFXE Dimplex oil filled panel heaters are manually controlled using the dials on each heater. During the site visit, all the heaters were on despite no staff being on site. Having the heaters on when no one is in the building wastes energy. This can be improved. New controls will allow heating times and temperatures to be set more easily. This will help reduce costs from unnecessary heating. We recommend installing heating controls.

One option is a 7-day timer for each heater, Times can be set according to when staff are most likely to be in each space with heaters coming on a maximum of 45 minutes before staff come in and going off 15 to 30 minutes before they leave. It may be possible to have the heaters on in the morning, at lunchtime and for a period in the afternoon – it all depends on the usage of each room.

For examples see:
https://www.tlc-direct.co.uk/Products/SMETU17.html
https://www.screwfix.com/p/masterplug-tes7-digital-plug-in-plug-through-programmable-timer/50676
https://www.electricpoint.com/timeguard-ntt03-24hr-7day-compact-electronic-immersion-timer.html

Another possibility is using booster buttons which can be fitted to each radiator and when pressed, set the heaters to come on for a set time period between 15 minutes and 4 hours.
https://www.heatingcontrolsonline.co.uk/horstmann-secure-30-60-120-boost-timer.html
https://www.electricpoint.com/timeguard-tgbt4n-4-hour-electronic-boostmaster-timer.html

A further solution would be to install an air to air heat pump (see recommendation 10) with appropriate controls for each room. If this is a likely solution, and soon, we would not suggest adding heating controls as they will only be used briefly.

Actions

- Review heating requirements in the different rooms of your building taking into account:
  - Are user controls appropriate? How much control do you want to offer ranging from full control of time and temperature to a 'boost button' or no control at all?
  - Do you need a setback function to return the heating to its original settings if users alter controls?
  - Is heating required at the same time every day of the week or would a 7-day programmer, which would allow you to programme the heating a week in advance, be more appropriate?
- Once this review is completed, contact a local qualified electrician to quote for installing appropriate heating controls. We recommend contacting at least three contractors for quotes.
- Choose a preferred contractor and arrange for the controls to be installed.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on reducing heating by 10% (heating estimated at 70% of electricity use). Possible costs for the four rooms needing controls are as follows: A 7-day timer is approximately £30 and a boost button £20 to £40. Plug in timers do not require installation costs; booster buttons or hard-wired timers will require half a day of an electrician's time.

3) Add loft insulation

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
475	103	560

Visual inspection showed that there is approximately 100mm of insulation in your loft. There is an opportunity to add insulation. Up to 25% of your building's heat is lost through the roof if it is un-insulated. We recommend increasing insulation to 300mm. This will minimise heat losses in winter, reduce heat gains in summer, improve comfort levels for users, and reduce annual energy bills by reducing heating requirements.

Loft insulation is widely available and mainly comes as glass or mineral wool. An example is here: http://www.wickes.co.uk/Products/Building-Materials/Insulation/Loft-Insulation/c/1000270

300mm of loft insulation will improve U-value, which is a measure of the insulation properties of the material (the lower the U-value, the greater the insulating properties). Check the U-value or ask a contractor if a U-value of 0.16 W per m^2k can be achieved.
Ensure that insulation is laid evenly over the whole loft, including right to the edges, to avoid cold spots where heat can escape.

Actions

- Install loft insulation to a recommended level of 300mm to maximise heat retention in the building. Discuss any moisture issues with contractor.
- Engage a qualified contractor for this work. Ideally obtain quotes from three contractors. The costs of installation can be reduced by using staff members to carry out this work.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on reducing heating by 8% (assuming heating accounts for 70% of elelctricity use). Costs are based on 200mm of loft insulation covering 28m^2 at £20 per m^2 including labour and other costs.

4) Add timer to hot water

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
192	42	180

Your hot water heater in the disabled toilet appears to be always on and heating water 24 hours a day 365 days a year. It is rated at 3 kW and will use about 0.7 kW a day to heat the water. Arrange for a timer to be installed to control heating times. Energy will be saved by only heating the water when users are likely to be in the building. We recommend arranging to install 7-day programmable timer to control hot water heater times to save energy.

An example of timer is here: http://www.screwfix.com/p/lap-7-day-digital-immersion-timer/1804r

Electric hot water heaters store low amounts of water and represent low Legionella risk if they are on for 15 minutes at 60°C prior to use.

Actions

- Arrange for an electrician to install a 7-day timer on the hot water heater.
- Set timer to switch off when not needed, for example 5pm every night. Programme the timer to turn on 30 minutes before hot water is required, for example 9am. The timer can be off the whole of each weekend too, if appropriate.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on your hot water unit being off 75% of the time (5pm to 9am and off at weekends), assuming it uses 0.7 kW per day. As hot water heaters are hard-wired you will need to get a qualified electrician to wire in the timer, which will cost around £30 plus half a day's labour. If you change your lighting to LEDs (see recommendation 5), you could ask your LED lighting contractor if they can include this work when on site.

5) Upgrade lighting to LEDs

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
1,062	230	1,750 to 2,100

There are some non-LED lights installed in the building that can be replaced with LEDs to reduce energy use and maintenance as well as providing improved lighting quality. These include five double 6ft fluorescent tubes and nine 2D bulkheads. LED lights are more energy efficient and exist for nearly every lighting type. They can reduce electricity use by up to 50% compared to other lighting. Additionally LEDs last at least 50,000 hours before they need to be replaced (fluorescent lights last 15,000 hours) resulting in reduced maintenance costs. We recommend replacing lights with LEDs to reduce the cost of lighting.

When selecting replacement lights there is also an opportunity to provide better lighting rather than using equivalent lights. Consider both the light quality preferred (known as colour temperature) that ranges from warm white, cool white or daylight and the level of brightness needed (measured in lumens). Ensure that, whichever contractor you use, they offer a minimum 5-year failure replacement guarantee. Consider additional lighting controls, such as absence detectors, that will switch off lighting when no movement is detected for a period of time. This is particularly useful for toilets, corridors and the garage where users spend short periods of time.

Actions

- Engage a lighting contractor to carry out an inventory of current lighting noting number and type of each light. For all non-LED lights discuss LED replacements. Generally LEDs are installed as entirely new fixtures rather than using existing fixtures.
- Alternatively, once current lighting stocks are used, ensure LED lights are always used to replace any future failed bulbs or tubes.
- Discuss additional lighting controls, such as sensors, with contractors.
- We recommend contacting at least three lighting contractors for quotes.
- Choose a preferred contractor and arrange for the lights and controls to be installed.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on LEDs using less energy and lights being on 2,210 hours per year in the garage and 1,105 hours elsewhere (8.5 hours on weekdays over 52 weeks, or half that for bulkheads) at 21.7p per kWh. There will be further savings from additional lighting controls, particularly in the garage. Costs are based on the lighting inventory above and include the cost of installation. Actual quotes from lighting suppliers may differ.

6) Add draught proofing to external door

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
0	0	20 to 40

There was a noticeable draught by the main exterior door. There is an opportunity to reduce heat loss. Any gaps around the doors will let in cold air and draughts; blocking gaps with draught proofing will greatly reduce this. We recommend adding draught proofing to reduce discomfort during colder months.

Examples of draught stripping can be found online here: https://www.screwfix.com/c/security-ironmongery/draught-excluders/cat840242

The best way to determine if draught proofing is required on a door is to feel around the door when the heating is on and it is cold outside. Draughts will be very evident and remedial action can be taken.

Actions

- Add draught stripping to the door or door frame. If draught stripping is not suitable to attach (e.g. if the gap is not uniform), consider engaging a contractor to suggest improvements to the door frame.

Costs and savings

Savings are difficult to calculate, but this action will help reduce draughts and discomfort in winter months. Costs for draught strips are estimated at £20 to £40, attached by a member of staff.

7) Investigate fridge use

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
See details	See details	0

The fridge in the mess room is on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There were a few bottles in the fridge, which may or may not have been in date, other than that it was empty. A fridge will constantly use energy and could be wasting energy if it isn't needed. This can be investigated.

Ask the staff about regularity of fridge use. It may be that the low usage seen during the site visit was an anomaly, in which case, no change is needed. If the fridge is rarely used, it may be possible to replace it with a mini fridge or take the fridge away altogether – or for it to be turned off during the winter months and turned back on during the summer.

Examples of mini fridges can be found here:
https://www.amazon.co.uk/mini-office-fridge/s?k=mini+office+fridge

Actions

- Survey staff to find out how much they use the fridge and decide whether it is necessary, whether it could be downsized or disposed of altogether.

Costs and savings

A constantly running under counter fridge will cost an average of £48 per year to run. At your tariff, this amounts to a saving of 220kWh if it is turned off. Mini fridges start at £100. There is no cost if the fridge is left as it is, but there may be a disposal cost to get rid of the fridge.

8) Provide signage for disabled toilet door

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
85	18	1 to 2

The disabled toilet has a heater in it and this opens straight into the visitors waiting room, which is unheated and often open to the elements. On cold days, the heat from the disabled toilet will disperse directly outside if the toilet door is left open, resulting in wasted energy. This can be improved. Clear signage on the door asking users to keep the door closed will ensure more of the heating energy is kept inside the toilet.

Actions

- Write simple and eye-catching signage to encourage users to keep the door closed at all times.
- Visuals are often more eye catching than words. Consider using images as well as words.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on reducing heating energy use by 1% (heating is assumed to be 70% of energy use). There is minimal cost to this action.

9) Add solar PV panels

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
1,490	442	4,186 to 4,508

There is sufficient space to install south facing solar PV panels on the roof to generate electricity from sunlight, which will reduce the amount drawn from the National Grid saving you energy costs and carbon. We recommend, subject to survey, a 3.22 kWp solar array of 7 panels generating an estimated 2,979 kWh of electricity per year. For every kWh generated from solar panels that you use on site you will save 21.7p (your day time electricity rate). Surplus solar electricity is exported back to the National Grid and you will receive approximately 5p to 15p per kWh from the Smart Export Guarantee, paid through your electricity supplier. We anticipate 50% of electricity generated will be used on site.

Find an MCS certified installer at this link: https://mcscertified.com/find-an-installer/

In addition to installing an array of solar PV panels on the roof, an inverter is installed indoors to make the electricity compatible with your building's electricity demand. While the sun shines every day, the amount generated is affected by temperature and cloud cover; weather data is used to estimate performance. Consider a battery to store electricity that would have been exported for use when the sun is not shining.

Actions

- Engage a solar PV contractor to design a solution for your premises. They will assess feasibility of the project, considering obstructions, such as trees. Speak to the designer about batteries for storing electricity that would have been exported. You can then engage a number of contractors with the design for quotes on installation.
- Contact at least three solar panel contractors to obtain quotes. Installation quotes need to include a structural assessment of the roof to determine if it can bear additional weight.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on using UK solar data to estimate generation from 460W solar PV panels, exporting at 8p per kWh. Costs are based on £1,300 to £1,500 per kWp. Prices from contractors will differ.

10) Consider an air to air heat pump system

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
2,393	519	6,000 to 8,000

The current panel heaters are old and aren't straightforward to contol in an efficient way (see recommendation 1). One replacement possibility is an air source heating system (ASHP) that uses electricity but will deliver 3 units of heating from 1 unit of energy, making it 300% more efficient than current heating. Inertia in the air is increased via compression through the heat pump and transferred to gas sent to fan emitters (which can be wall or ceiling mounted as shown in the picture). Up to 5 emitters can be attached to one pump and emitters in different rooms can be set to different timings and temperatures, according to needs. Heat pumps can also cool during the summer, should that be needed. We recommend investigating an air source heating system as a potentially efficient and low cost heating solution.

For further details see: https://www.theecoexperts.co.uk/heat-pumps/air-to-air-heat-pumps.

Possible installers can be found here:
https://www.renewableenergyhub.co.uk/search-installers

If coupled with solar technology producing electricity to power the pumps, this technology could provide background heating at very low running costs.

Actions

- Discuss the potential for an ASHP system at the site.
- Engage a qualified contractor to determine the feasibility of the project and develop drawing and specifications.
- Request quotes from three competent and qualified suppliers.
- Choose a preferred supplier and arrange for the system to be installed.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on heat pumps being 300% more efficient that panel heaters. You may find the heat pump needs to be on slightly longer than the panels, so savings are estimated at 50% rather than 66% of the current usage (and electricity for heating assumed to be 70% of overall energy use). This will save 0.42 tonnes of CO_2e per year, amounting to £519 saving per year. Costs are based on heat pumps, pipework, fan emitters, and removal of the current heating system. There may be additional costs for improving the electricity supply to the site, etc.

RESOURCES & NEXT STEPS

Funding

Possible sources of funding for the recommendations in this report:

ESOx Green Fund (https://www.energysolutionsoxfordshire.org/get-match-funding-with-our-green-fund/) 25% match grant for recommendation in this report. The current round closes 11th March 2026.

The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) may also have funding opportunities for businesses from time to time. Check here: https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/funding-grants

You can also **sign up to the ESOx newsletter** at this link (see bottom left): https://www.energysolutionsoxfordshire.org/articles/

Solutions fit for the future

This report recommends installing new electrical products. We recommend discussing some technical considerations with your contractors. While UK electricals must comply with safety standards, there is currently no requirement that items are able to communicate with other electrical systems to maximise operating efficiency both on site and within the National electricity grid. For example, heat pumps use electricity and are best operated in tandem with solar PV panels and batteries to minimise use of more expensive grid electricity. As electricity networks make more use of data sharing, **ensure contractors consider compatibility when installing** the items below to help avoid later upgrades:

Solar PV panels – Ensure inverters, which convert DC power generated to AC power compatible with your site, have **'modbus'** interface. This enables communication with other devices, including batteries.

Heat pumps – Ensure these include **OpenADR** (automated demand response), which allows better electricity management, particularly in areas where sub-stations have grid constraints.

Your action progress update

Our report recommendations may help you choose what actions your organisation would like to act on. After a number of months, we will ask for an update on your progress. Some actions will be completed, some in progress, and others not yet started. Below is an example of how you can indicate your progress (tick one box per row). There is no expected completion date for any action, however your information is extremely important for helping us track project improvements.

Opportunity	Action completed	Action in progress	Not begun but intending to	Not begun, not intending to	Not applicable
1) Take and submit meter readings	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
2) Add heating controls	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
3) Add loft insulation	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
4) Add timer to hot water	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
5) Upgrade lighting to LEDs	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
6) Add draught proofing to external door	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
7) Investigate fridge use	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
8) Provide signage for disabled toilet door	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
9) Add solar PV panels	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
10) Consider an air to air heat pump system	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Carbon Reduction Recommendations Report

for

Witney Parish Council

April 2026

Carbon & energy assessment of Corn Exchange

Market Square, Witney OX28 6AB

Funded by Westmill Solar Co-operative

ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

Report overview

Helen Watts from EiE met Janine Sparrowhawk on 21 April 2026. Recommendations in this report are based on our site visit & information obtained; we consider finances, carbon impact, and ease of implementation. Savings and costs are estimated using data provided and from our recent work. Below is a summary of the opportunities recommended; further pages provide detail on each opportunity.

Energy savings recommendations - summary

Opportunity	Payback (years)	Savings current & future energy prices (£ / yr)	Estimated costs (£)	Carbon impact (tCO_2e / yr)
1) Manage heating	1.1	271	300	0.63
2) Conduct an out of hours survey	-	See details	0	0
3) Upgrade lighting to LEDs	9.9	844	8,400 to 9,800	0.69
4) Add draught proofing to external doors	-	See details	50 to 70	0
5) Investigate glazing solutions	44.6	271	12,100 to 16,500	0.63
6) Manage summer heat	-	See details	1,500 to 2,000	0
7) Add solar PV panels	8.7	3,573	31,096 to 35,880	2.34
8) Consider an air to water heat pump system	-	See details	35,000 to 45,000	8.02
	TOTAL	**£4,959 per year**	**£88,446 to 109,550**	**12.30 tCO_2e per year**

Site details

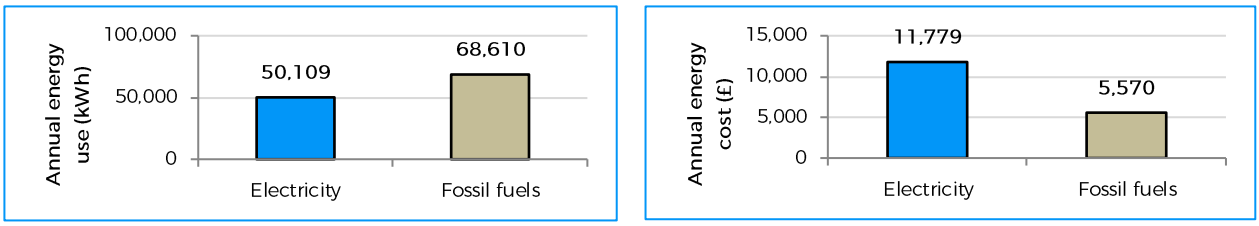
The Corn Exchange was built in 1863 and refurbished in 2015. There has been a café (open six days a week) in the entrance of the ground floor since 2021. The 561m^2 area consists of the café, theatre, Gallery meeting room, kitchen, various toilets and offices. The building is owned by Witney Town Council, is Grade II listed and in a Conservation Area. Levels of insulation in the walls and loft are unknown. Documents from the refurbishment make brief mention of insulation boards used on the ground floor but no further information. Windows are all single glazed and draughty in places. Some lighting has been changed to LEDs. Gas boilers heat radiators throughout and the theatre has an air handling system. There is one electricity and one gas meter, both read by the council monthly. The gallery room is used approximately 25 hours per week and theatre similarly. The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is rated C and Display Energy Certificate B.

ENERGY PROFILE

Energy consumption annual profile

Fuel type	Annual Energy use (kWh)	Cost per kWh (p)	Standing charge (p/day)	Approx. annual cost (£)
Electricity	50,109	21.7	248	11,779
Gas	68,610	7.9	41	5,570

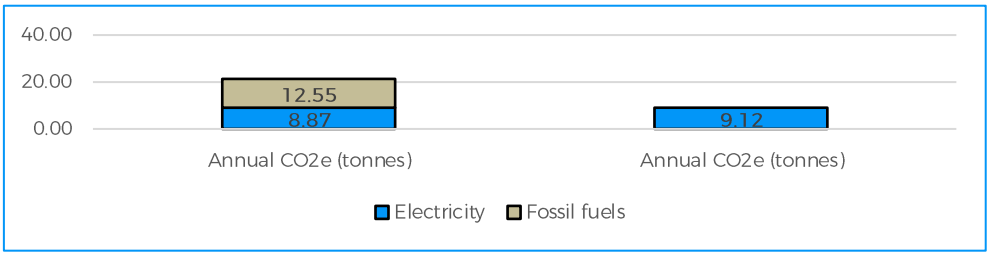
Energy profile breakdown for Corn Exchange consumption (left) and costs (right)



Consumption is based on information provided.

123.02 tonnes avoided CO_2e over 10 years by implementing recommendations (based on tonnes of CO_2e per year)

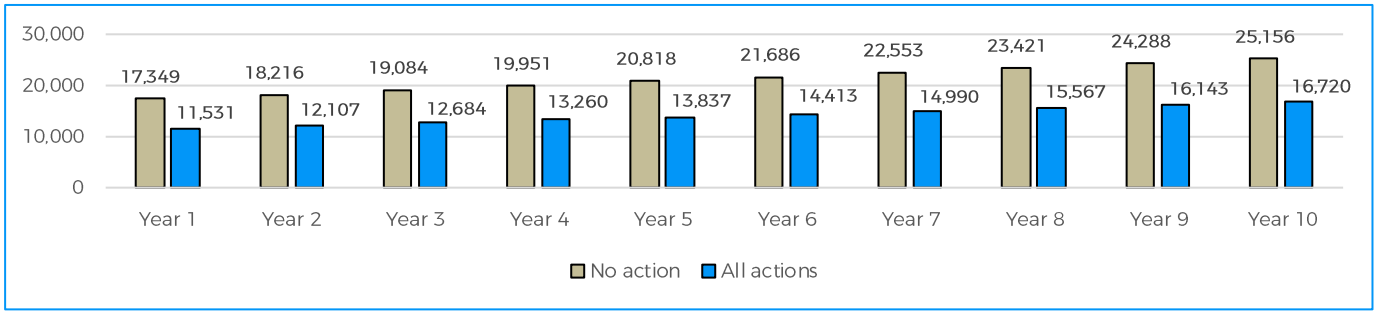
21.42 tonnes CO_2e from current annual energy consumption
9.12 tonnes CO_2e from implementing recommendations



Based on current annual CO_2e minus CO_2e implementing all actions using 2025 UK greenhouse gases coefficients.

£71,270 energy savings over 10 years by implementing all report recommendations

Corn Exchange energy spend in the next 10 years



Savings are 'no action' minus 'all actions' using Laser mid-range predicted UK electricity price rises.

1) Manage heating

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
3,431	271	300

Your heating is controlled by an Ambiflex system, which is little understood and timings are unknown. It is suspected that heating may be on continually. The Air Handling Unit (AHU) is also a mystery. In order to save energy, carbon and money, we recommend getting a heating engineer / AHU contractor to service and explain the system, ensuring that controls are well-documented in the process. The following suggestions may help to guide your discussions:

Understand how the Ambiflex system works and review control settings – Engage an expert to point out what settings are possible and document the controls so they can be regularly updated according to building use. Check heating times and set temperature and reduce where possible, e.g. during milder winter weeks. Ensure times match occupancy as closely as possible. Leaving heating on unnecessarily when no one is in the building wastes energy.

Manage TRVs – Thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) can be reduced in areas where users spend short amounts of time (corridors and toilets). Other spaces can be set to medium. Reset TRVs when possible.

Review boiler output temperature – Check the output temperature of your condensing gas boilers. They ideally run at 60 to 65°C to benefit from the efficiency of condensing; any hotter and efficiency is lost.

Map problem areas – Determine which rooms have issues of under or overheating due to the radiators. For cold rooms ensure the problem is not a faulty TRV or obstructions in front of a radiator.

Manage heating zones – Identify if boilers have separate radiator circuits that can be set differently. A heating engineer can determine if zones exist or can easily be introduced. If there are zones, review zone timing to reduce heating at some of the site when possible.

Calibrate temperature sensors – Arrange for a contractor to compare thermostat readings with actual to ensure accuracy. Arrange for inaccurate units to be replaced.

Balance radiators – When some radiators are unable to adequately heat rooms, contractors can reset input valves on all radiators to improve comfort if this has not been done recently; this has a cost.

Broaden maintenance checks – Your boilers will be serviced regularly. Review what checks are made and discuss with your contractor if further testing for efficiency is possible, such as burner or flue checks.

Air Handling Unit – Engage an expert to find out what settings are possible and advise on most efficient use. Ascertain what functions AHU has. Can it be used to cool or heat air or is it just for adding fresh air? If there are air filters, are these being changed or cleaned at regular intervals?

Actions

- Engage a contractor to show you how the system works and arrange servicing or further checks as necessary
- Review the above suggestions and carry out as appropriate to improve heating efficiency.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on reducing heating by 5%, though actual savings may be much higher. Costs are only for a contractor's time for a day.

2) Conduct an out of hours survey

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
See details	See details	0

The amount of energy used overnight in your building is unknown. There is no access to half hourly energy data. Carrying out an 'out of hours' energy survey will help identify wasted energy when the building is not in use. The survey requires taking meter readings and finding & switching off energy using items that are not needed to reduce wasted energy. We recommend conducting an out of hours energy survey.

Gas meter readings are submitted as cubic metres, amounts can be converted to kWh using an on-line calculator: http://www.energylinx.co.uk/gas_meter_conversion.html

Actions

- In order to identify wasted energy out of hours, conduct a survey of energy use, arranging to switch off any items left on unnecessarily. These may include: lights, heating, fans, machinery on stand-by, and other appliances. Then establish a baseline of energy use: the minimum kW per hour outside of occupied hours.
- Conduct the survey at the end of a workday when no users are in the building.
- Switch off any items not needed. Check control manuals for heating, cooling, and air handling, if these need to be timed. Manuals can often be found on the internet.
- Take gas and electricity meter readings at the start of the survey and again first thing the next working morning, before users arrive. Note the time when all readings are taken.
- Calculate the average hourly out of hours energy use by subtracting the first meter reading from the current reading and dividing by the number of hours between both readings. Convert gas readings to kWh. This results in your average electricity and gas kW per hour.
- Regularly collect out of hours meter readings again and compare to the original baseline from the survey. If there has been an increase in kW per hour, further action to switch off unnecessary items may be needed.

Costs and savings

There may be savings from actions identified. There is no cost to this action.

3) Upgrade lighting to LEDs

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
3,891	844	8,400 to 9,800

There are some non-LED lights installed in the building that can be replaced with LEDs to reduce energy use and maintenance as well as providing improved lighting quality. These include 54 double 5ft fluorescent tubes. LED lights are more energy efficient and exist for nearly every lighting type. They can reduce electricity use by up to 50% compared to other lighting. Additionally LEDs last at least 50,000 hours before they need to be replaced (fluorescent lights last 15,000 hours) resulting in reduced maintenance costs. We recommend replacing lights with new LED light fixtures to reduce the cost of lighting.

When selecting replacement lights there is also an opportunity to provide better lighting rather than using equivalent lights. Consider both the light quality preferred (known as colour temperature) that ranges from warm white, cool white or daylight and the level of brightness needed (measured in lumens). Ensure that, whichever contractor you use, they offer a minimum 5-year failure replacement guarantee.

You already have motion sensors for lights in many areas. Also consider light level sensors that can reduce lighting in naturally bright locations, e.g. near windows.

Actions

- Engage a lighting contractor to carry out an inventory of current lighting noting number and type of each light. For all non-LED lights discuss LED replacements. Generally LEDs are installed as entirely new fixtures rather than using existing fixtures.
- Discuss additional lighting controls, such as sensors, with contractors.
- We recommend contacting at least three lighting contractors for quotes.
- Choose a preferred contractor and arrange for the lights and controls to be installed.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on LEDs using less energy and lights being on 1,250 to 2,250 hours per year (25 to 45 hours over 50 weeks, depending on location) at 21.7p per kWh. Costs are based on the lighting inventory above and include the cost of installation. Actual quotes from lighting suppliers may differ.

4) Add draught proofing to external doors

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
See details	See details	50 to 70

There are draughts from gaps at several exterior doors. There is an opportunity to reduce heat loss. Any gaps around the doors will let in cold air and draughts; blocking gaps with draught proofing will greatly reduce this. We recommend adding draught proofing to reduce discomfort during colder months.

Examples of draught stripping can be found online here:
https://www.screwfix.com/p/stormguard-self-adhesive-brush-pile-weatherstrip-white-5m-3-pack/30322

https://www.screwfix.com/p/stormguard-epdm-rubber-p-strip-white-20m/33145

The best way to determine if draught proofing is required on a door is to feel around the door when the heating is on and it is cold outside. Draughts will be very evident and remedial action can be taken.

Actions

- Add draught stripping to the door or door frame. If draught stripping is not suitable to attach (e.g. if the gap is not uniform), consider engaging a contractor to suggest improvements to the door frame.

Costs and savings

Savings are difficult to calculate, but this action will help reduce draughts and discomfort in winter months. Costs for a pack of three 5m brush pile weather strips are £13 and a pack of 20m rubber draught proofing strip are £14. Both could be attached by a volunteer.

5) Investigate glazing solutions

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
3,431	271	12,100 to 16,500

Windows are single glazed and double glazing is not permitted. Some windows do not close properly or have gaps around them. There is an opportunity to improve windows through refurbishment suitable for listed buildings or adding secondary glazing. Both help reduce heat loss & draughts to keep the building comfortable in cold weather. We recommend engaging specialist contractors to discuss opportunities.

Refurbishing windows – This includes addressing draughts by improving airtightness, including: refinishing frames and glazing, or adding sealant. Further information is at these links:
https://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/looking-after-your-home/repair/windows/

Other contractors may offer a sealant service; one product is here:
http://www.theenergysavers.co.uk/#!quattro-seal/c4rn

Secondary Glazing - These inner windows are suitable for Grade II listed sites and can be designed to open. Consider thickness of glass and U-value of the secondary window. Insulation is rated in U-values that measures heat loss through a structural element of a building; the lower the U-value the better the insulation. There are a number of specialist companies that can advise on glazing improvements for listed buildings and those of historic interest and related issues such as avoiding condensation. Links are below.

Installing secondary glazing can reduce heat loss without affecting the aesthetic of historic buildings. Historic England says that carefully designed secondary glazing allows the original windows to be retained unaltered, and where necessary repaired, reducing air leakage and conducted heat losses. As a result there is no loss of historic fabric and often the insulation is reversible. For more information see:
https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/eehb-secondary-glazing-windows/heag085-secondary-glazing/

The Victorian Society says that 'The secondary frames are aligned with the external window frames, cause the least visual disruption' (https://www.victoriansociety.org.uk/advice/windows-and-double-glazing).

Also see:
http://www.stormwindows.co.uk/
https://www.selectaglaze.co.uk/sectors/heritage-listed-buildings

An alternative is removable magnetic Perspex glazing, numerous providers exist. See:
https://www.magneglaze.co.uk/secondary-glazing/

Actions

- Engage qualified contractors to discuss window refurbishment and secondary glazing options.
- Define the work needed for windows. Obtain quotes from three appropriate contractors for window refurbishment and / or the design and installation of secondary glazing.
- Choose a preferred supplier and arrange for the work to be carried out.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on reducing annual heating expenditure by 5% based on approximately 55m^2 of windows having secondary glazing added. Costs for secondary glazing are based on £220 to £300 per m^2, including installation. Window refurbishment may be less than this. Final costs depend on glazing and frame specifications.

6) Manage summer heat

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
See details	See details	1,500 to 2,000

Spells of hotter weather are becoming more common during the UK's summer. Using air cooling to address this is costly, particularly in naturally ventilated buildings.

The landing outside the Gallery room has three windows above and gets very hot. The Gallery room also gets too warm in the summer. It has blinds but these are rarely used, and it is unknown what sort of blinds they are (whether they are thermal blinds, for example). Adding exterior shading is not possible since it is a listed building.

The following are suggestions to help manage indoor temperatures during hot weather:

Review insulation – Sufficient building insulation can help reduce heat gain in the summer, particularly through roofs and walls. Ensure the building is properly insulated to help manage summer heat.

Solar reduction window treatment – Consider applying solar reduction treatment to the windows on the landing to repel the heat. For examples see: https://www.windowfilm.co.uk/

Shades for skylights – Another possibility is external blinds, which exist for skylights and can be attached by a member of staff. For example see: https://www.roofblinds.co.uk/catalog/velux/velux-awning-blinds

Close blinds and curtains – Closing curtains or blinds will help prolong indoor comfort. Ideally close curtains and blinds the previous evening before a particularly hot and sunny day.

Close windows and door and use fans – During outdoor temperatures 25°C or more, many users will open windows and doors to feel a breeze. If indoors is much cooler, instead use portable fans whilst closing windows and doors. This will provide air movement without overheating. If useful, install indoor and outdoor thermometers to display temperatures.

Purge indoor heat – Prolonged hot weather can lead to a build-up of indoor heat. Insulation can trap heat inside for longer. Overnight or early in the morning, when outdoor temperatures are cooler (e.g. 17°C), open windows, doors, rooflights, and even loft hatches to let hot air escape. Be sure to close these again before the temperature rises.

Actions

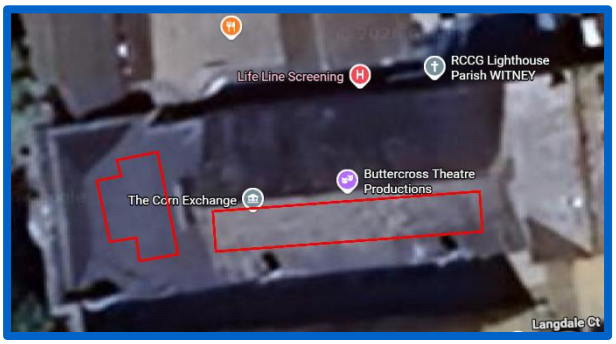
- Review the above suggestions and carry out as appropriate to improve comfort during hot weather.

Costs and savings

Savings are only from the absence of using air cooling systems, however these actions will improve comfort. There will be costs for adding curtains, blinds, or shading, or purchasing electric fans.

7) Add solar PV panels

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
13,218	3,573	31,096 to 35,880



It is unknown whether you would get planning permission for adding solar to the roofs; you would need to apply. However, there is sufficient space to install south and east facing solar PV panels on the roof to generate electricity from sunlight, which will reduce the amount drawn from the National Grid saving you energy costs and carbon. We recommend, subject to planning and survey, a smaller east facing 7.36 kWp array of 16 panels, generating an estimated 5,851 kWh per year and a larger 16.56 kWp solar array of 36 panels generating an estimated 16,179 kWh of electricity per year. For every kWh generated from solar panels that you use on site you will save 21.7p (your daytime electricity rate). Surplus solar electricity is exported back to the National Grid and you will receive approximately 5p to 15p per kWh from the Smart Export Guarantee, paid through your electricity supplier. We anticipate 60% of electricity generated will be used on site.

Find an MCS certified installer at this link: https://mcscertified.com/find-an-installer/

In addition to installing an array of solar PV panels on the roof, an inverter is installed indoors to make the electricity compatible with your building's electricity demand. While the sun shines every day, the amount generated is affected by temperature and cloud cover; weather data is used to estimate performance. Consider a battery to store electricity that would have been exported for use when the sun is not shining.

Actions

- Engage a solar PV contractor to design a solution for your premises. They will assess feasibility of the project, considering obstructions, such as trees and other buildings. Speak to the designer about batteries for storing electricity that would have been exported. You can then engage a number of contractors with the design for quotes on installation.
- Contact at least three solar panel contractors to obtain quotes. Installation quotes need to include a structural assessment of the roof to determine if it can bear additional weight.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on using UK solar data to estimate generation from 460W solar PV panels, exporting at 8p per kWh. Costs are based on £1,300 to £1,500 per kWp. Prices from contractors will differ.

8) Consider an air to water heat pump system

Energy saving (kWh)	Cost saving (£)	Cost of action (£)
43,224	858	35,000 to 45,000

The current boilers were installed in 2015 and will likely need replacing in the next ten years. It is wise to consider what your replacement options are before this happens so that you are ready. One option is an air source heating system (ASHP) that uses electricity but will deliver 3 units of heating from 1 unit of energy, making it over 300% more efficient than current heating. Inertia in the air is increased via compression through the heat pump and transferred to a wet heating system and radiators. We recommend investigating an air source heating system as a potentially efficient and low cost heating solution.

ASHPs run at 40 to 60°C, whereas conventional boilers run at 60 to 80°C, so require slightly longer heat up times and some maintaining of background temperature throughout most of the heating season. ASHPs qualify for a government rebate, claimed through installers, helping reduce the payback period of investment.

For further details see:
https://www.theecoexperts.co.uk/heat-pumps/types
https://www.renewableenergyhub.co.uk/main/heat-pumps-information/commercial-heat-pumps
https://www.daikin.co.uk/en_gb/product-group/commercial-heat-pumps.html

Some older radiators are not suitable for ASHPs as they lack sufficient surface area to emit enough heat. This will be the case with the vast majority of your radiators. Your heat pump designer can review radiators to see which need to be replaced. The pipework in the building will also need reviewing. Under floor heating is best suited to air source heat pumps. It suits the temperature of heat produced by the heat pump. Ensure there is sufficient back-up heating available in case of extremely cold temperatures. The requirement for such a system will depend on what system is eventually selected. Installers of systems will suggest various options, one of which is keeping a gas boiler for occasional use.

Solar PV panels can supplement electricity costs for heat pumps for further savings.

Thought may be needed in the location of the outdoor unit since it is a listed building, however there is ample space behind the building.

Actions

- Discuss the potential for an ASHP system at the site.
- Engage a qualified contractor to determine the feasibility of the project and develop drawings and specifications.
- Request quotes from three competent and qualified suppliers.
- Choose a preferred supplier and arrange for the system to be installed.

Costs and savings

Savings are based on replacing fossil fuels with electricity, savings 8.02 tonnes of CO_2e per year. This will save £858 per year at your current tariffs. Costs are based on heat pumps, pipework, new radiators, and removal of the current heating system. There may be additional costs for improving the electricity supply to the site, etc.

RESOURCES & NEXT STEPS

Insulation

Whether insulation was added to walls or lofts when the refurbishment took place in 2015 is not known. There may have been some floor insulation added, but that is the only information you currently have. Adding any wall insulation in the listed building is unlikely because of the interior design. However, exploring lofts to see if there is any insulation is definitely worthwhile. Adding loft insulation to a depth of 300mm will save energy. Loft insulation costs £20 to 25 per m^2 fully installed and will save approximately 15% of your heating bill if there is none present already.

Funding

Possible sources of funding for the recommendations in this report:

ESOx Green Fund (https://www.energysolutionsoxfordshire.org/get-match-funding-with-our-green-fund/) 25% match grant for recommendations in this report. The current round closes 10th June 2026.

Enterprise Oxfordshire may also have funding opportunities for businesses from time to time. Check here: https://enterpriseoxfordshirebusiness.com/net-zero-subpage-funding-and-grants/

You can also **sign up to the ESOx newsletter** at this link (see bottom left): https://www.energysolutionsoxfordshire.org/articles/

Solutions fit for the future

This report recommends installing new electrical products. We recommend discussing some technical considerations with your contractors. While UK electricals must comply with safety standards, there is currently no requirement that items are able to communicate with other electrical systems to maximise operating efficiency both on site and within the National electricity grid. For example, heat pumps use electricity and are best operated in tandem with solar PV panels and batteries to minimise use of more expensive grid electricity. As electricity networks make more use of data sharing, **ensure contractors consider compatibility when installing** the items below to help avoid later upgrades:

Solar PV panels – Ensure inverters, which convert DC power generated to AC power compatible with your site, have **'modbus'** interface. This enables communication with other devices, including batteries.

Heat pumps – Ensure these include **OpenADR** (automated demand response), which allows better electricity management, particularly in areas where sub-stations have grid constraints.

Your action progress update

Our report recommendations may help you choose what actions your organisation would like to act on. After a number of months, we will ask for an update on your progress. Some actions will be completed, some in progress, and others not yet started. Below is an example of how you can indicate your progress (tick one box per row). There is no expected completion date for any action, however your information is extremely important for helping us track project improvements.

Opportunity	Action completed	Action in progress	Not begun but intending to	Not begun, not intending to	Not applicable
1) Manage heating	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
2) Conduct an out of hours survey	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
3) Upgrade lighting to LEDs	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
4) Add draught proofing to external doors	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
5) Install secondary glazing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
6) Manage summer heat	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
7) Add solar PV panels	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
8) Consider an air to water heat pump system	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Appendix D

Energy Solutions Oxfordshire

Feasibility Report

Burwell Hall

ENERGY SOLUTIONS OXFORDSHIRE®

Introducing this Feasibility Report

This Feasibility Report has been produced using the information gathered during our virtual visit to your premises. It contains our findings on your existing energy usage, as well as our expert recommendations to improve the energy efficiency of your premises based on the preferences you have expressed to us – reducing the cost of your energy bills, and the carbon emissions your organisation is responsible for.

Company name:	Burwell Hall
Contact name:	Nicky Coyley
Postcode:	OX28 5NP
Total site area:	354m²
Energy use source:	Electricity & gas
Main heat source:	Yes

Next steps

1. Read and review the suggested improvements in this report.
2. We will call you within the next week to make sure you understand the information in this report, answer any questions you have, and discuss moving forward to the implementation phase.

Our energy recommendations – at a glimpse

The energy reduction recommendations that we have for your organisation are outlined in a snapshot in the table below, and in more detail on the pages to follow.

Type	Recommendation	Annual savings	Cost range
Heating Option A	1. Ground source heat pump	£1,683	£20,000 to £35,000
Heating Option B	2. Air source heat pump (air to water)	£1,170	£15,000 to £20,000
Hot water	3. Timers for hot water heaters	£99	£500 to £700
Heating	4. Zone heating in changing rooms	£548	£600 to £800
Lighting	5. Replace lights with LEDs	£67	£400 to £500
Renewables	6. Solar PV panels	£631	£10,000 to £12,000
Insulation	7. Ceiling insulation	£242	£10,000 to £15,000
Management	8. Additional low & no-cost measures	£322	£0

Please note that the cost ranges and savings are estimated figures. These can be refined based on actual quotations from contractors if you choose to go ahead and continue working with us. Savings also depend on what heating option is chosen and timing of other measures.

ESOx can offer further services. Our fees for each will depend on the measures to be progressed and other details, and can be provided on request.

Bid writing support for funding

There are several funds that Witney Town Council can potentially apply for to progress measures in Burwell Hall. We offer support writing applications and completing technical details.

Implementation support

When funding for measures is secured, ESOx would draft specification letters and invite multiple contractors in our network to provide competitive quotes measures at Burwell hall you would like to progress. We would arrange and conduct contractor site visits for each measure, scheduling and liaising with you. We would collect, validate, and analyse quotes, advising on the benefits and concerns of each.

Installation support

Once contractors are chosen, we can manage the installation of measures, being the main point of contact, scheduling contractors, collecting key documents, and advising you on issues arising. This service also includes verifying completion and performance of measures installed and validating savings over a 12 month period.

Potential savings from the recommendations

Based on the findings from our visit to your premises and information subsequently provided, we are recommending energy efficiency measures which would reduce your kWh usage by:

95%

reduction in energy usage

This would represent the following cost savings for your organisation:

£33,729

total avoided energy costs over 10 years

This is an estimate based on installing a ground source heat pump and other recommendations, which will be further refined based on actual quotes from contractors if you choose to go ahead to the next stage of implementation.

£9,175 *- No action*
Your annual energy cost in 10 years' time with no action

£4,834 *- Implementing all recommendations*
Your annual energy cost in 10 years' time if you make improvements

47%

Your current energy profile

Based on information provided, your existing energy consumption is as follows - including annual kWh consumption, annual costs, and energy tariffs.

4.13p	15.19p
(gas)	(electricity)

	Gas	Electricity	Totals
Annual energy expenditure (excluding VAT)	£3,423	£1,737	**£5,160**
Annual kilowatt hours of energy consumption	77,906 kWh	10,130 kWh	**88,036 kWh**
Annual tonnes of carbon equivalent	14.27 t CO_2e	2.15 t CO_2e	**16.42 t CO_2e**

How your annual energy is used

Units of floor area			
354 total m^2	£14.58 per m^2	248.69 kWh per m^2	46.38 kg CO_2e per m^2

Measure 1: Heating Option A - Ground source heat pump

Installing a ground source heat pump (GSHP) system would result in the following savings from

avoided energy:

£1,683
per year on energy bills, based on your current energy tariff

67,778 kWh
per year of energy

12.12 tonnes
per year of carbon dioxide equivalent

We estimate a budget between **£20,000 and £35,000** for this measure with an additional service fee if you choose to progress this with support from Energy Solutions Oxfordshire.

Rationale and description

The hall is currently heated by a gas fired boiler. A ground source heat pump system (GSHP) provides the opportunity to heat using a renewable resource of energy whilst reducing your carbon footprint.

How energy use will be avoided

GSHPs run on electricity but produce heat very efficiently, this means that if you put 1kW of electricity into the system you will get more than 1kW of heat energy out; this ratio is called Coefficient of Performance (CoP). Typically a ground source heat pump has a maximum CoP of 4, meaning for 1kW of electricity you will get 4 kW of heat. The actual ratio of 'electricity in' to 'heat out' will change over the course of the year.

Other considerations

Your current Potterton Kingfisher cf150 boiler was no longer manufactured after 1998 and therefore is at least 23 year old. It is a non-condensing boiler with an efficiency rating of 65% and is therefore an inefficient and carbon intensive method of heating the building. In comparison with a heat pump system, for every 1kW of gas into the current heating system you will only get 650W of heat out (at 65% efficiency). The most efficient gas boilers operate at an efficiency rating of around 92 to 94%.

In addition, this building is currently heated when not in use. Is is estimated that heating requirements could be reduced by 20% by programming the building to match occupancy. This reduction has been taken into account in savings calculations.

The replacement of the boiler with a GSHP will eliminate the need for gas in the building and make further savings through reduced boiler maintenance. However, the new GSHP will add approximately 10,000 kWh of electricity use or £1,519 per year. This can be reduced by investing in solar PV panels (see measure 6).

A GSHP system has both a heat pump and sub-surface pipework. GSHP pipework can be installed in 1.2 metre trenches about 1 metre down and can either be installed as straight pipes or coiled pipework, depending on a specialist survey. Pipework could be installed in the fields behind the hall and re-covered with grass. This work may also provide the opportunity to improve the drainage in the field.

Read more about GSHPs here:
https://www.thegreenage.co.uk/tech/ground-source-heat-pumps/

https://www.isoenergy.co.uk/ground-source-heat-pump

Measure 2: Heating Option B - Air source heat pump (air to water)

Installing an air source heat pump system would result in the following savings from avoided energy:

£1,170
per year on energy bills, based on your current energy tariff

64,402 kWh
per year of energy

11.40 tonnes
per year of carbon dioxide equivalent

We estimate a budget between **£15,000 and £20,000** for this measure with an additional service fee if you choose to progress this with support from Energy Solutions Oxfordshire.

Rationale and description

The site is currently heated by a gas-fired boiler. An air source heat pump system (ASHP) provides the opportunity to heat using a renewable resource of energy whilst reducing your carbon footprint from the heating system.

How energy use will be avoided

ASHPs run on electricity but produce heat very efficiently, this means that if you put 1kW of electricity into the system you will get more than 1kW of heat energy out; this ratio is called Coefficient of Performance (CoP). Typically an air source heat pump has a maximum CoP of 3, meaning for 1kW of electricity you will get 3 kW of heat. The actual ratio of 'electricity in' to 'heat out' will change over the course of the year.

Other considerations

As detailed in measure 1 on page 6, your current boiler is at least 23 year old and only 65% efficiency. An ASHP would eliminate the need for gas in the building and make further savings through reduced boiler maintenance. However, the new ASHP will add approximately 13,500

kWh of electricity use or £2,050 per year. This can be reduced by investing in solar PV panels (see measure 6).

In addition, this building is currently heated when not in use. Is is estimated that heating requirements could be reduced by 20% by programming the building to match occupancy. This reduction has been taken into account in savings calculations.

An air source heat pump (ASHP), usually placed outside at the side or back of a property, boost heat from the air and transfer this to a heating system, reducing overall energy used. ASHPs are compatible with radiators, under floor heating systems or even warm air convectors and hot water. As the heat produced by an ASHP is less hot (50 to 60°C) than that from a conventional boiler (75 to 80°C) a specialist supplier will need to specify radiator sizes for your hall.

For further reading see:
https://www.greenmatch.co.uk/heat-pump/air-to-water-heat-pump

Measure 3: Timers for hot water heaters

Hot water tanks heating continuously

Changing the programme settings for your two 182 litre hot water tanks to coincide with Saturday football matches would result in the following savings from avoided energy use:

£99
per year on energy bills, based on your current energy tariff

3,379 kWh
per year of energy

0.61 tonnes
per year of carbon dioxide equivalent

We estimate a budget between **£500 and £600** for this measure with an additional service fee if you choose to progress this with support from Energy Solutions Oxfordshire.

Rationale and description

The gas heated hot water tanks are programmed to be heating 364 litres of water continuously. This quantity of water is only required for showers after Saturday football matches in the football season. Programming the hot water to switch on only for these matches will reduce wasted energy. Programming them to turn on 2 to 3 hours prior to when hot water is needed should be sufficient to heat the water and also satisfy Legionella prevention measures for hot water.

How energy use will be avoided

Water tanks, while insulated, continually lose heat. Reducing the time that the tanks are standing hot will save energy.

Other considerations

By switching off the hot water tanks during the week you will no longer have hot water available in the kitchen or toilets. Hot water could be provided by installing a 15 litre under sink hot water heater in the kitchen and to serve the toilets. These can be fitted with timers to turn them off at night. Whilst these heaters use some electricity, as they are low energy, and rarely used, costs and energy use will be reduced.

If under-sink hot water tanks are installed a plumber will need to disconnect kitchen and toilet pipework to the current large hot water tanks to avoid two sources of hot water to these sinks.

Savings for this recommendation are based on your current heating system. The savings will change if a heat pump is installed, which could also provide hot water. We will be happy to recalculate savings based on heating your hot water with a heat pump if required.

Measure 4: Zone heating in changing rooms

Creating a separate heating zone for the changing rooms would result in the following savings from avoided energy use:

£548
per year on energy bills, based on your current energy tariff

13,244 kWh
per year of energy

2.43 tonnes
per year of carbon dioxide equivalent

We estimate a budget between **£600 and £800** for this measure with an additional service fee if you choose to progress this with support from Energy Solutions Oxfordshire.

Rationale and description

The heating zone that includes the reception area, toilets, kitchen and meeting room also includes the radiators in the changing rooms and changing room toilets. The changing rooms are only used once a week on a Saturday, however the space is heated every day in line with the other radiators. Zoning the changing room radiators will allow them to be set to a different heating schedule to the remainder of the building.

How energy use will be avoided

Programming the changing room and changing room toilets to be at a frost setting for all but a few hours on a match Saturday will reduce wasted heat and therefore energy use.

Other considerations

An alternative to zoning is to instruct the caretaker to turn the thermostatic radiators valves on the radiators down to low and back up again before match days. However this is time consuming and may be forgotten.
Savings for this recommendation are based on your current heating system. The savings will change if a heat pump is installed, which uses less energy to heat your building.

Measure 5: Replace lights with LEDs

Replacing your existing light fixtures with energy efficient LED lighting panels and round LED fixtures would result in the following savings from avoided energy use:

£67
per year on energy bills, based on your current energy tariff

439 kWh
per year of energy

0.09 tonnes
per year of carbon dioxide equivalent

We estimate a budget between **£400 and £500** for this measure with an additional service fee if you choose to progress this with support from Energy Solutions Oxfordshire.

Rationale and description

LED lights are more energy efficient using less energy than current fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescent lights (CFLs). Whilst most of your lighting has already been changed to LED, the changing room area is still lit by CFL lighting. Lighting can be upgraded to LEDs that use 50% to 80% less energy and last at least four times longer, reducing maintenance costs. The addition of lighting controls beyond on / off switches, such as absence detectors, will save more energy.

How energy use will be avoided

Lights use electricity over time. Each LED will require less energy than the non-LED light replaced; savings are based on the difference in energy between LEDs and the original lights. LEDs last longer reducing maintenance and replacement costs.

Lighting controls will reduce energy use further by turning the lights off when they are not required. This has been identified as a problem in the changing rooms where lights can be left on throughout the week if left on in error on a Saturday.

Other considerations

Contractors will review lights and consider other light characteristics such as angle and 'colour temperature', which alters the tone of the lighting, before providing a quote. Contractors may also recommend alternative lighting options following a site visit.

Measure 6: Solar PV panels

Installing solar PV panels on the rooftop of your premises would result in the following savings from avoided energy use through generating your own energy and income from the Smart Export Guarantee:

£631
per year on energy bills, based on your current energy tariff

3,900 kWh
per year of energy

0.71 tonnes
per year of carbon dioxide equivalent

We estimate a budget between **£10.000 and £12,000** for this measure with an additional service fee if you choose to progress this with support from Energy Solutions Oxfordshire.

Rationale and description

There is sufficient space to install solar PV panels on east and west facing roof of your building to generate electricity from sunlight. In addition to installing an array of solar PV panels on the roof, an inverter is installed indoors to make the electricity compatible with your building's electricity demand. The system includes a meter to record how much electricity is generated and how much is exported to the national grid when not used immediately on site. The solar PV system operates so that generated electricity is used to meet on site demand; any surplus is exported.

How energy use will be avoided

Electricity generated by sunlight and used on site will replace electricity drawn from the National Grid. While the sun shines every day, the amount generated is affected by temperature and cloud cover; weather data is used to estimate performance.

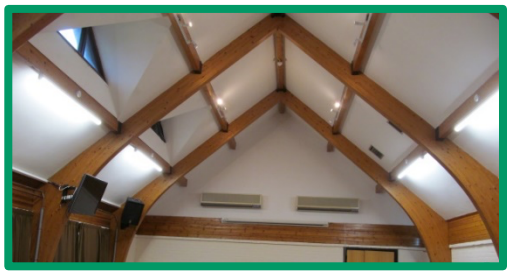
In order to maximise the financial benefit of solar panels most of the generated electricity needs to be used on site rather than exported. For ever kWh generated from solar panels that you use on site you will save 15.19p (the day time electricity rate from your supplier). For solar electricity exported back to the National Grid you will receive a maximum of approximately 3.5p per kWh from the Smart Export Guarantee, paid through your electricity supplier.

Other considerations

Based on a desk-top review of your roof and taking into account you concern over possible vandalism if solar was installed on the south facing roof facing the park, we estimate that you could install a 6.5kW solar array generating an estimated 5,200 kWh of electricity per year. We would anticipate 75% or 3,900 kWh of this generation will be used on site with the remainder exported when the hall is not in use.

If the town council's policy is to maximise carbon reduction, we recommend that you make full use of the roof space you have available to install the maximum number of panels the roof will allow, which may include some of the south facing roof also. Some of the electricity would be used on site and some exported, reducing the National Grid's dependence on fossil fuels.

Measure 7: Ceiling insulation



Installing insulation below the ceiling in your main hall would result in the following savings from avoided energy use through retaining heat in your building:

£242
per year on energy bills, based on your current energy tariff

5,843 kWh
per year of energy

1.07 tonnes
per year of carbon dioxide equivalent

We estimate a budget between **£10,000 and £15,000** for this measure with an additional service fee if you choose to progress this with support from Energy Solutions Oxfordshire.

Rationale and description

The ceiling in the main hall is only insulated to 1980s building standards when the building was built. Adding insulation below this ceiling will minimize heat losses in winter, reduce heat gains in summer, improve comfort levels for users and reduce annual energy bills by reducing heating requirements.

How energy use will be avoided

Up to 25% of heat loss from a building is through an uninsulated roof. Increasing roof insulation levels will reduce the cost of heating by retaining the heat in the building for longer.

Other considerations

Internal ceiling insulation is normally installed using insulation board that is cut to fit between the rafters and plastered and painted over.

This measure will require scaffolding and therefore should be scheduled for a period when the hall is closed or less busy.

Savings for this recommendation are based on your current heating system. The savings will change if a heat pump is installed, which uses less energy to heat your building. We will be happy to recalculate savings on this basis if required.

Measure 8: Additional low & no-cost measures

Taking action on low or no-cost actions identified below would result in the following savings from avoided energy use:

£322
per year on energy bills, based on your current energy tariff

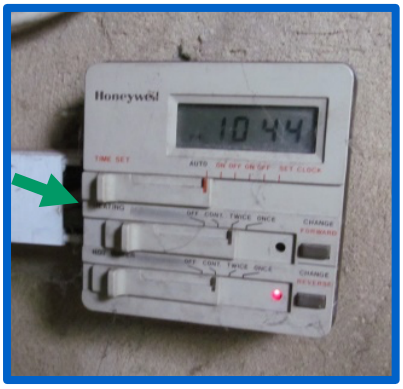
7,791 kWh
per year of energy

1.43 tonnes
per year of carbon dioxide equivalent

There is no cost to these measures apart from staff time.

Rationale and description

Ensuring that the building in run as efficiently as possible with energy reduction in mind can reduce carbon and costs whilst retaining a comfortable environment for users. Consider the following actions:



1) Repair the thermostat / check the programmer – During the site visit the thermostat that controls the heating for all areas apart from the main hall was set to 10˚C however the temperature in the building was considerably hotter than that - all the radiators were still on. This suggests that the thermostat is not controlling the temperature and the boiler is providing heat to the radiators only based on the scheduled heating times that are set to twice a day. Additionally, the controller (see image) was showing that the heating was not on (absence of red light) however the radiators were still very hot. This may be because the timer had just switched them off. We recommend that a heating engineer reviews these controls, carries out repairs if required and provides clear instructions.

2) Set heating time to match usage – There were no bookings in the building for the morning of the assessment visit however the heating was on, presumably on the 'twice a day' setting. Matching heating times to building usage, reducing the heating to a low setting such as 10 to 12˚C between bookings, will reduce energy use.

3) Make use of the ventilation system in the main hall - The ventilation system was not in use and little is known about what this can provide, however using it may be a lower carbon / cost solution than using the air-conditioning in the hall in summer. Review the ventilation system with an HVAC contractor to identify how the use of this system can reduce energy use.

4) Turn off the kitchen hot water boiler when not in use - The hot water boiler is switched on at all times for very little use. Either turn the hot water boiler on in advance of requirement or instruct users to turn it on as required.

5) Take and report gas meter readings – Gas meter readings used by your gas supplier to calculate your bills in 2019 (the data supplied) are based on estimated readings. Reading the meter monthly and reporting the reading to the gas supplier will allow accurate billing and improve understanding of how gas is used throughout the year.

How energy use will be avoided

Energy use will be avoided through stricter control of heating and cooling systems and improved understanding of how energy is used in the building.

Other considerations

Compiling a file of how the heating and cooling systems work in the building and retaining this information for handover to future building managers will ensure that the building continues to operate efficiently through staff changes.

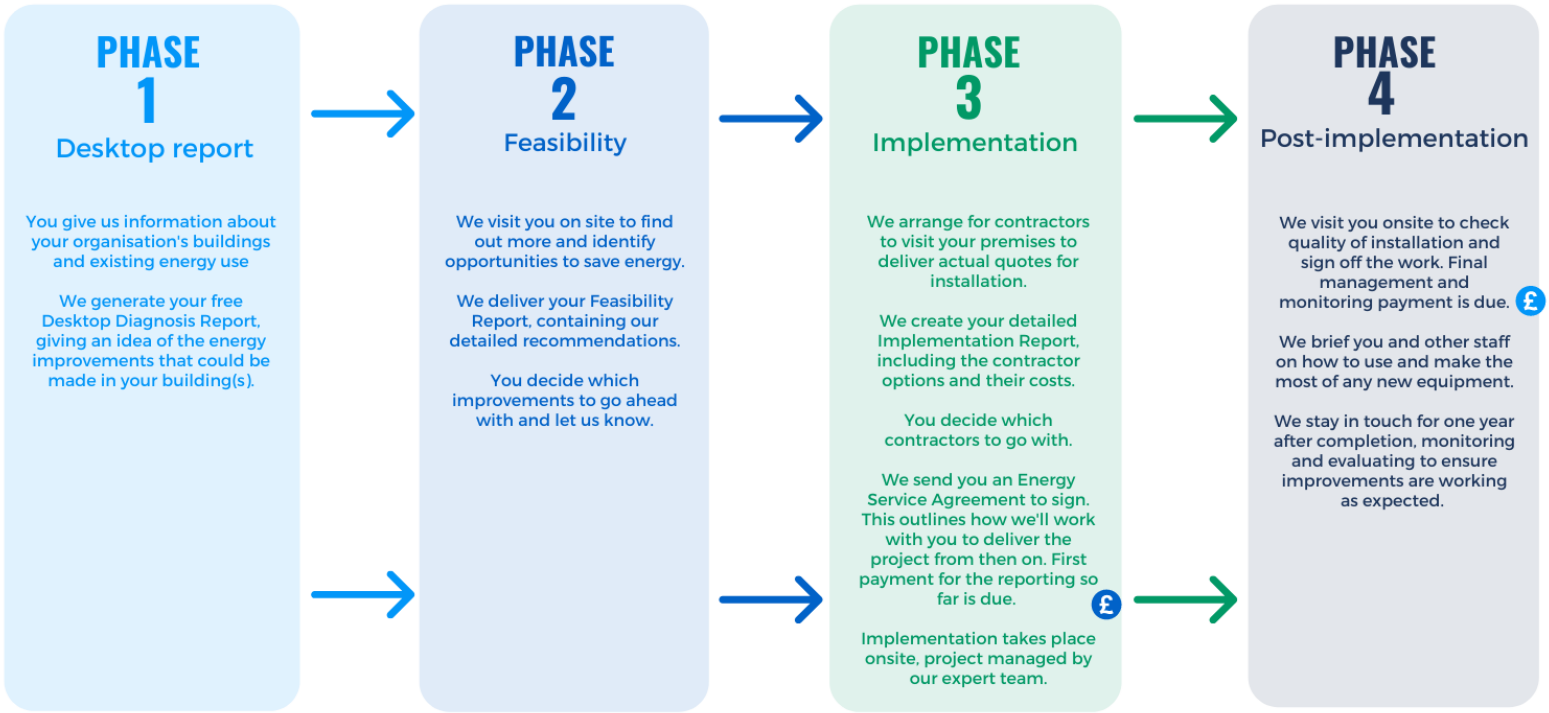
Next steps

The next steps for your energy improvement project are as follows:

- You read and review the information and recommendations in this Feasibility Report.
- Our Business Development Manager, Richard Dorey, will call you within the next week to discuss the report – ensuring you understand the information given, answer any questions you may have, and discuss which recommendations you'd like to proceed with.
- You decide which recommendations you'd like to move forward with. You may be ready to do this during the call with Richard, or you may need to discuss this with other members of your team – in this case Richard will follow up with you afterwards.

An overview of the full Energy Solutions Oxfordshire process is below. You are currently part-way through the second phase – Feasibility.

An overview of the ESOx process



CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item: Seasonal Planting Strategy

Meeting Date: 19 May 2026

Contact Officer: Head of Estates and Operations

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Seasonal Planting Strategy of floral displays within Witney Town Council's portfolio.

The Council recognises that floral displays contribute significantly to the appearance and character of the town. The council's objective is to create attractive, sustainable, biodiverse, and climate-resilient floral displays across Witney that enhance civic pride, support wildlife, improve wellbeing, and provide value for money through a balanced approach combining seasonal bedding and perennial planting.

Background

The Council cares for over 12 hectares of public open spaces, including parks, small green areas, flower beds, and shrubs. Seasonal floral displays including hanging baskets, lamp post brackets, and mounted floral standards bring colour to the town throughout the year.
Public green spaces play an important role in improving the appearance of communities, supporting biodiversity, and enhancing wellbeing.

The committee's decision in January 2026 was to move towards a mixed approach to planting combining perennials and bedding plants from the autumn onwards.

Current Situation

Witney Town Council Seasonal Flower Planting Strategy
Witney Town Council aims to create vibrant, colourful, sustainable, and biodiverse floral displays that enhance civic pride, strengthen the town's identity, and improve the appearance of parks and public spaces throughout the year.
Floral displays are recognised as an important feature of the town, contributing positively to the experience of residents, businesses, and visitors while also supporting wildlife and environmental sustainability.
The strategy seeks to ensure that planting schemes are visually striking and memorable, helping Witney stand out as an attractive and welcoming market town, whilst balancing environmental responsibilities and long-term financial sustainability.

Strategic Objectives

The Council will maintain bright and attractive floral displays in key locations while increasing the use of sustainable perennial planting across suitable public spaces. Planting schemes should provide colour, texture, and visual interest throughout the seasons and contribute positively to the character of the town.

The strategy also aims to support pollinators and biodiversity, reduce long-term maintenance requirements, and improve climate resilience through more sustainable planting practices. Annual themes and commemorative displays may continue to be incorporated where appropriate to celebrate civic events and important occasions.

Strategic Planting Approach

Witney Town Council will continue to adopt a balanced planting model that combines seasonal bedding in high-profile locations with perennial planting in parks, verges, and wider green spaces.

Seasonal bedding will continue to play an important role within the town centre, memorial areas, hanging baskets, gateways, and other prominent civic spaces where bold colour and immediate visual impact are desirable. These displays help create a welcoming environment and contribute to the town's overall attractiveness.

Perennial planting will increasingly be used within parks, road verges, roundabouts, and green corridors where longer-lasting planting schemes can provide colour over extended periods while improving biodiversity and reducing maintenance requirements.

All planting schemes should be designed to maximise visual impact through strong colour combinations, varied textures, and long flowering periods. The Council recognises that sustainability improvements should not result in displays appearing dull or neglected, and planting designs should therefore remain vibrant, attractive, and well-maintained throughout the year.

Seasonal Planting Framework

Spring and Summer Displays

Spring and Summer planting should focus on delivering bold and colourful displays that enhance public spaces and create a positive impression for residents and visitors. Seasonal bedding plants such as antirrhinums, begonias, geraniums, petunias, cosmos, and marigolds will continue to provide strong seasonal colour in focal areas.

Perennial planting will increasingly be integrated into these schemes through the use of species such as lavender, rudbeckia, salvia, echinacea, sedum, penstemon, and ornamental grasses. These plants not only provide extended flowering periods and visual structure, but also improve biodiversity and drought tolerance.

Planting designs should ensure that displays remain full, colourful, and visually engaging throughout the season. Hanging baskets and raised displays should continue to use cascading and trailing plants to maximise visual appeal within the town centre and other key locations.

Autumn and Winter Displays

Autumn and winter planting should continue to provide colour and structure during the darker months and prevent public spaces from appearing empty or unattractive. Winter bedding plants including pansies, violas, wallflowers, cyclamen, and polyanthus will continue to be used in prominent areas where winter colour is most valued.

These displays should increasingly be complemented by evergreen shrubs, ornamental grasses, heucheras, hebes, skimmias, and winter-flowering plants to provide year-round

interest and structure. The use of contrasting foliage colours and textured planting should help maintain visual quality during the winter season.

Location-Based Planting

High-profile civic spaces, including the town centre, memorials, entrance gateways, floral towers, and public seating areas, should continue to receive the most colourful and formal displays. These locations are important in shaping first impressions of the town and should therefore maintain a high standard of presentation and seasonal interest.

Within parks and open spaces, planting schemes should balance naturalistic perennial planting with carefully designed feature beds that continue to provide colour and visual attraction. Meadow-style planting may be introduced where appropriate, although care should be taken to ensure areas continue to appear managed and welcoming rather than neglected.

Road verges, roundabouts, and green corridors are particularly well suited to drought-tolerant perennial planting. These areas can provide waves of seasonal colour while reducing watering and maintenance requirements and improving the overall appearance of the town.

Biodiversity and Sustainability

Under the Environment Act 2021, the updated Biodiversity Duty legally requires all public authorities in England, including town and parish councils, to actively conserve and enhance biodiversity.

The Council's planting strategy will contribute positively to biodiversity and environmental sustainability while retaining strong visual appeal. Increasing the use of nectar-rich plants will support pollinators including bees and butterflies, while reduced soil disturbance and fewer seasonal replacements will help improve soil health and reduce waste.

The Council will continue seeking opportunities to reduce water consumption, and lower carbon emissions associated with plant production and transportation. Biodiversity-focused planting should demonstrate that environmentally sustainable landscapes can also be colourful, attractive, and beneficial to the wider community.

Annual Themes and Civic Events

Seasonal displays may incorporate themes that recognise important civic events, commemorations, and celebrations throughout the year. These will include Remembrance displays and may include heritage-themed planting for national commemorations, Pride displays, royal celebrations, and environmentally themed planting schemes.

Thematic displays should be concentrated within highly visible locations to maximise their impact and should complement the wider planting strategy while remaining appropriate in scale and cost.

Equality and Community Wellbeing

The Council recognises that attractive and well-maintained public spaces contribute positively to mental wellbeing, civic pride, and community identity. Floral displays should therefore be distributed fairly across the town so that all communities can benefit from attractive and welcoming environments.

Planting schemes can also help encourage greater use of parks and public spaces, support social interaction, and improve perceptions of safety and care within the local environment.

Maintenance and Operational Considerations

The strategy seeks to maintain high visual standards while reducing unnecessary maintenance burdens over time. Increasing the use of resilient perennial planting will help reduce watering requirements, minimise seasonal replacement work, and improve the long-term sustainability of planting schemes.

The Council will continue to monitor plant performance and public feedback and may trial new drought-tolerant and long-flowering species where appropriate. Opportunities to improve storage and overwintering facilities may also be explored to support future planting efficiencies.

Monitoring and Review

The planting strategy should be reviewed annually to assess visual quality, biodiversity outcomes, maintenance costs, water usage, and public satisfaction. Planting schemes should remain flexible to allow for improvements and adjustments based on operational experience and changing environmental conditions.

A wider strategic review should take place every five years to ensure the approach continues to meet the Council's objectives and the expectations of residents and visitors.

Summary

A balanced approach that combines colourful seasonal displays with increased perennial planting is considered the most effective and sustainable strategy for Witney Town Council. This approach will maintain the town's reputation as an attractive and welcoming destination while supporting biodiversity, climate resilience, and long-term value for money.

The strategy ensures that public spaces remain vibrant, visually distinctive, and enjoyable throughout the year, helping floral displays continue to serve as an important attraction within the town and its green spaces.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

5. A Beautiful Witney

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality - is linked to seasonal floral display planting through fair access to attractive public spaces, inclusive decision-making, and representation of diverse communities. When planting is focused only on affluent or tourist areas, it can reinforce inequality.
b) Biodiversity - seasonal floral displays in Witney are used as a tool to enhance urban biodiversity, support pollinators, and meet sustainability goals, while still improving the appearance of public spaces.

c) Crime & Disorder - research shows that well-maintained green spaces (including parks, landscaped areas, and planted public spaces) tend to be associated with lower rates of crime and vandalism, especially when they are attractive, visible, and actively used by the community.
d) Environment & Climate Emergency - Local governments and environmental campaigns in the UK are responding to the climate emergency by expanding urban planting initiatives including trees, wildflowers, shrubs, and other vegetation to help mitigate climate impacts and support biodiversity.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial implications

While perennial planting may require similar levels of initial investment, it is expected to provide improved long-term value through reduced replacement costs, lower watering requirements, and less intensive maintenance. Seasonal bedding will remain important in key locations where strong visual impact and civic presentation are priorities.
The Council will continue to seek an appropriate balance between financial sustainability, environmental responsibility, and maintaining high-quality floral displays.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report and recognise that a balanced approach prioritising the use of perennials while retaining seasonal displays in key locations is considered the most effective and sustainable strategy.

Climate and Biodiversity

Agenda Item: Biodiversity report

Meeting Date: 19/05/2026

Contact Officer: Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer

The purpose of this report is to outline what the council has been doing to improve biodiversity across the council holdings.

Background

The Lake and Country Park provide a diverse range of varied and interesting habitats, and they will always have scope for improvement, and the aim of the Council will be to identify and develop opportunities to increase biodiversity.

Current Situation

- Reptile, bird, and plant monitoring is taking place assisted by U3A (University of the Third Age) and BBOWT are currently carrying out a Water Vole survey
- Officers are supporting work by SSE who are replacing High Voltage Cabling across the lake
- A new Community Orchard comprising of 32 trees has been planted on the old railway line by Mill Meadow. Officers visited, photographed and gave refreshments to Lower Windrush Valley volunteers who assisted in the planting of the trees.
- The Council are progressing their application for Green Flag status and hope to put an application soon
- X4 new bird boxes have been installed along the A40 strip
- The Council are maintaining a program of cutting butterfly “scallops” to increase “edge” habitat
- The Council have re-furbished the tern raft for the Spring/Summer
- Roundabouts are being managed for biodiversity wherever possible, and sponsorship is still a possibility but has yet to be pursued fully
- There has been no more updates on the roadside verge nature reserves

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

7. A Green & Resilient Town

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality –Equality in biodiversity in green spaces refers to the idea that all species regardless of their size, role, or ecological status should have the opportunity to thrive and be represented within urban and natural green spaces. Achieving equality in biodiversity involves not just conserving a wide variety of species but also ensuring that ecological systems are designed and managed in ways that support diverse species' needs. This can be applied to urban parks, nature reserves, forests, and other green spaces, aiming for a balance where no group of species is disproportionately favoured over others. b) Crime & Disorder –Green spaces such as Lakes and Parks can contribute to reducing urban crime by making spaces more inviting and safer for residents. c) Environment & Climate Emergency –This is deeply intertwined with both the protection of biodiversity and the fight against climate change. Both challenges require urgent and comprehensive action, as they not only affect the country's natural systems but also its economy, society, and future well-being. d) All aspects of this report are to action our responsibilities to this situation.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial implications

- The cost of applying for Green Flag will be around £500.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report.

CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY

Agenda Item: Lake and Country Park

Meeting Date: 19/05/2026

Contact Officer: Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer

The purpose of this report is to update members on the work being carried out on the country park.

Background

The Lake and Country Park is managed to balance recreation and conservation, and provide a safe and interesting location for all to use.

Current Situation

Seven benches, part funded by OCC are to be installed in the park.

Duck Tubes are being created for the waterfowl on the lake to use as nest sites.

A new lectern at the entrance to Mill Meadow and panel for the noticeboard at the Avenue Two entrance are close to design completion.

The application for Green Flag status is continuing.

Water testing is still part of the regular management of the site.

The council have secured £4500 from various funds to support work within the Country Park.

The Council are in discussion with Synlos (http://www.synolos.co.uk/) about some of their clients volunteering within the Country Park.

The council is developing an area close to the Ave 2 entrance for the Kids Planet team to allow their kids an area to sit and play, it will have a layer of chippings and seats enclosed on 3 sides for safety.

The Council have been working with WODC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, and Wychwood Project to create 10 walks around Witney including the Country Park.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

7. A Green & Resilient Town

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality –Equality in biodiversity in green spaces refers to the idea that all species regardless of their size, role, or ecological status should have the opportunity to thrive and be represented within urban and natural green spaces. Achieving equality in biodiversity involves not just conserving a wide variety of species but also ensuring that ecological systems are designed and managed in ways that support diverse species' needs. This can be applied to urban parks, nature reserves, forests, and other green spaces, aiming for a balance where no group of species is disproportionately favoured over others. b) Crime & Disorder –Green spaces such as Lakes and Parks can contribute to reducing urban crime by making spaces more inviting and safer for residents. c) Environment & Climate Emergency –This is deeply intertwined with both the protection of biodiversity and the fight against climate change. Both challenges require urgent and comprehensive action, as they not only affect the country's natural systems but also its economy, society, and future well-being. d) All aspects of this report are to action our responsibilities to this situation

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial implications

- All the costs for the signs and 5 benches for the Country Park have been met by funding that the Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer has being awarded so far this year.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report.

CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda Item: National Emergency Briefing

Meeting Date: 19 May 2026

Contact Officer: Committee Clerk

The purpose of this report is for Members to consider showing the National Emergency Briefing film and recommend a suitable date.

Background

At the meeting of the Council on 13 April 2026, following consideration of correspondence received, Members resolved that the decision be deferred to the Climate & Biodiversity Committee. (Full Council Minute 206 13.04.2026 Refers)

Current Situation

The National Emergency Briefing is a 50-minute film that sets out the case for urgent government action in response to the climate and nature crisis, including informing the public through a national televised briefing supported by regular updates. It advocates for a science-led emergency response to accelerate emissions reduction and improve resilience, helping to strengthen understanding of these issues at both national and local levels.

A number of community screenings are already scheduled within the local area, including Charlbury on 11 June, Eynsham on 14 June, Chipping Norton on 14 July, and St Mary's Church in Witney on 16 July. In order to complement these events and avoid duplication, whilst maximising opportunities for residents to attend, potential dates for a screening at the Corn Exchange have been identified as 27 July and 3 August, reflecting venue availability and providing a suitable gap following other local screenings.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

7. A Green & Resilient Town

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality – Showing the film supports inclusive community engagement in line with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010.
b) Biodiversity - While the proposal has no direct impact on biodiversity, it supports increased awareness of climate and nature issues, aligning with the Council's duty to conserve and enhance the natural environment.
c) Crime & Disorder - There are no crime and disorder implications.
d) Environment & Climate Emergency - The proposal supports the Council's Climate Emergency declaration by promoting awareness and community engagement on climate change and environmental issues.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial implications

- To maximise public access, community screenings are offered free of charge
- There would be a potential staffing cost dependent on the time of the showing of the film and if the café is to be open.

Recommendations

Member are invited to note the report and

1. Decide whether to show the film
2. If yes, when and at what time should it be scheduled.
3. Consider if the café should be open ahead of the film showing
4. Consider Inviting the Witney MP and other local influential people including journalists
5. Consider if a member of the committee should host a follow up discussion following the film for those gathered to consider how to respond to Parliament.

From: Chris Borg – Policy Manager NALC
Sent: 05 May 2026 14:00
Subject: Re: Chance to respond to DEFRA Biodiversity Net Gain for brownfield consultation.

To: CEN

Dear colleagues.

I hope you are very well. NALC is currently responding to a raft of other policy consultations so won't be responding to this one, but DEFRA have published a consultation here (https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/biodiversity-net-gain-considering-a-targeted-exemption-for-brownfield-residential-development) on a potential exemption from biodiversity net gain (BNG) for certain residential developments on brownfield land. The consultation proper link is here (https://consult.defra.gov.uk/defra-biodiversity-net-gain/biodiversity-net-gain-considering-a-targeted-exemp/).

Do have a read of this document and encourage your parish or town council, or county association to respond direct if you get the chance.

Very best wishes and thanks.

Chris Borg

Policy manager

nalc

National Association of Local Councils

The Bloomsbury Building, 10 Bloomsbury Way, Holborn, London WC1A 2SL

www.nalc.gov.uk

nalc@nalc.gov.uk

020 7637 1865

From: Saunders, Mark - Oxfordshire County Council **On Behalf Of** Climate.Action
Sent: 12 May 2026 18:30
Subject: Annual community payments from renewable energy – help shape Oxfordshire's new policy

Hello,

Oxfordshire's communities can benefit from the renewable energy projects currently progressing through the planning system. We are writing to invite your Parish Council to take part in a public consultation on a new policy that could put long-term, locally controlled funding directly into your community's hands. The draft Interim Policy for Community Benefit Contributions and Community Shared Ownership is now open for public consultation on Let's Talk Oxfordshire.

👉 Respond here: Let's Talk Oxfordshire – CBC/CSO Consultation

WHAT THIS COULD MEAN FOR YOUR PARISH

- For host communities of renewable energy projects, annual payments to your community, index-linked from the developer to a local fund for the full operational life of the project, potentially 20 to 40 years.
- For renewable energy projects under 10 MW, 100% of the community benefit contribution stays in the local fund. It comes directly to communities like yours.
- Decisions on how to spend the Local Fund will be made by you, guided by a Community Action Plan developed with and for your community.
- The pipeline is already here. There are over 25 projects in the Oxfordshire planning system and this pipeline could generate contracts for over £20 million in community benefit contributions by 2030. This policy ensures your community gets its fair share.

AN IMPORTANT POINT ON PLANNING

This policy does not determine whether renewable energy projects get built – that is entirely a matter for the planning system. What this policy does is ensure that if a project is approved, your community is treated fairly and consistently. We cannot control what comes forward – but we can make sure Oxfordshire communities get the best out of it.

HOW TO TAKE PART

We encourage your Parsh Council to submit a formal response to the consultation, and we invite individual councilors to respond in their own right too. The consultation closes Monday 15th June 2026. For queries, please contact climate.action@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Regards

Mark Saunders

Energy Systems and Investment Manager, Oxfordshire County Council

County Hall | New Road | Oxford | OX1 1ND