WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

Climate Change Strategy
and
Action Plan

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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, plant and machinery fuel 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
  - Plant and Machinery fuel: 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: 25 tCO_2e reduction on 2024-25 baseline**	**Net Zero by 2028**
Finance and Resources						
1. Annually review the WTC Procurement Policy.	HEO/OM/ ASA-CP /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.
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.	ASA-CP	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.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
3. Main contractors hired by WTC to have an Environmental Policy.	HEO/ASA-CP 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.
4. Review use of all chemicals used by WTC (e.g. cleaning products) and seek environmentally friendly alternatives where feasible.	OM/ ASA-CP/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.	RFO confirmed investment arrangements are with ethical investment company. 02.10.26 - RFO is actively investigating ethical banking arrangements.
6. External grants and funding opportunities identified and applied for to support and implement delivery of the action plan.	ASA-CP	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.	ASA-CP	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/ ASA-CP /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. 28.08.26 – Pre-Planning Application Advice request sent to WODC regarding the possible installation of Solar PV at the Corn Exchange. Awaiting response. 2.09.26 - EOI for Windrush Cemetery projects issued.
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.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Transport						
10. Encourage staff to use lower carbon forms of transport for work travel or car share for journeys outside of Witney.	ASA-CP	Low	3	Nil	2026-27 replace at least 50% of current staff work trips made by car with lower carbon transport options. Installation of new cycle racks & shelter at WW Depot.	Creation of FB poll or Survey Monkey to be established & repeated annually. Council rejected installation of electric bike charging point at WW Depot. WTC e-bike now considered unsuitable for use by staff to undertake work journeys between sites. Installation of cycle racks & shelter planned to be completed at new WW Depot. 15.09.26 - Reintroduction of cycle to work scheme for staff.
11. Reduce Town Councillor travel emissions for Witney Town Council business.	ASA-CP	Low	3	Nil	Reduce Councillor town council related travel.	Creation of FB poll or Survey Monkey to be established & repeated annually.
Fleet and Machinery Commitment						
12. Transition vehicle fleet and operational machinery to fully electric alternatives.	HEO/OM/ ASA-CP /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.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
13. Transition small machinery and equipment to fully electric alternatives.	HEO/OM/ ASA-CP/BGSO	Low	1	Proposals to be submitted.	Small machinery and equipment to be reviewed when replacement is required. Suitable alternatives to be researched and options detailed for consideration.	Electric alternatives to be considered and if none are feasible this will be recorded. Continually review suitable alternatives as industry review and develop choices.
14. Where feasible hired vehicles and equipment to be electric.	HEO/OM/ ASA-CP/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 /ASA-CP	High	2	Existing	100% renewable electricity and gas.	Review all WTC energy providers. 100Green current provider.
16. Town Centre Christmas Lights Display.	HEO/PO/ ASA-CP	High	2	Existing	100% renewable electricity	Investigate with OCC the energy provider for Christmas Lights. 2.10.26 – info requested from SSEN.
17. Encourage staff to identify and reduce energy use and wastage.	ASA-CP	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. Posters to be created & distributed around buildings & staff noticeboards.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Water						
18. Reduce carbon emissions from water usage and waste water. Reduce water consumption by installation of water saving devices in Council buildings.	HEO/OM/ ASA-CP /PO/VEO	High	3	Existing or proposals to be submitted for larger schemes outside of maintenance budgets.	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 Reuse of The Leys Splash Park grey water by watering floral displays, grass sports areas and trees. Testing of water undertaken to ensure suitable for use. Establish and report on water reuse from The Leys Splash Park.
Waste						
19. Reduce emissions from waste.	HEO/OM/ ASA-CP /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. Review of Waste Transfer Notes to establish annual figure. Spot checks on waste bins to ensure waste is correctly recycled.
20. Wood waste and green waste	HEO/OM/ ASA-CP/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. Storage bays to be installed at West Witney Depot to enable processing.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
21. Completely reduce the use of single-use plastic in Council offices and premises.	HEO/OM/ ASA-CP/VEO	Low	3	Existing	Identify single use plastics and target reduction of single use plastic to zero.	To be discussed at staff meetings to establish single use plastics.
22. Reduce the use of single-use plastics and waste at all internal and external events.	VEO/ASA-CP	Low	3	Existing	Annual review of hire forms and Events Policy. Reports to be provided in Event Management Plans by event organisers.	Events Hosting Policy reviewed 28.07.26 to be considered at PGF 28.09.26. 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 facility provision. Reviews and reports submitted to the CBC. 02.10.26 - Community events use recyclable or reusable refreshment containers. Individual water bottles will no longer be in use. Craft making at community events avoids single use plastics.
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/ ASA-CP /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.	ASA-CP	Low	3	Existing	% reported annually to reduce paper buying and waste produced.	Review processes for reducing paper use. All paper purchased is recycled. Consider options for Council meetings.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
Land Use						
25. WTC Witney Lake & Country Park.	HEO/ ASA-CP /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/ ASA-CP /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 alternatives where feasible.	OM/ ASA-CP/BGSO	Low	1 & 3	Nil	Review current Pesticides Policy.	Review all pesticides being used. Continually review best alternatives as suppliers review and develop products 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/ ASA-CP /BGSO	Low	3	Proposals to be submitted when required.	Number of community gardens and orchards on WTC land. Reinstatement of community gardening group in 2027. Introduction of Best Kept Allotment award at Citizen of the Year Awards.	Seek adequate spaces for growing food and garden areas within the community on WTC land. Reviews and reports submitted to the CBC. Consider identifying and promoting further community gardening areas on redundant amenity land.
Adaption						
29. Create a Community Emergency Plan.	HEO	N/A	N/A	Nil	2025/26 Community Emergency Plan created and adopted by Council and shared with relevant organisations/groups.	Community Emergency Action Plan drafted and with WODC Officers for review.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
					Comms plan in place during extreme weather events and local emergencies.	
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.	HEO/BGSO	N/A	N/A	Nil	Environmental Emergency Plan created and adopted by Council and shared with relevant organisations/groups.	Ensure staff are trained in emergencies such as wildfire, drought, flood, storms focussing 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.	ASA-CP	Low	N/A	Nil	Updates provided as agreed.	Social media updates on initiatives, projects etc.
Delivery and Monitoring						
33. Establish WTC Climate Action Working Party.	WTC/ASA-CP	High	N/A	Nil	Terms of Reference agreed. Reporting into CBC with recommendations.	CAWP established.

Climate Action	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction	Scope of emissions	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
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/ASA-CP	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.
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.	ASA-CP	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.	ASA-CP	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.	ASA-CP	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.	ASA-CP	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. Benchmarking established against Corsham TC, Cirencester TC, Shrewsbury TC & Woodley TC.
39. Carbon sequestration recording of WTC's planting trees and hedges.	BGSO/ASA-CP	High	1, 2 & 3	Existing	Detail target numbers for planting projects. 2024/25 – 24 trees 2025/26 – 34 trees 2026/27 – 4 trees & 697 hedging plants 2027/28 - * to be agreed	Detail planting undertaken since reporting on WTC climate impact by recording the annual carbon sequestration. Review required of replanting any failed trees and hedging following exceptionally hot summer of 2026.

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.	ASA-CP	High	Nil	2025 – Report undertaken. Undertake annual report comparison for: 2026 2027	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
				2028	
41. Facilitate an Eco Fair to promote climate action taking place in Witney, with WODC, OCC, eco-friendly businesses, organisations and community groups.	ASA-CP	High	Nil	Monitor the impact in terms of number of stall holders and local community response.	Eco Fair held on 9 October 2025. Eco Fair held on 24 September 2026. 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.	ASA-CP	Medium	Existing – may need revising	Number of primary schools participating.	Witney primary schools are invited to participate in Schools in Bloom. 10th anniversary of Schools in Bloom in 2027. Following the competition, the Schools in Bloom wheelbarrows are gifted to local care and nursing homes, extending the life of the displays and bringing joy to residents through the children's creativity. Consider whether this is extended to WTC tenants, affiliated partners and organisations with a specific eco theme.
43. Creation of a Climate Emergency webpage to enable discussion, idea sharing and extended public awareness of the issues.	ASA-CP	Low	Nil	2026/27 - Council website is up to date with climate information. Number of visitors per year to webpage. Social media content planning to	National Emergency Briefing film screened in Corn Exchange 27 July 2026. 61 attendees.

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
				allow for regular programme of climate action.	
44. Sign post local businesses to grants and advice on climate initiatives.	ASA-CP	Medium	Nil	2026/27 - 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 etc.	Agreed micro EV hubs in Council facility car parks, planning responses etc. Following feedback from exhibitors at the Eco Fair 2026, it is proposed that a networking platform be established and supported to bring together local organisations, fostering collaboration and enabling joint initiatives to be developed.

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	ASA-CP /WTC/WODC	Medium	Nil	Number of groups supported.	
Buildings					
48. Council Public Halls: Promote as cold and warm spaces during extreme weather events.	WTC/ASA-CP /VEO	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/ASA-CP	N/A	Dependent on lease agreements.		Energy efficiency measures and funding opportunities will be shared with long term leaseholders.
Transport					
50. Promote the use of public transport to Council events and activities.	WTC/ASA-CP /VEO	Low	Nil	Actively promote and inform community of public transport routes available to events using social media, etc.	28.07.26 - Sustainable travel incorporated into Event Hosting Policy.

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
51. Encourage users of our amenity areas and buildings to cycle.	WTC/ASA-CP /VEO/OM	Low	Proposals to be submitted following review.	Actively promote and inform community of cycling routes to Council facilities and events using social media, etc.	Review cycle stand provision.
52. Promotion of walking in Witney.	WTC/ASA-CP /BGSO	Low		Promotion of walks around the Lake & Country Park on social media and website.	Walking trails in and around Witney regularly promoted along with healthy outdoor activities e.g. outdoor gym. WTC website to be updated to include outdoor gym equipment listing. Themed walking trails to be investigated e.g. blue plaque heritage trail. Nature trail to be investigated within Witney.
53. Sustainable transport investment.	WTC/OCC/WODC	High	Nil	Partnership working with OCC and WODC.	Support OCC and WODC cycling initiatives, EV charging networks, active travel, public transport and expanding network of local footpaths. Themed walking trails to be investigated linking WTC & WODC land.
Energy					
54. Promotion of Community use of WTC thermal imagining camera to identify areas of heat loss within their properties.	WTC/ASA-CP	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 since 2025 to Witney residents. Promoted at Witney Eco Fair 2026 & on social media.

Climate Action Witney Community	Lead Officer / Partner Organisations	Impact of action on carbon footprint reduction for Witney Parish	Budget	KPI	Progress / Comments
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/ASA-CP	Low	Nil	Number of projects supported.	
58. Support litter picking initiatives within the community.	WTC/ASA-CP	Low	Existing	Number of events per year.	Community litter picking kits are available from the WTC Admin office.
Land Use					
59. Allotments – Work with Witney Allotment Association to promote positive environmental action.	WTC/ASA-CP	Low	Nil	Number of environmental actions supported. Introduction of Best Kept Allotment award at Citizen of the Year Awards.	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:

* – 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

BGSO - Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer

PO - Project Officer

VEO - Venue and Events Officer

ASA-CP – Administrative Support Assistant – Communities & Planning

Partner Organisations:

WODC – West Oxfordshire District Council

OCC – Oxfordshire County Council

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

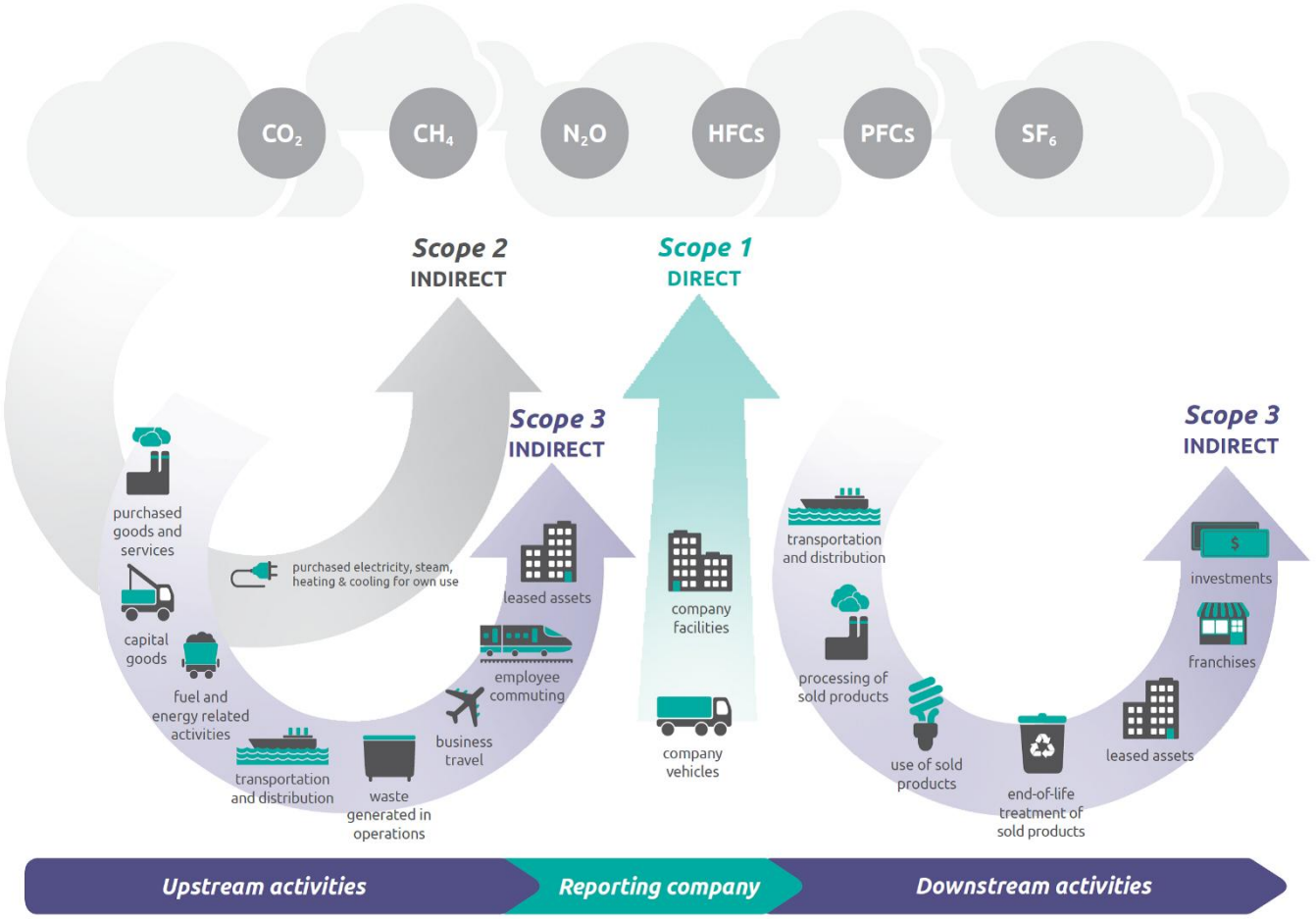
What are Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions?

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