

Cheshire West & Chester Council



Climate Emergency

Response Plan 2025-2030

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Cheshire West
and Chester

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The purpose of the Cheshire West and Chester Climate Emergency Response Plan 2025-2030

This is Cheshire West and Chester Council's Climate Emergency Response Plan. It is designed to influence action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout the borough, and to shape how the area adapts to the impacts of climate change that affect our communities.

It is designed to support the achievement of two key goals, that the borough achieves carbon neutrality by 2045, faster than the national 2050 target, and that the Council as an organisation achieves carbon neutrality in its own scoped operations by 2030.

It contains a series of actions which set out how the Council will set out to achieve its goals, including both the direct actions that the Council will take within its services, and the areas where the Council will seek to work with residents, businesses, stakeholders and government to influence the wider state of the borough.

The audience for this plan is diverse; it is intended to be accessible to residents, to ensure the Council can be held to account for its climate commitments. It is intended to be of use to community groups and organisations to see how they can direct their efforts in a way that matches the borough's strategic direction. It will be of use to businesses and planners proposing developments or retrofits which are in-line with the Council's climate aspirations. The Plan will also be used by decision-makers within the Council, both political and administrative, to ensure that the Council maintains compliance with the vision and values that have shaped the plan.



Foreword from Cllr Gittins

Each year, we are reminded of the consequences of climate change and the need to take urgent action to prevent them. West Cheshire is a unique borough; we have a globally significant heritage city, historic market towns, a proud tradition of agriculture, and a world-leading industrial past, present and future. To safeguard these assets for future generations, we have a responsibility to play our part in tackling this global challenge in a way that is fair, achievable and equitable for all our communities.

We should fully understand the scale of this challenge; government figures show that West Cheshire generated over three million tonnes of greenhouse gases in 2022, one of the top-10 highest-emitting local authorities in the UK. The answer to this challenge is not in de-industrialisation, or in reducing our economic and social growth. Quite the opposite; we have an unparalleled opportunity to be a centre of green industry that will create high-quality, accessible jobs at all skill levels for decades to come.

In response to the challenge of the Climate Emergency, we have set an emissions target for the borough to become net zero by 2045 and engaged our partners, communities, and residents to better understand the changes required to meet it.

In presenting this second version of our Climate Emergency Response Plan, I hope we can build on our framework for collective action on climate change across west Cheshire that is fair, forward thinking, addresses inequalities, and which creates the urgency that we need to act. Building on our existing plan, we have re-developed a set of comprehensive actions, which will drive forward our carbon reduction progress across a borough working in partnership. We will continually refine the approach as we work with you, our residents, stakeholders and businesses to learn what works, and where we can improve. We are fully committed to collaborating with everyone to achieve this goal and will play our part by becoming a net-zero council by 2030.

Introduction

In 2018, a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned that urgent action was needed to cut greenhouse gas emissions and limit global warming to 1.5o C, to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.

In response, 191 countries formally approved the Paris Agreement, targeting net zero by 2050, and committing them to limit global warming to well below two degrees, and preferably to 1.5o C, compared to pre-industrial levels.

In May 2019, Cheshire West and Chester Council declared a Climate Emergency, setting a target for the borough to achieve net zero emissions by 2045 – five years in advance of the Paris Agreement target.

In 2021, the Council ratified its first Climate Emergency Response Plan, running to 2025. This Plan fully refreshes and replaces the first Climate Plan.

In August 2021, the IPCC's latest assessment report confirmed that without immediate, rapid, and large-scale reductions in emissions, limiting warming to 1.5°C or even 2°C will be beyond reach.

Our most recent winter, 2023/24 was the second warmest on record (Met Office) and the estimated rise of global carbon dioxide concentrations far exceeds the IPCC's scenarios in which temperature rise is limited to 1.5 Celsius¹.

This Climate Emergency Response Plan sets out the scale of the net zero 2045 challenge for west Cheshire and proposes a framework for collective action to deliver this, structured around three pillars.

¹Met Office carbon-dioxide forecast for 2024 - Met Office

The Three Pillars of Our Response		
West Cheshire's opportunities and challenges	How we work together	Delivering on our plans

Pillar 1: West Cheshire's opportunities and challenges

Challenges

We now know that the levels of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere are higher than at any point in recent history, and that this increase is directly linked to human activity, mainly the burning of fossil fuels.

Human-induced climate change is already affecting every region of the world – and its effects, including extreme heat and more frequent, intense storms, have been felt here in west Cheshire. Towns such as Northwich have been felt the devastating effects of flooding; however all parts of our borough feel the impacts of climate change. Delivering the rapid cuts in greenhouse gases needed to avoid more severe impacts of climate change will be the biggest challenge of our generation.

Key facts

				
Flooding – Events such as Storm Christoph caused £0.5m in direct damages and 244 homes were affected.	Excessive CO₂ - In 2019 atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations were higher than at any time in at least two million years.	We've experienced the second warmest winter on record (2023).	Heatwaves – heatwave declared across the UK in Sept 23 as temperatures exceed 30c for seven days.	New pests and disease migrating from lower latitudes.

Opportunities

Summary of co-benefits of acting on climate change		
Economic	Social	Environmental
Clean and inclusive growth in the local economy	Improved air quality	Reduced flood risk (coastal, pluvial and fluvial)
Low carbon technologies	Lower living costs	Improved access to green space and nature
High quality employment	More active, outdoor lifestyles	Improved biodiversity and habitats
Improved productivity	More diverse and healthier food	Improved land management
Diversification to more sustainable markets	Fuel poverty reduction	Cleaner air
Reduced heat and energy costs	Less demand on health services	Cleaner water
Increased energy security	Improved mental health	Greater water security
Reduced imported fuels	Fewer work and school days missed	Carbon sequestration in habitats
Reduced congestions	Fewer premature deaths	Less risk of heatwaves and extreme weather events
Reduces costs from flood and extreme weather events	Warmer, healthier homes	Reduced pests and disease from lower latitudes
Reduced waste	Quieter, safer streets	Reduced / reversed species decline

Key facts

				
<p>Green economy – more than £5bn planned investment in green industries.</p>	<p>Jobs – more than 10,000 new jobs projected by 2040 in green industrial clusters.</p>	<p>Implementing climate actions like better insulation and renewable energy use in homes could lead to cheaper energy bills over time.</p>	<p>The UK's net-zero emissions plan includes changes in land use and farming that are expected to improve air and water quality, benefiting biodiversity.</p>	<p>Investment in adaptation measures like coastal defences and flood management can significantly reduce the risk and economic impacts of climate-related damages.</p>

Our scope

We have included different types of emissions sources in our baseline assessment for this plan. Some are associated with our own (direct) activities and others relate to the actions of others (indirect).

The Response Plan covers west Cheshire's emissions across Scope one, two and limited Scope three. Borough wide emissions are for Scope one and Scope two emissions only.

Scope one: Emissions directly owned or controlled by an organisation or consumer. This is typically the combustion of gas for heating or fuel use by vehicles in west Cheshire.

Scope two: Emissions linked to the consumption of electricity by an organisation or consumer. The electricity (and associated emissions) is generated outside of west Cheshire, but the user is in the borough, so the indirect emissions are attributed here.

Scope three: Indirect emissions relating to an organisation or consumer's activities, but that are outside of their control. This can include purchased goods, services, food, waste and travel outside of the borough. Measuring and calculating Scope three emissions is an extensive and complex process.

Our baseline

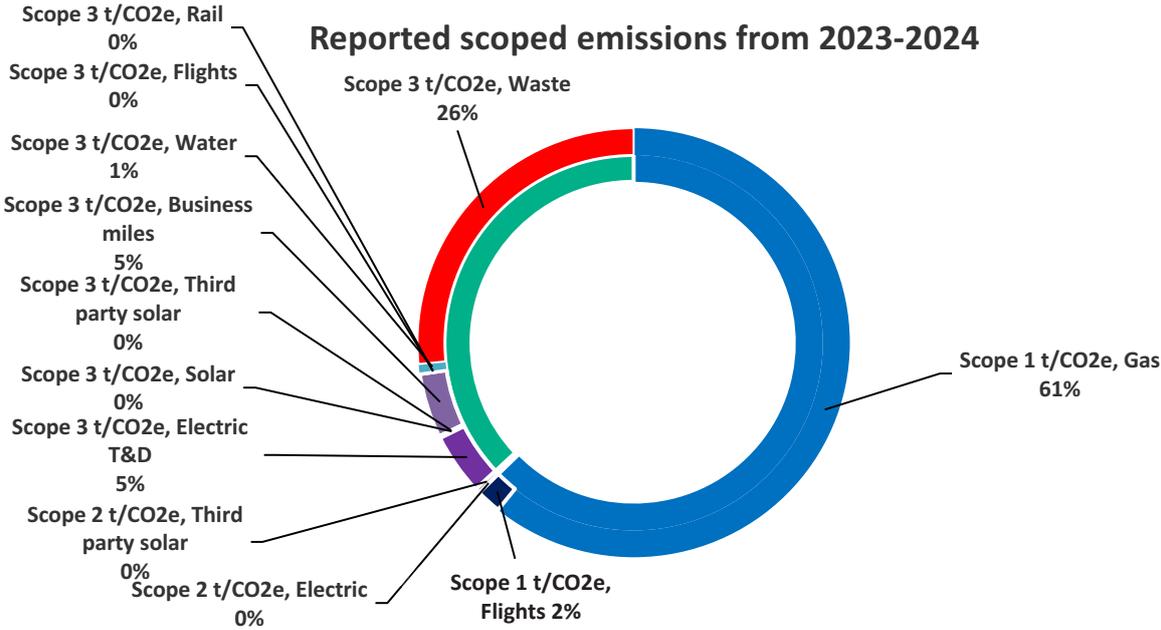
Cheshire West and Chester Council baseline

The last full year of emissions on an expanded scope reported by the Council was for financial year 2023-2024 with a total of 11,836.7 t/CO₂e. This represents a 77.1% reduction against the baseline year 2014-15.

The table and chart represent the derivative sources of emissions in the baseline year and show the largest source of emissions as scope 1; generated from the gas burnt on site consumed across the Council estate. This accounted for 60.8% to the total emissions measured. The remaining emissions are largely emissions associated with the collection and treatment of waste (26.6%), mileage (4.8%), from electricity consumption (4.6%).

The remaining 2.7% are residual emissions split up from a variety of sources.

Source	Scope 1 t/CO ₂ e	Scope 2 t/CO ₂ e	Scope 3 t/CO ₂ e	Total t/CO ₂ e	Percentage of Total
Gas	7,193.5			7,193.5	60.8%
Fleet			225.6	225.6	1.9%
Electric		0.0	547.5	547.5	4.6%
Owned Solar PV			14.3	14.3	0.1%
Third party Solar PV		41.4	3.6	45.0	0.4%
Mileage			572.0	572.0	4.8%
Rail			12.9	12.9	0.1%
Flights			1.2	1.2	0.0%
Water			74.7	74.7	0.6%
Waste			3,146.2	3,146.2	26.6%
Hotel			3.8	3.8	0.0%
Grand Total	7,193.5	41.4	4,601.8	11,836.7	100%



Our action towards net zero

In recent years, the borough has made significant progress towards achieving our aspirations – including:

- Borough-wide emissions have reduced from 4.3 million metric tons (mt) CO2 in 2018 to 3.2mt in 2022.
- More than £9m in grants have been secured from central Government to help deliver energy, housing retrofit and natural environment projects in Cheshire West and Chester.
- The Council has acted as the accountable body for the national trees for Climate Programme, which has delivered more trees than any other program in the UK in recent years.
- The Council has launched the Origin cluster, creating greater collaboration between industrial businesses in the Ellesmere Port Area.
- The Council has developed its Fuel Poverty Strategy, Land Action Plan, EV Strategy and Inclusive Economy Strategy.
- Cheshire West and Chester has become a Sustainable Food Place.
- The Council has trialled the development of Low Carbon Homes.
- The Council helps local people to access a variety of grants to retrofit their homes – such as the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Energy Company Obligation (ECO), Home Upgrade Grant and others.
- The Council has launched the Solar Together programme which has helped hundreds of people get competitively priced Solar panels and/or batteries on their homes.
- Setting up warm, welcoming spaces throughout the borough over recent winters, to help ensure everyone has access to a warm place outside their homes.
- Supporting community, crowd-funded projects via Climate Emergency Fund and Spacehive.

Our progress to net zero

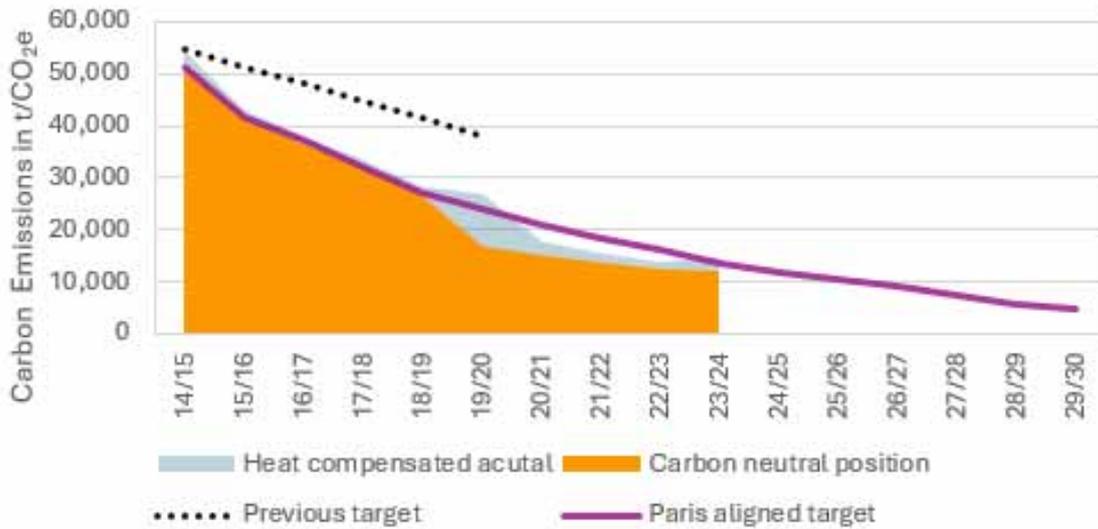
So far, the Council has achieved an 77.1% reduction in emissions across its estate and operations since 2014-15. We now need to continue progressing against our goals to meet our 2030 net zero target.

Carbon budget analysis

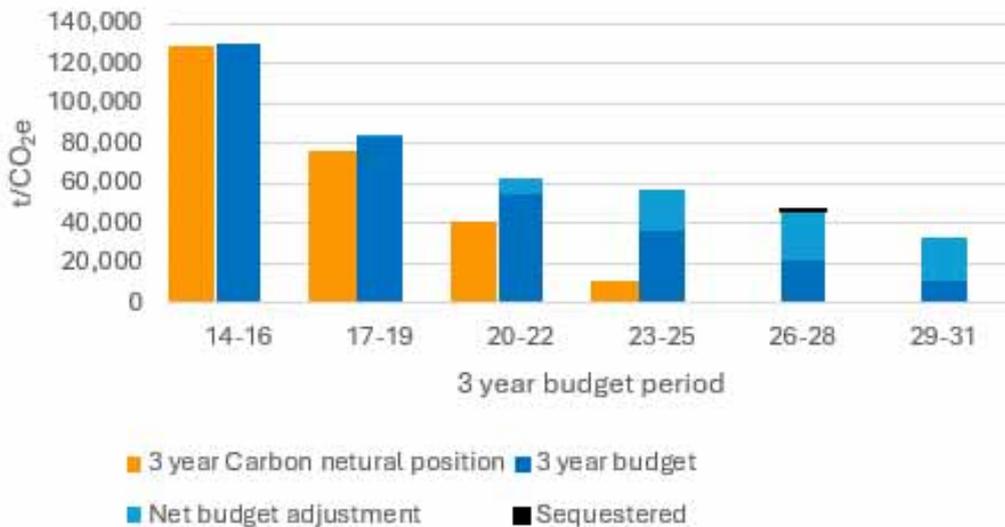
The chart and table show the progress the Council made in the last Carbon Management Plan. It also highlights the Council's performance trajectory against a Paris Agreement aligned target and the Council's own climate emergency declaration target.

As a minimum, the Council will need to continue to maintain an Actual position below the lines to successfully meet its commitments.

Cheshire West Carbon Emission Tracker



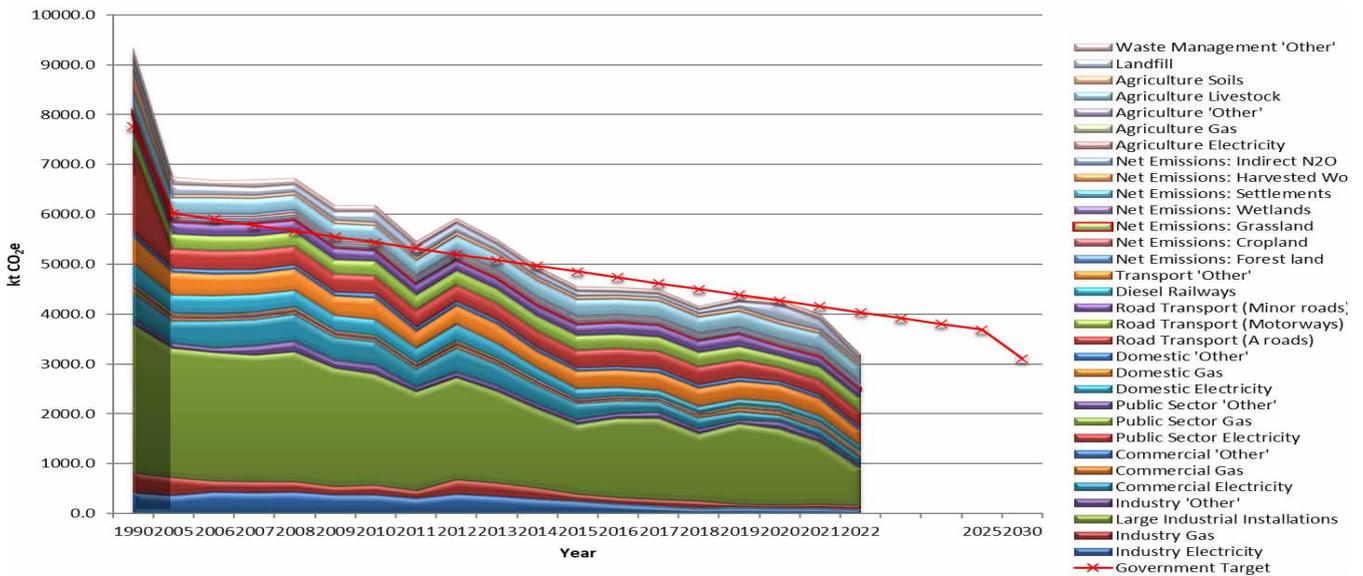
Cheshire West Scoped Carbon Budget t/CO₂e



Borough wide emissions

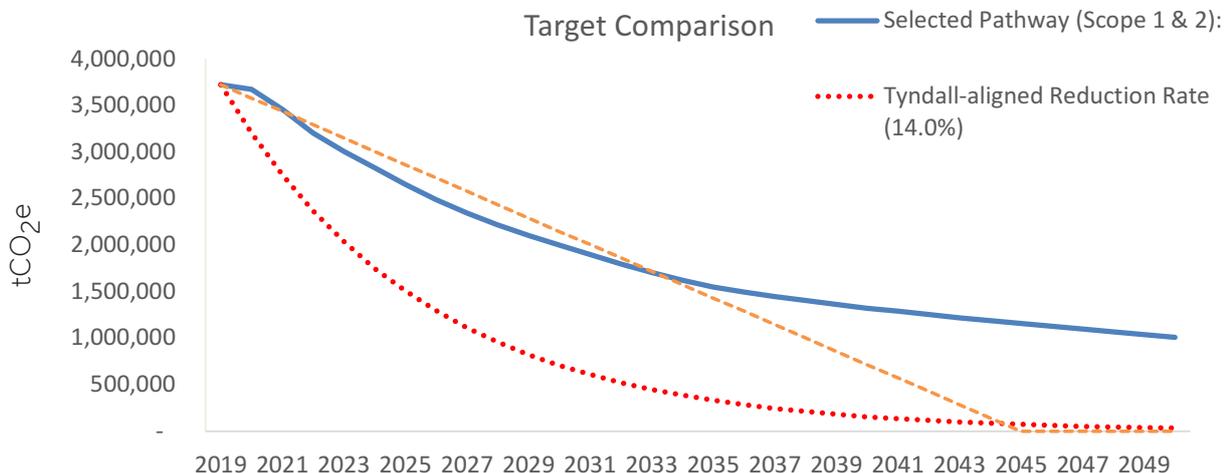
Emissions within west Cheshire borough have significantly decreased, falling from 4.3 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent greenhouse gases in 2019 to 3.2 million tons in 2022 following the declaration of a Climate Emergency. Industry remains the largest contributor, followed by transport, housing, and agriculture.

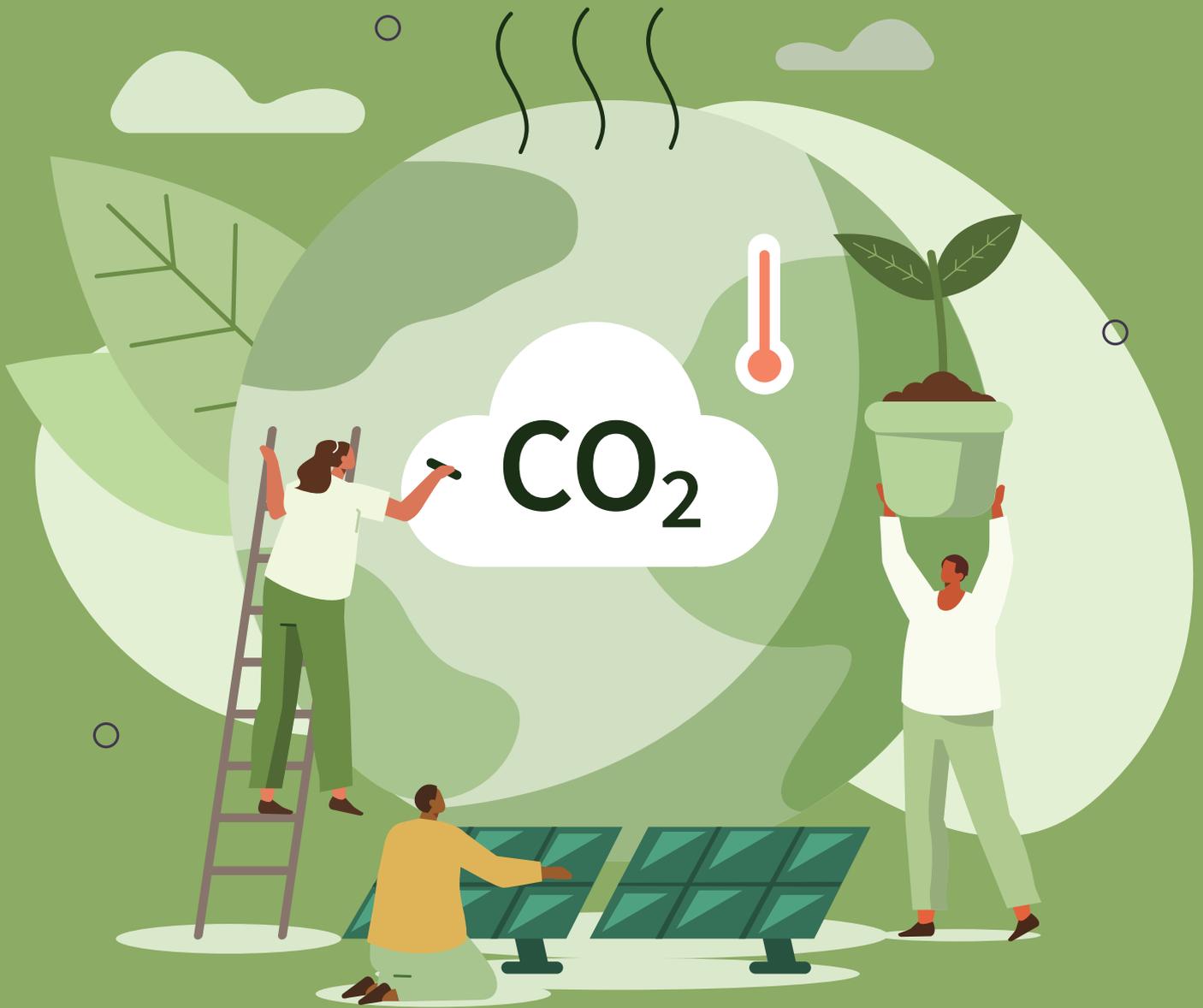
Cheshire West CO₂ Emissions



Borough baseline continued

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, and the Environmental Consultancy Anthesis, have jointly produced the Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emission Reduction (SCATTER) tool. This produces realistic and localised emissions pathway. Given west Cheshire's exceptionally high emissions, even in the most ambitious pathway (Level 4) the borough does not achieve net zero by 2045. Therefore further support is required from government to bring about the radical scale of change that is required.





Carbon management hierarchy

The Council's carbon management hierarchy is as follows:

Avoid

We will strive to make good decisions that do not lock in additional energy use or carbon emissions in the first instance, exploring alternatives that avoid these.

Reduce

We will strive to reduce our existing carbon emissions and energy use.

Substitute

We will strive to substitute carbon intensive processes or technologies with renewable or low carbon technologies, products or modes of behaviour.

Insetting

Where emissions have been avoided, reduced and substituted as far as feasibly possible, we will prioritise in-setting, whereby carbon is sequestered within the borough's boundaries via sustainable, evidence based solutions.

Offsetting

Where insetting opportunities have been maximised, if further carbon sequestration is required, we will review opportunities to off-set these emissions outside the borough's boundaries via sustainable, evidence based solutions.

Pillar 2: How we work together

Climate targets and policies

Paris Climate Agreement (2015) - International treaty to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees and preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre industrial levels		
UK Climate Change Act (amended 2019) - Set legal targets for the UK to achieve net zero emissions by 2050	Cheshire West and Chester Climate Emergency Declaration (2019) - Set targets for the Council to achieve net zero by 2030, and for the wider borough to achieve net zero by 2045	UN Human Rights Council (2021) - Recognised in 2021 that having a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is a human right.

The Council's role

An enabler of climate action

At the national level, local authorities bear direct responsibility for approximately 2% of total UK emissions. However, their influence extends much further, potentially impacting up to 40% of emissions through their activities and powers. In west Cheshire, the Council's emissions account for 0.4% of the broader borough's emissions.

Our operational approach has evolved: we now integrate climate considerations into every decision, explore opportunities to reduce emissions from our buildings and activities, and invest in low-carbon technologies and practices. Additionally, we keep the powers and levers at our disposal under constant review to drive climate action both within and beyond the borough.

This ongoing evaluation of our activities, functions, and services informs the proposed actions outlined in our Climate Emergency Response Plan for the borough. Through a network of interconnected council policies, we collectively promote environmental enhancements, aligning with the Greener Communities objectives of the borough plan.

Our principles:

Principle 1: A democratically led process

The Council is a democratically led organisation where Councillors work together to represent the views of people throughout the borough. This plan will be shaped by our Climate Taskforce, a cross-party, politically led committee.

We encourage residents to share their views with the Plan, and what they want to see within it, with their local Councillor, and with the Council during the engagement and consultation periods.

Principle 2: An evidence based process

The Council will use the best available data and evidence to inform the development of the borough's Climate Emergency Response Plan.

This will involve datasets published by national government, primarily by DESNZ (the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) and DEFRA (The Department for Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs).

In developing its first Climate Emergency Response Plan, the Council engaged Anthesis, an environmental consultancy, to produce a model for the borough's journey to net zero. This model, SCATTER (Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reduction) has now been open-sourced, via a partnership between Anthesis, Nottingham City Council and DESNZ. The Council will use this open source model to inform the development of its second Climate Plan.

In addition to national and local datasets, the Council recognises the immense value of data gathered from our residents and local stakeholders. The Council will consistently engage and co-produce this plan with our communities, ensuring it is a plan that all of west Cheshire can jointly own and buy into.



Principle 3: A co-produced plan

We launched an engagement process in Summer 2024.

The engagement was open from 26 July to 1 September 2024. Residents and stakeholders were invited to take part by visiting the online Climate Emergency Response Plan webpage where they could complete a survey, submit ideas on how to tackle climate and nature emergencies, and pin where climate action is currently taking place on a map.

People could also attend one of the five in-person drop-in sessions which were held in Northwich, Winsford, Ellesmere Port, Malpas and Chester. People were also able to respond to the engagement by email, letter or telephone. We also held three focus groups, two with members of the Council's Citizens Panel, and one with young people who attend Cheshire College South and West.

Communication methods to ensure that key stakeholders were made aware of the engagement and given the opportunity to have their say included emails to key stakeholder organisations, a Member Briefing, focus groups, communications via the Climate Newsletter which has more than 5000 subscribers, social media, a meeting with the Youth Senate and attendance at community meetings.

The engagement received a total of **474 responses**, comprising of **421 survey responses, 18 ideas board contributions, 33 people attending focus groups and drop-in sessions, and 2 emails received.**

Across all comments received in response to the engagement the following were identified by respondents as the most important:

The importance of a rapid transition to renewable energy for all forms of energy use.

That businesses should be supported to become more environmentally sustainable, such as via using renewable energy, suggestions on how to do this included monitoring their supply chains to use lower-carbon products and services, insulating their premises, and by improving the efficiency of their processes.

That the Council should promote energy efficiency in new build homes by reviewing the elements of the local planning framework relating to this, by lobbying government, and by setting a positive example.

The importance of conserving nature, by ensuring that nature is a factor in all decision making, by promoting biodiversity, and by planting and preserving trees (and other forms of natural carbon sinks).

The importance of planning, infrastructure and transport working together to create an environment where people can move around easily using low-carbon modes of travel, such as walking, cycling and public transport.

The results of these have been included in the specific sectoral plans, and informed the actions within the Plan. A summary report on the engagement phase has been included as Appendix 1.

A consultation will be launched in Winter 2024; the results of this consultation on the Draft Plan will further inform the Plan, prior to it being reviewed by the Council's Cabinet and full Council in 2025.

We commit to continuing to co-produce our climate emergency response in partnership with our communities over the lifetime of the plan, engaging regularly and meaningfully with communities, providing advice and support to ensure we can decarbonise together.

Principle 4: Creating a deliverable plan, using our finance and influence

The Council has set challenging targets – the difficulty of achieving net zero by 2045 in the context of an area which is in the top 10 emitters in the UK should not be underestimated. It is therefore essential that actions are deliverable to ensure that the strategies we propose can translate into real-world outcomes. Deliverable actions are those that are realistic, achievable, and backed by the necessary resources, including funding, technology, and community support. In doing so, we want to set realistic expectations and avoid overpromising, which can undermine public confidence and delay progress. Focusing on deliverability ensures that our initiatives lead to tangible environmental, social, and economic benefits, helping us meet our climate targets in a timely manner while building trust and accountability with stakeholders.

We cannot tackle climate change in isolation; we will work collaboratively with a wide range of partners to drive meaningful change. Climate change is a complex, global issue that requires coordinated efforts at all levels of society. By partnering with the residents, Government, businesses, community organisations, and academic institutions, we intend to leverage additional expertise, resources, and innovation.

We recognise that we do not have the direct financial resources to tackle this challenge alone. We have made significant climate investment in recent years, committing more than £10m of the Council's capital resources to a dedicated Climate Emergency fund; however this is a small fraction of what is required. In order to bridge the gap between that is available and what is required, we will explore sources of additional investment, such as via pension funds, new models of green finance, and via new Government funding sources.

Alignment with wider strategies

The Climate Emergency Response Plan sits within a wider range of strategies, all of which have interdependencies, inform and are informed by the Plan. A selection of these are represented below:



Pillar 3: Delivering on our plans

Delivering in Partnership

We recognise that tackling the climate emergency requires collaboration with a wide range of partners, stakeholders, and communities. These include organisations like Net Zero North West, Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington, health partners, community leaders and organisations, and all of our residents and communities. By working in partnership, we can develop more comprehensive strategies, share resources, and engage the wider community in efforts to reduce carbon emissions, protect biodiversity, and build a sustainable future for West Cheshire.

Examples of our key partners include:

- **Net Zero North West** is an initiative dedicated to driving the transition to a low-carbon economy in the North West, supporting the UK's goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. It fosters collaboration among businesses, local authorities, and academic institutions to decarbonise key industries, such as energy, chemicals, and manufacturing. Through large-scale energy projects focusing on renewable energy, hydrogen production, and carbon capture and storage (CCS), the initiative aims to significantly reduce emissions while supporting innovation and industrial growth.
- The initiative also plays a vital role in promoting economic development by attracting investment and creating green jobs, positioning the region as a leader in the green economy. By working closely with government bodies, Net Zero North West helps shape policies that support the transition to net zero. Its efforts contribute not only to regional prosperity but also to environmental sustainability, improving air quality and protecting natural ecosystems as part of the global fight against climate change
- **Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington** is a key partner organisation focused on promoting economic growth and development in the Cheshire and Warrington area. Its primary role is to support businesses, attract investment, and drive innovation across various sectors in the region. It has made delivering the transition to net zero by 2045 part of its core mission, with recent activity such as the development of a Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan.



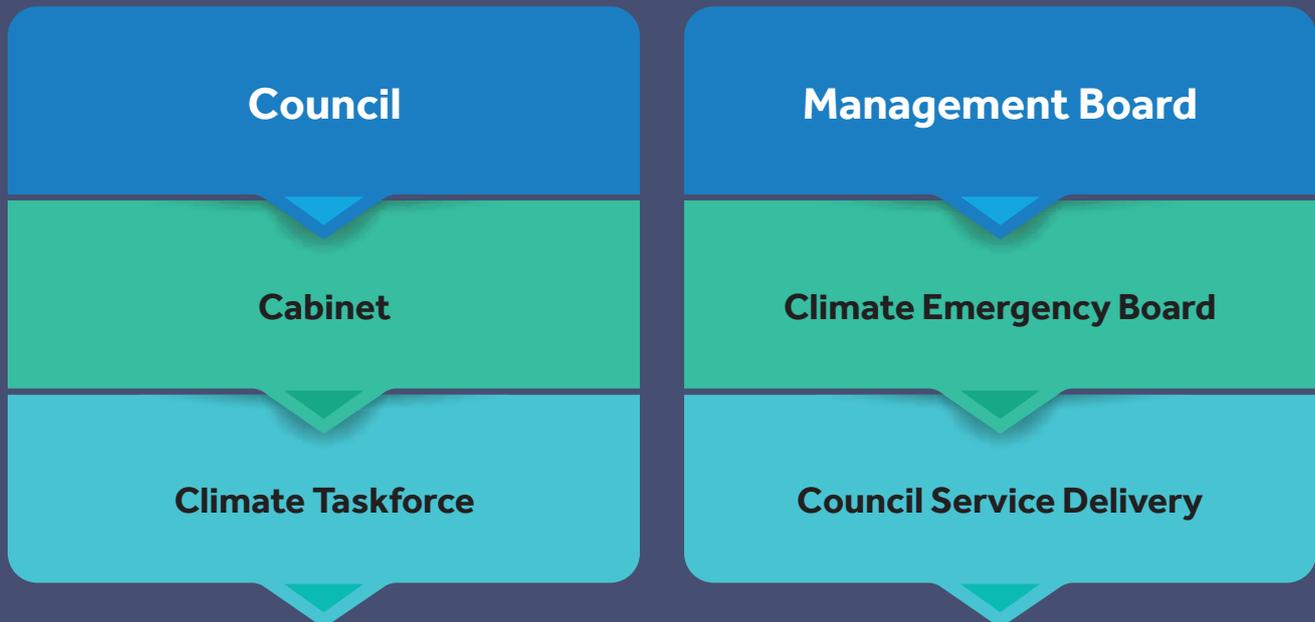
Governance and Performance

The implementation of the Climate Emergency Response Plan is a Council-wide responsibility. Within this context, the senior accountable officer for the programme is the Executive Director for Place and Growth. The Director of Transport, Highways and Climate is the lead Director for this priority. The Climate Change Strategy Manager is responsible for the co-ordination and monitoring of the plan, with Heads of Service throughout the Council responsible for the implementation of actions within their service areas.

The Leader of the Council, in her capacity as Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency, and the Climate Emergency Taskforce provide political direction and oversight to the Plan, shape the Plan's ongoing development and bring in expert knowledge as required to influence delivery.

The Plan will be monitored annually at Council, in-line with the first Climate Emergency Response Plan. Actions will be tracked on an annual basis, with performance metrics in the Council's Corporate Performance Management Framework used to track progress on decarbonisation across the borough.

The Council's governance process for the climate emergency response is outlined below, with political governance on the left, and officer governance on the right.



Decision Making Processes

The Council is reviewing options for implementing a decision-making aid, inspired by Kate Raworth's 'donut economics'. The decision wheel is represented below, and this has been adopted as an assessment method within the Council's capital governance process. Inclusion of these wide-ranging criteria, relating to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors, is intended to ensure that the Council takes account of these in decision making.



Embedding climate change awareness

The Council is committed to integrating training policies and systems for Climate Change policies to:

- our staff
- members
- communities

The strategy for climate change education within the Council includes the following:

Make messages clear and accessible through regular communications and training activities

Embed a behaviour within the Council of thinking sustainably, asking questions and challenging our current practices

Clearly communicate what the Council's aims are

Make it clear how staff and Members can support this individually and collectively

The Council has developed specific carbon and climate literacy training that is available to all. Alongside training and metrics, it is also important that we bring about behavioural change for how we view, plan and act on our current and up-coming challenges. This ethos is centred on empowering our staff to make positive and innovative contributions and decisions.

There will be further carbon literacy training which will further equip participants with skills and knowledge to understand the climate costs and impacts of everyday activities and the ability to reduce emissions on an individual and organisational basis.



Equality and diversity

The Council will ensure that it:

- identifies specific support required to support individuals relating to the effects of climate change, recognising that these often disproportionately affect vulnerable individuals and groups, exacerbating existing inequalities.
- recognises potential climate-linked inequalities linked to individual characteristics, including but not limited to age, race, religion, class, economic circumstances, gender, disability and sexual orientation.
- understands the mental and physical health effects of the climate crisis on our staff and communities.
- recognises that inclusion is the practice of providing everyone with equal access to opportunities and resource. Policies must be designed to be inclusive of different groups.
- continues to ensure that the Climate Taskforce includes representation from a diverse range of stakeholders, including community organisations, and promote ongoing engagement with groups such as the Poverty inspirers to engage with people from a diverse range of perspectives.

The Council will be mindful of the equality and diversity impacts in its response to issues such as:

- Energy and fuel poverty
- Food insecurity
- Improving job skills, education and retraining
- Clean air and reducing pollution
- Flood risk and recovery
- Educational risks and social risks
- Quality of public space, green space and assets
- Infrastructure
- Accessibility to key services/houses
- Affordability of public transport and access to active travel



Training and Skills

The Council has made a number of commitments with regards to Climate Change that have an impact not only on the required skills within the Council, but more broadly within the borough and wider industry. The Council is developing – in conjunction with the education providers and industry – training plans and policies to address the following:

- Engagement with industry and education providers to deliver an approach to support the workforce in transitioning to green skills;
- Recognising a specific challenge around retrofit, the Council is working with our local employer base (and education providers) to address retrofit services;
- Supporting Higher Education on innovation and developing new net zero products;
- Ongoing digital skills development with residents and businesses, and addressing the skills gap with regards to digital infrastructure;
- Training for business in readiness to adopt new, low carbon approaches to operations and delivery – including areas such as whether there are sufficient drivers/mechanics available to support that supply chain;
- Potential skills opportunities with regards to forestry, horticulture and conservation. This could include such mitigation activities such as flood management, peat restoration etc;

The Council is actively pursuing opportunities and funding to develop green skills in conjunction with academic institutions.

As part of the Council's response to the cost of living crisis, we have developed our own internal training on fuel poverty and signposting for support which has been rolled out across the Council. This is being further developed to extend to partners such as the NHS. We have also engaged with National Energy Action to deliver specific training to front line Council staff, NHS and voluntary sector on fuel poverty.

Tracking the borough's progress

In-line with the 2020-2024 Plan, the 2025 Plan will report annually to Council, with the first presentation of the 2025-2030 Plan including an update on the Council's progress on decarbonisation in 2024. To enable sufficient time to progress the delivery of actions in the plan prior to the first Annual Report, this will be developed for Winter 2026. This will be integrated with the annual refresh of the Plan, to streamline the reporting process and reduce duplication.

The Annual Report will monitor the delivery of the actions within the Plan. This framework will be supplemented by a range of measures within the Council's existing corporate performance management framework which relate to climate change, including:

- Domestic retrofit installations;
- New homes delivered;
- Recycling performance;
- Tree Planting;
- Greenhouse gas emissions from Council properties;
- EV charging infrastructure installations.

In recent years, new measures have been integrated into the existing "State of the Borough" annual reporting framework, tracking borough-wide carbon emission statistics aligned to the themes of the Plan, alongside a range of other factors.

This comprehensive performance framework will enable members and residents to hold the Council to account for under-performance, and enable us to celebrate good performance. Where a need to improve performance is identified, the Climate Change team work with the relevant service to seek to understand and resolve barriers to delivering better outcomes. Responsibility for the production of an annual report sits with the Climate Change Strategy Manager, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency and the Climate Emergency Taskforce.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/datasets-and-statistics/insight-and-intelligence/borough-and-ward-profiles/state-of-the-borough/environment>

Sector Action Plans

5 Energy

5.1 Sector Analysis:

The electricity grid in Cheshire West is currently highly constrained. Ageing infrastructure is inflexible and unable to cope with significant additional demand and increased levels of variable localised energy generation from renewables.

It is recognised the investment plans of the National Grid and the Local Distribution System Operator (DSO) have been focused on energy security rather than Net Zero and have been recommended to be brought forward by 7 years to address the gap with the Net Zero plans. Even with this, it is currently preventing the quick, large scale roll out of renewable generation connections to the scale required to decarbonise the grid. Significant investment will continue to be required to upgrade the network within the Network Energy Systems Operator (NESO) and Ofgem plans. This will be required to cope with the capacity and flexibility required to decarbonise the grid and the increase in electric production to support the shift from using fossil fuels at source to electrification of transport, heating and cooking. In the intervening period, “behind the meter” (direct from generator to consumer) generation and storage systems are being recommended.

To become carbon neutral, we must transition by optimising the energy system to a ‘smart’ grid network. A ‘smart’ grid is the vision for a modern, secure, electricity system. This requires a ‘whole system’ approach to transforming the energy system including the electrification of transport, heating and cooking, reducing electricity demand in buildings through energy conservation measures, the use of energy efficient appliances, increasing renewable energy generation, using hydrogen and storage technologies effectively (from Solar PV, wind etc) and embracing smart grid technologies.

In addition, we must eliminate the use of fossil fuels, where possible, and to centralise, capture and store the related emissions where avoidance is not possible during the transition to a predominantly electric and electrolytic ‘green’ hydrogen, ‘Net Zero’ energy system.

Change is also needed in the heating sector with a move away from traditional boilers emitting carbon dioxide at point of burning fossil fuels in homes and businesses.

Moves towards alternative forms of heat and development of heat networks where appropriate are needed, along with the large scale roll out of heat pumps where appropriate. The workforce and skills for this sector will need to be developed to meet the demand for the scale of change required.



5.2 Engagement

The Council ran an engagement exercise to enable the Council to understand the issues affecting the borough’s residents, businesses and visitors through online and in person surveys. The outputs of the survey element of this process for this sector are presented below. Further analysis from this engagement process is available in the full report on the Engagement process.

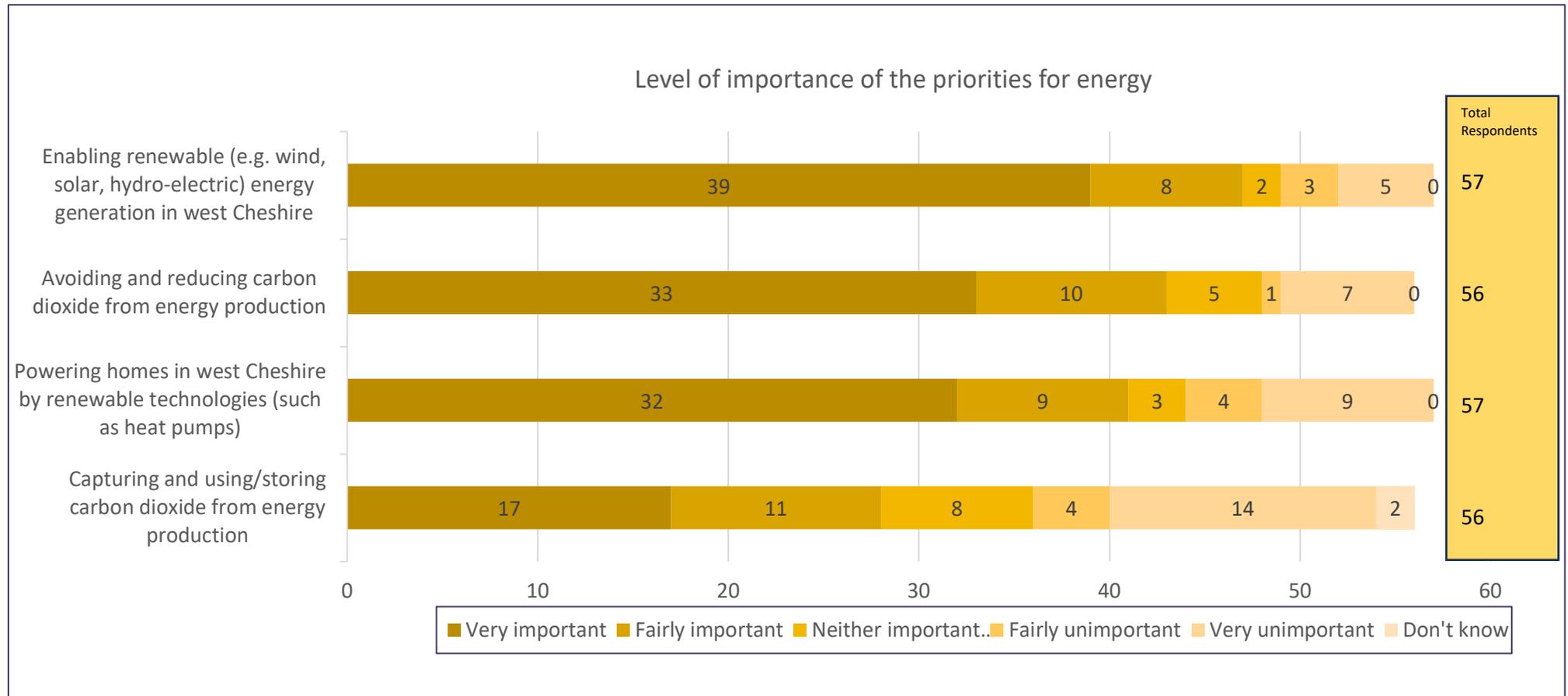


Figure 7: Energy Engagement Feedback¹

¹ Figure 7 presents the outputs of the engagement process related to the energy priority, and outlines the views people expressed on the priorities proposed.



5.3 Outcomes for the Borough by 2030, informed by engagement:

Ref.	ENERGY SECTOR OUTCOME	OUTCOME Delivered by?	TIMESCALE Short, Medium or Long Term	CO-BENEFITS
O1	Development of a Local Area Energy Plan for Cheshire West and Chester – as part of wider subregional roadmap to decarbonising the energy system in west Cheshire. whole systems approach (buildings, heat, transport and power generation) including future state where known.	Local Authorities, Delivery Partners, Businesses, Industry, Agriculture, SPEN and Partner Authorities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security
O2	Local Authority Energy Performance is smarter, more efficient and minimises and offsets the remaining use of fossil fuels for heating and transport by 2030 (Estate and Operations)	Local Authorities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Minimised running costs, stimulate market & supply chain, demonstrate real world examples, leading by example
O3	Local Authority energy demand is met through renewable energy by 2030. (Estate & Operations) Locally owned and operated energy is maximised where possible.	Local Authorities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security



O4	Low carbon and renewable energy generation, storage and schemes supporting smarter grid flexibility are delivered on Local Authority land and assets.	Local Authorities, DSO	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security
O5	A significant proportion of electricity demand across Cheshire West and Chester is met by locally generated and locally owned low carbon and renewable energy by 2030, moving towards 100% and then becoming a net exporter by 2050.	UK Government, LEP, DSOs, partners, Energy Hub, community energy groups, individuals, businesses	Medium & Long Term	Energy security, affordable energy for all, money spent on electricity stays within the Borough, community investment, green economy, growth and prosperity
O6	The electricity grid is smarter, more flexible and peak demand is met through low carbon and renewable energy, energy storage and improved demand side response.	UK Government, Ofgem, LEP, ESO, DSOs, Local Authorities, Energy Generators, Businesses, Individuals	Medium & Long Term	Unlocks huge economic potential. Local energy markets, affordable energy for all
O7	Heat demand within west Cheshire is reduced and decarbonised as far as possible.	UK Government, Local Authorities, Community Energy, Businesses, Individuals	Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security



O8	Energy infrastructure in west Cheshire is adapted and resilient to the projected impacts of Climate Change.	UK Government, LEP, MDA, National Grid, DSOs, Local Authorities.	Short, Medium & Long Term	Energy security/Reliability
O9	Where energy is generated from combustion process emissions are captured and stored	UK Government, Business, regulators	Short, Medium & Long Term	Green economy, Health and

5.4 The Council's commitments:

Ref	Action	Influence	Outcomes	Cost	Carbon
A1	Support Development of a Local Area Energy Plan for Cheshire West in partnership with the network operators, neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders.	Influence	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	Medium	Low
A2	Support mapping and analysis of low carbon and renewable energy resources and opportunities across the borough to an appropriate level of detail to support allocation of sites and identification of suitable areas through Local Plans.	Influence	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	Low	Low
A3	Support the enactment of planning policies and strategies to create a positive and proactive environment to enable renewable energy generation which supports the transition to a smart, flexible energy system.	Influence	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	Low	High
A4	Support and develop partnerships with community energy initiatives and explore how to support these organisations.	Influence	1,3,4,5,8	Low	Low



A5	Continue to purchase 100% certified traceable renewable energy tariffs with a medium to long term aim to purchase energy from local community energy schemes and renewable energy generators in the County.	Direct	2,3,4,5,8	Medium	High
A6	Design Local Authority new buildings and developments to maximise opportunities for renewables including potential for micro-grids and heat networks.	Direct	1,2,3,4,6,7,8	High	High
A7	Explore and implement opportunities for generating renewable energy and battery storage initiatives on Local Authority owned land.	Direct	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	High	High

5.5 Opportunities and benefits

1. Energy security
2. Reduce the Borough's dependency on imported fossil fuels.
3. Money spent on energy stays within the Borough.
4. Community energy investment
5. Community energy groups could be a vehicle for energy conservation and efficiency initiatives.
6. Green economy, growth and prosperity
7. Develop skills and training.
8. Stimulating the market and supply chain
9. Promote existing schemes such as Solar Together
10. Transition to a smart, flexible grid network.
11. Local energy markets.

5.6 Barriers and challenges

1. Grid capacity is a significant issue for Cheshire West.
2. Grid issues may be a barrier to connection in certain areas, e.g. high connection costs, costly grid reinforcements and long waiting times.
3. Engaging landowners.
4. Changing public perception and misconception.
5. Skills gap.



5.7 What the Government needs to do:

1. Deliver on the Outcomes of the Energy White Paper
2. Ensure Ofwat are regulating the NESO and DSO's and promoting early action in business plans.
3. Engage at the local level to ensure two-way communication over Local Area Energy Plans are set out and kept up to date for Multi stakeholder engagement.
4. Fund appropriate development to transition to a low carbon economy.

5.8 What our Partners can do:

1. Engage in the mapping of current a future energy need.
2. Follow advice in the Industry and Commercial section.
3. Engage in innovation towards low carbon development.
4. Promote best practice.
5. Engage with the ORIGIN or BID groups to keep up to date with and prompt action on transitioning to a carbon neutral borough.

5.9 What Residents can do:

1. Switch your electricity to a renewable generated energy tariff or renewably generated energy Smart tariff if you have a solar PV system, battery storage system or Electric Vehicle.
2. Ensure you home is healthy, efficient, and more affordable by:
 - a. Following advice in the Housing Sector section to insulate homes effectively.
 - b. Turning off lights and appliances at the wall when not use and use energy efficient bulbs, like LEDs, around your home.
 - c. Heating only the space you need to a comfortable level.
3. When you are buying electrical appliances, look to buy AA+ rated, energy efficient models.
4. Install solar panels and battery and/or a solar hot water system on your home to cut energy costs and carbon emissions.
5. Replace your gas cooker with an electric oven and/or induction hob.
6. Consider replacing your conventional fuel (gas, oil, coal or wood) heating system with electric heating such as an air source heat pump.
7. Cut down on washing and drying by only washing clothes, towels and bedding when it needs it.
8. Dry clothes outside where and when possible



5.10 Case Study – Bretton Hall Farm

Bretton Hall Farm is a community driven solar farm that crosses the boundary between Flintshire and Cheshire West and Chester and has received planning permission from both local authorities. The site covers 49 hectares of land currently used for sheep grazing, which will continue after construction. The site will retain its important role and capacity in alleviating flood risk in the local area while increasing biodiversity, with improved soil structure and management of natural resources and wildlife.

The solar farm will have a generation capacity of 30MW producing c.35million kWhs annually of low cost, clean and reliable power for local consumers enough power for up to 8,400 homes. It is estimated that this will lead to an overall significant community carbon saving of 6800 tonnes of CO₂ every year during the 40-year lifetime of the project. A battery installation will allow more flexible use of the power generated and assist in providing clean renewable energy when it is most required. The project will generate employment & training and opportunities for local companies for the work to building and maintain the solar farm. Community Share ownership - as the project will be owned by its membership, the construction finance will be raised and offer shares in the society to local investors and organisations. The development will then be owned by its members on a one member-one-vote basis. After a few years, the project will begin to generate a surplus. 100% of the profits generated will be distributed via a community benefit fund to other projects providing sustainable community benefits. Independent studies have demonstrated that community energy projects can deliver 12-13 times more social community benefit than equivalent commercial installations.

6 Industry and Commercial

6.1 Sector analysis:

Industry and businesses are crucial to the economy of Cheshire West but are responsible for over a 3rd(¹) of the greenhouse gases and related carbon dioxide emission releases from Cheshire West.

Consumer pressure, legislation and economic factors are increasingly encouraging businesses and the industrial sector to reduce their environmental impact, and there is an important role for the Local Authority under its Greener Communities mission along with economic development and business support partners to play in supporting the shift to a low carbon economy.

Under government backed plans, Cheshire West and Chester is a leading area for industrial decarbonisation within the UK. Clean growth is at the core of west Cheshire's plan to create opportunity for residents and businesses in a fair local economy.



Locally, we have significant strengths in professional, scientific and technical fields with a large industrial sector, presenting clear business opportunities in the transition to a clean growth, low carbon economy.

Low and zero carbon Hydrogen production are considered by the Government, informed by the independent Climate Change Committee² as being key to achieving ambitious carbon emissions reduction targets at a county, regional and national level. This support extends to carbon capture and storage technology, with the Climate Change Committee further noting in its 2024 Annual Report to Parliament³ that “Rapid initial deployment and scale-up of novel technologies including carbon capture and storage will also need to occur this decade”.

The investment leveraged by this process is likely to continue to act as catalyst for employment growth in construction and new technologies. A number of other key projects are also emerging, including the continued development of the Protos site in the ORIGIN area and the decarbonisation of the Winsford Industrial estate, providing space for green innovation.

2022 data from DESNZ shows that emissions from business and industry make up 25.6% of the annual carbon emissions for the UK (96.2 Mt CO₂e). Since the mid-2000s, the volume of emissions has declined by over 50% with steep falls in emissions from large industrial installations and commercial electricity generation. Within west Cheshire, emissions from Industry were % (965.3 kt CO₂e) and Commercial % (226.2 kt CO₂e), combined sector were 37.7% (1191.5 kt CO₂e) of total emissions ⁽¹⁾.

² [Hydrogen in a low-carbon economy - Climate Change Committee \(theccc.org.uk\)](https://www.theccc.org.uk)

³ [Progress in reducing emissions: 2024 Report to Parliament \(theccc.org.uk\)](https://www.theccc.org.uk)



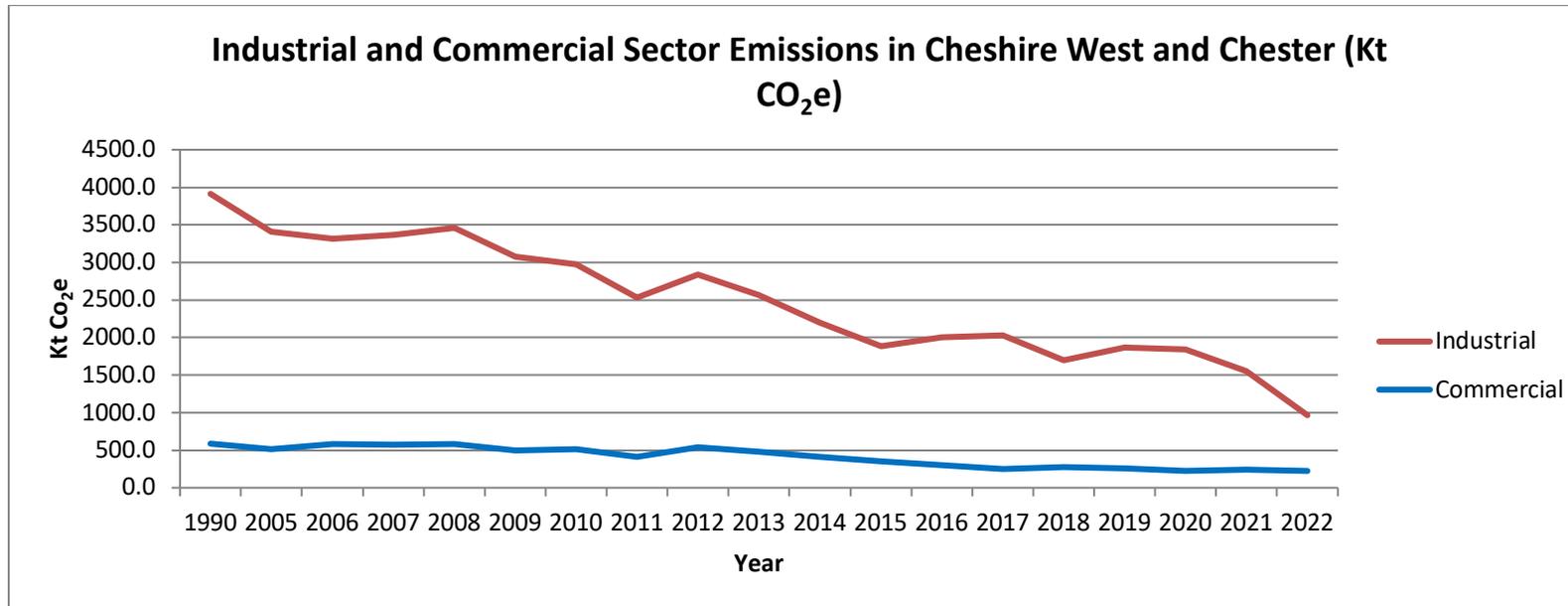


Figure 8: Cheshire West and Chester (kt CO₂e) Source: UK local authority & regional CO₂ emissions 2005-2022⁴

6.2 Engagement

The Council ran an engagement exercise to enable the Council to understand the issues affecting the borough's residents, businesses and visitors through online and in person surveys. The outputs of the survey element of this process for this sector are presented below. Further analysis from this engagement process is available in the full report on the Engagement process.

⁴ Figure 8 relates to industrial and commercial sector emissions within Cheshire West and Chester since 1990, and how these have changed over time. Source: [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics - GOV.UK](#)



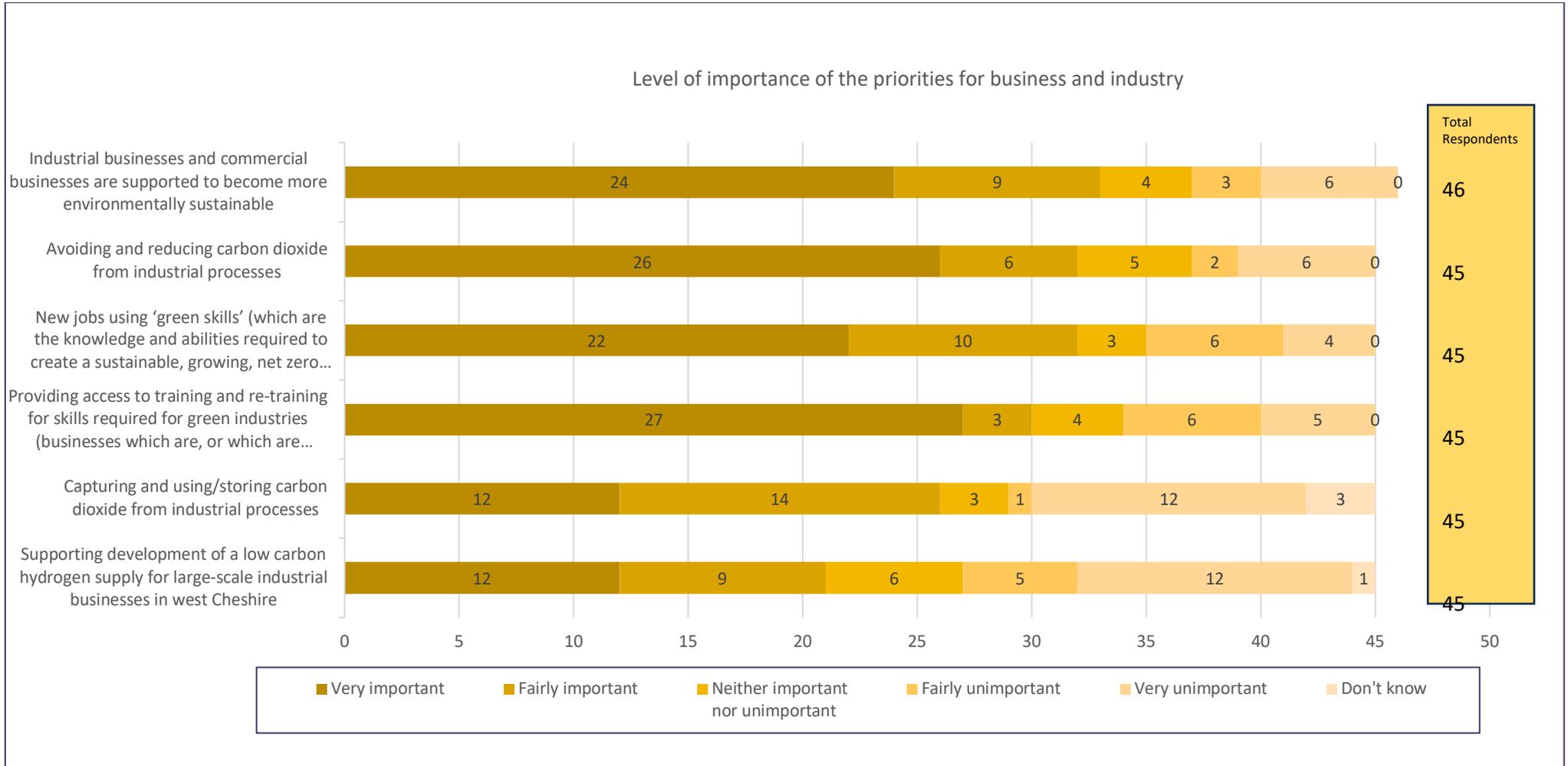


Figure 9: Industrial and Commercial Engagement Feedback⁵

⁵ Figure 9 presents the outputs of the engagement process related to the industrial and commercial sector, and outlines the views people expressed on the priorities proposed.



6.3 Outcomes for the Borough by 2030, informed by engagement:

Ref.	INDUSTRY AND COMMERCIAL SECTOR OUTCOME	OUTCOME Delivered by?	TIMESCALE Short, Medium or Long Term	CO-BENEFITS
O10	Cheshire West and the ORIGIN area provide a world leading example on industrial decarbonisation.	Local Authorities, Delivery Partners, Businesses, Industry, ESO, SPEN and Partner Authorities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security
O11	Businesses are energy efficient maximising green economy growth, local social value and GDP.	Local Authorities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Minimised running costs, stimulate market & supply chain, demonstrate real world examples, leading by example
O12	Industrial emissions are avoided, reduced, and mitigated to the fullest extent possible, and residual emissions captured.	Local Authorities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security
O13	Cheshire West develops a green skilled work force with Net Zero awareness embedded in organisations culture	Local Authorities, DSO	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security
O14	The electricity grid is fit for purpose through information provided by Industry and Commercial future plans.	UK Government, Ofgem, LEP, ESO, DSOs, Local Authorities, Energy Generators,	Medium & Long Term	Unlocks huge economic potential. Local energy markets, affordable energy for all



		Businesses, Individuals		
O15	Heat demand within west Cheshire is reduced and decarbonised as far as possible.	UK Government, Local Authorities, Community Energy, Businesses, Individuals	Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security
O16	Where energy generated from combustion process are minimised and any residual emissions are captured and stored	UK Government, Local Authority,	Short, Medium & Long Term	Green economy, Health and

6.4 The Council's commitments:

Ref	Action	Influence	Outcomes	Cost ⁶	Carbon
A8	Support and provide a local governance role to major industrial decarbonisation programmes ensuring they take account of a just transition and a sense of place.	Influence & Direct	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	Low	High
A9	Support the ORIGIN business forum ensuring Transition to Net Zero forms a core focus of the group.	Influence	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	Low	High

⁶ The proposed scale to determine L/M/H for cost and carbon are as follows. These are approximations and will be further refined as actions translate into specific projects:

- **Cost Scale (all partners and stakeholders):** Low - £0-£1m, Medium £1-10m, High - £10m+
- **Carbon Impact (borough-wide):** Low - 0-1000 TCO2e/annum, Medium 1000-10,000 TCO2e /annum, High - 10000+ TCO2e /annum



A10	Support the BID business forums ensuring Transition to Net Zero forms a core focus of the groups.	Influence	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	Low	High
A11	Support wider Industry and Businesses not engaged through funding mechanisms such as UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Innovate UK funding Streams.	Influence	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	Low	High
A12	Work with Public Sector Partners around the efficient use of key infrastructure.	Direct	2,3,5,6,7	Medium	Medium
A13	Advocate with political representatives the key strengths of the borough and its opportunities in the green growth and the low carbon economy.	Influence	1,3,4,5	Low	High
A14	Engage with Industry and education providers to provide a viable workforce for the current skills gap.	Influence	1,3,4,5,6	Low	High
A15	Support the role out of fast efficient Digital infrastructure to all areas of the borough.	Influence & Direct	5	Medium	High
A16	Continue to lead by example in decarbonisation of the Council's estates and services.	Influence & Direct	2,6,7	Medium	High

6.5 Opportunities and Benefits

1. Clean growth, jobs and skills;
2. Regional collaboration, aligned to Net Zero North West;
3. Carbon Reduction;
4. Business benefits aligned to low carbon products;



5. Sustainable tourism.

6.6 Barriers and Challenges

1. Grid capacity and infrastructure; The existing energy grid and distribution infrastructure requires considerable investment to adapt to future energy demands and emerging technologies.
2. Funding mechanisms; adequate funding to support and incentivise businesses to reduce emissions and their environmental impacts is essential.
3. Legislation; To meet the UK Government's carbon reduction commitments, new legislation and requirements will be placed upon businesses and residents. It is essential that they are supported to respond and adapt, to ensure continued growth and resilience.

6.7 What can the Government do?

1. Deliver on the outcomes of the Energy White Paper
2. Ensure regulation and legislation remain updated to support the transition to a low carbon economy
3. Engage at the local level to ensure two-way communication over Local Area Energy Plans are set out and kept up to date via stakeholder engagement.
4. Fund appropriate development to transition to a low carbon economy.
5. Ensure skills funding and programmes are fit to provide the required workforce.

6.8 What can our partners do?

1. Understand and report on your business emissions and environmental impact, including the supply chain.
2. Switch to a renewable energy supplier.
3. Engage with the businesses landlords/tenants to switch to a renewable energy supply if your company does not buy direct.
4. Access support available for Net Zero pathways.
5. Introduce energy efficiency measures to cut carbon and save money for your business. Install renewable energy generation at the business premises.
6. Plan to switch the premises heating system to a renewable alternative.
7. Switch the companies' fleet to electric or low carbon vehicles.
8. Develop a travel plan for your company and its staff based on a modal hierarchy, which reduces the need to travel as the highest priority and includes supporting your employees to work from home and use public transport.
9. Ensure your business has considered how it packages and disposes of waste.



10. Include carbon management and sustainability in the companies' procurement policy.
11. Ensure any land you own or manage promotes biodiversity.
12. Buy products and services from companies that have good 'green' credentials and a low carbon footprint.
13. Promote best practice.
14. Engage with the ORIGIN or BID groups to keep up to date with and prompt action on transitioning to a carbon neutral borough.

6.9 What can Residents do?

1. Support local businesses.
2. Support business with plans for transitioning to Net Zero.
3. Set up community energy companies.

7 Transport

7.1 Sector Analysis

Emissions from transport represent a significant and growing proportion of west Cheshire's emissions profile (24.6%), with on-road transport contributing to over 85% of these emissions. While the Council has varying levels of influence on different transport modes and networks within the borough, tackling transport emissions will be a priority in achieving our emissions goals. This section assesses our climate goals and ambitions for transport, including increased use of active and sustainable modes, reducing dependency on private cars, increasing uptake of EV and reducing emissions from domestic freight transport.

It will be important to prioritise a shift towards active and public transport and away from private car use over electrification of vehicles to make the most of the co-benefits associated with reduced car use including congestion, road safety and equity for all road users. However, this must be done in a way that is fair, choice-based and does not restrict access to opportunities and services. However, it is also important to recognise the inherent unfairness in aspects of our current transport system, along with the opportunities decarbonisation offers to address these issues.

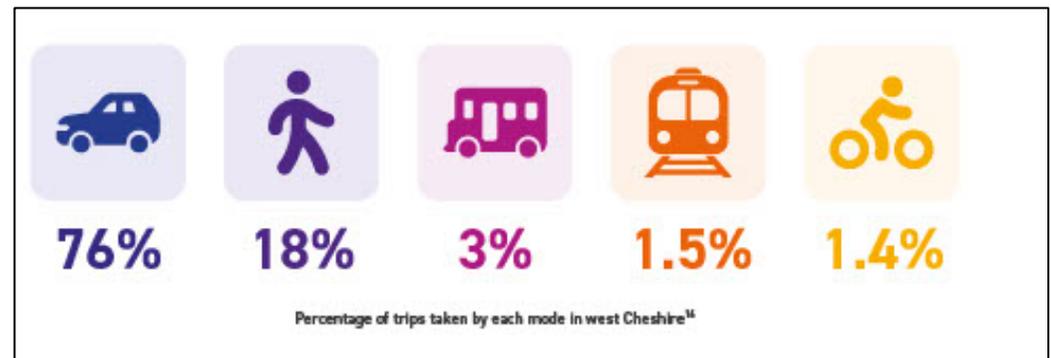


Figure 10: The percentage of trips taken by different modes of transport in west Cheshire.



The Council's approach to planning and influencing local transport is set out in our Local Transport Plan (currently under review). To become carbon neutral, we must transition to zero and low carbon modes of transport in a way that is fair to all our residents.

7.2 National Policy:

National transport policy has developed rapidly in recent years, with significant advancements across public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling, and road policy. This has been accompanied by new investment strategies across road and rail, and a drive to support transition to zero emission cars through the rapid expansions of local vehicle charging networks.

7.3 Local Context

Locally, transport is the second-largest contributor to climate change in the borough, accounting for over 20% of total domestic emissions in 2021. The transport sector has not matched the substantial emissions reductions seen in other parts of society, with a 36.6% increase in the contribution transport has made to overall emissions since 2005. The vast majority of emissions are directly generated by road-based trips, and over half are generated by cars and taxis

The transport needs of the borough are multiple and varied, and it is important to reflect urban and rural connectivity challenges. The emerging Local Transport Plan will adopt a tailored approach to these diverse needs.

7.4 Aspiration:

Our approach to the future of transport will prioritise investment in quality walking, wheeling and cycling networks, for personal transport and deliveries. This includes reallocation of road space where necessary and appropriate to create a coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive network for local trips.

Government has committed to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2035, with 80% of new car sales and 70% of new vans sold being zero emission at the tailpipe by 2030. However, refuelling infrastructure for zero emission vehicles across north-west England is currently limited and patchy. We will enable a comprehensive electric vehicle charging network across the borough to support this transition and will work with partners and government to support the transition for bus, rail and freight vehicles (including hydrogen transport where relevant). We will transition the Council's fleet to zero emission vehicles.



While forecasts of zero emission vehicle adoption are impressive, decarbonisation of vehicles alone will not be enough in to achieve our target of a net zero borough by 2045. Equally, electric vehicles still generate particulate pollution, contribute to traffic queues and are involved in road collisions. A significant reduction in car miles driven, particularly where there is only one person in the vehicle, will be essential to achieving our priorities.

Moreover, our emerging Local Transport Plan recognises that there is a need to rebuild the bus network as a mode of choice, and this is strongly reflected in engagement feedback. Quality public transport is key to a sustainable and fair transport system, providing access to jobs, learning, health and leisure for all, while supporting local businesses by making it easier to recruit staff and freeing up highway capacity for freight transport. The Council will seek to support the post-pandemic recovery of bus and rail patronage, and work with partners to develop the public transport where this meets our priorities, including improving integration with other modes.

We will need to provide better alternatives, as set out earlier, but we also need to avoid factors which make short, solo car trips the easiest option where other travel options are convenient and readily available. Any such measures should only be employed in a targeted and well-evidenced way, and focused on giving people a real choice of travel modes. Recent engagement exercises have underlined the importance of designing sustainable places and providing quality digital infrastructure as an alternative to travel. Schools, shops and other vital services should be conveniently located close to where people live, reducing the need to travel. We will align our approach to transport and spatial planning through coordination of our emerging Local Plan and emerging Local Transport Plan.

Similarly, digital connectivity is also changing the need to travel, particularly for work and shopping trips. Ensuring that everyone across the borough has the same access to digital opportunities (both in terms of infrastructure and skills) will complement our approach to transport planning.

7.5 What works?

Development of the borough's Local Transport Plan will be evidence-led, based on robust analysis of the potential impact which our plans will have in moving the borough towards our intended vision. This includes quantifying the carbon emissions from transport and the reductions which could be delivered through the Local Transport Plan programme. Development of the borough's Local Transport Plan will be evidence-led, based on robust analysis of the potential impact which our plans will have in moving the borough towards our intended vision. This includes quantifying the carbon emissions from transport and the reductions which could be delivered through the Local Transport Plan programme. Details of this programme will be set out separately, but for example, research has demonstrated that:

- Car sharing schemes can lead to a 6-16% reduction in car mileage among those using the service, and potential for significant reductions in levels of car ownership, reducing financial burdens on local families.
- Safe, convenient and direct routes for walking, wheeling and cycling can increase the number of people travelling by active modes, and reduce driving trips (particularly for urban commuting)



- Modern parking policies, integrated within a broader sustainable transport network, can deliver an 11-19% reduction in car use.
- If planned and delivered well, school travel planning initiatives can encourage a 5-27% shift from single occupancy car travel. These programmes are led by the school, college, or university, but often draw on support and resources from local authorities.
- A full double-decker bus can take as many as 75 car trips off the road.

7.6 Climate Emergency Response Plan Engagement: Outputs of residents' survey on Transport

The Council ran an engagement exercise to enable the Council to understand the issues affecting the borough's residents, businesses and visitors through online and in person surveys. The outputs of the survey element of this process for this sector are presented below. Further analysis from this engagement process is available in the full report on the Engagement process.



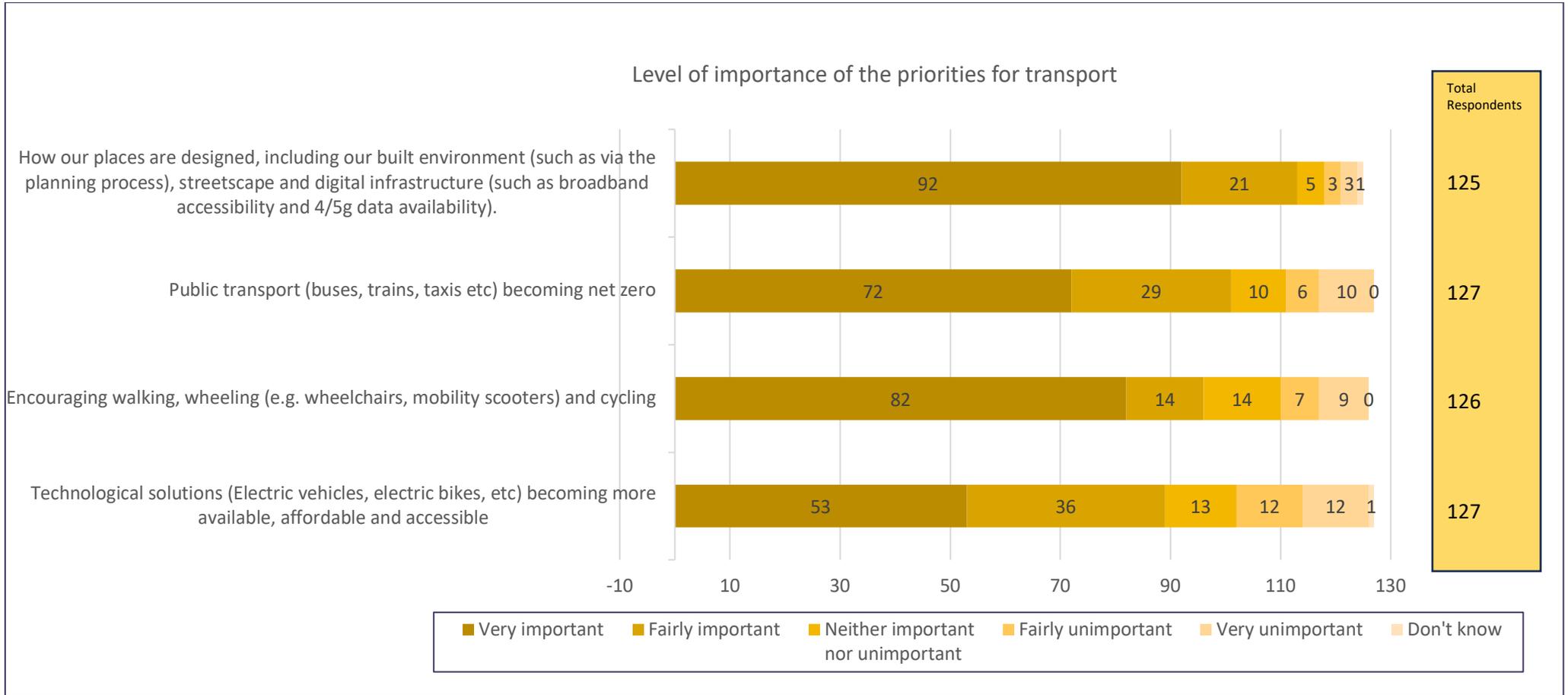


Figure 11: Transport Engagement Feedback⁷

⁷ Figure 11 presents the outputs of the engagement process related to the transport sector, and outlines the views people expressed on the priorities proposed.



7.7 Outcomes by 2030, Informed by Engagement

Ref.	TRANSPORT SECTOR OUTCOME	OUTCOME Delivered by?	TIMESCALE Short, Medium or Long Term	CO-BENEFITS
O17	Develop and adopt Cheshire West and Chester Local Transport Plan 4 – an action plan for transforming transport to create a fair, sustainable future transport system	Local Authorities	Short-Term	Fairer transport network, sustainable inclusive economy, healthier lifestyles, sustainable communities
O18	Reduced dependency on private car trips	UK Government, Local Authorities, Businesses, Operators, Enhanced Partnership, Communities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Reduced financial burden in owning and operating private vehicle
O19	Increased uptake of walking, wheeling and cycling modes	UK Government, Local Authorities, Businesses, Operators, Enhanced Partnership, Communities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Improved health outcomes, improved local economy
O20	Increased public transport patronage	UK Government, Local Authorities, Operators, Communities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Reduced congestion for road freight (economy)
O21	Improve climate resilience of local transport networks	UK Government, Local Authorities, Delivery Partners	Short, Medium & Long Term	Economic resilience
O22	Maximise transition of petrol and diesel vehicles to zero-emission fuels (electric and hydrogen)	UK Government, Local Authorities, Delivery Partners, Distribution Network Operators, Businesses, Individuals	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security



7.8 The Council's commitments

Ref	Action	Which outcome this supports	Influence	Cost	Carbon
A17	Develop the Cheshire West and Chester Local Transport Plan 4 and supporting implementation plan to set out a pathway to a zero-emission transport system in the borough, in partnership with the network operators, neighbouring authorities, local communities and key stakeholders.	1,2,3,4,5,6	Direct	Low	High
A18	Establish a commercial partnership to deliver a major expansion in the borough's public electric vehicle charging infrastructure network, focused on improving opportunities for communities without access to off-street parking and creating an EV charging network to suit all user needs.	1,2,4,5,6	Direct	Medium	High
A19	Continue to transition the council's fleet vehicles to zero emission technologies, and explore interoperable networks with other public sector institutions in the borough	1,2,6	Direct	Medium	Medium
A20	Develop and adopt a west Cheshire Design Code, ensuring that new developments and street retrofit schemes are built to encourage and enable sustainable forms of transport and are resilient to future climate impacts	1,2,3,4,5,6	Direct	Low	High
A21	Continue to deliver improved walking, wheeling and cycling networks across our urban communities, in line with the Council's adopted Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	1,2,3,5	Direct	Medium	High
A22	Continue to work with local bus operators to deliver our joint Bus Service Improvement Plan, which seeks to make bus the mode of choice through provision of quicker, more reliable and more accessible services, improving connectivity for all.	1,2,4,5	Direct/ Influence	Low	High
A23	Support local businesses in accessing funding and advice to promote transition to zero-emission fleets and support sustainable commuting.	1,2,3,4,5,6	Influence	Low	High
A24	Support local schools and educational establishments in promoting safe and sustainable travel choices for pupils, students and staff	1,2,3,4,5,6	Influence	Low	Medium
A25	Work with regional partners and forums to lobby for improved rail infrastructure and services for communities across the borough, including improved services, better facilities and greater multimodal connectivity	1,2, 3,4,5	Influence	High	High



8 Housing

8.1 Sector analysis

How and where we live has a large effect on the environment and our wellbeing. Our borough has a distinct make up of rural and more metropolitan areas which bring its own unique benefits and challenges.

From rising household energy costs to bringing our communities together in Welcoming Spaces, we all have an important role to play. Housing in the borough contributes to 15% of the carbon emissions, at 476.8ktCO₂e as of 2022. Approaching the challenge of how to decarbonise housing across the borough is complex.

Retrofitting houses requires substantial investment from local and national sources, upskilling of current workforce across the region to deliver housing improvements and balancing this against rising energy costs and risks of poverty.

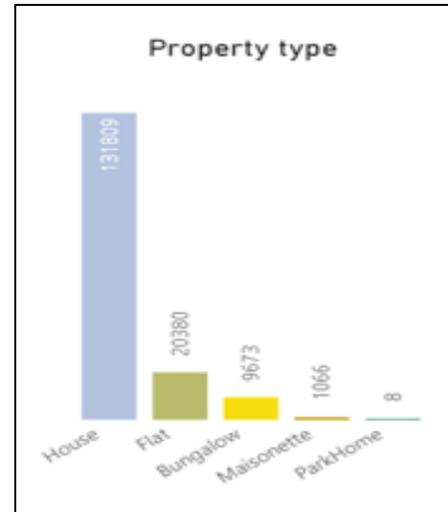
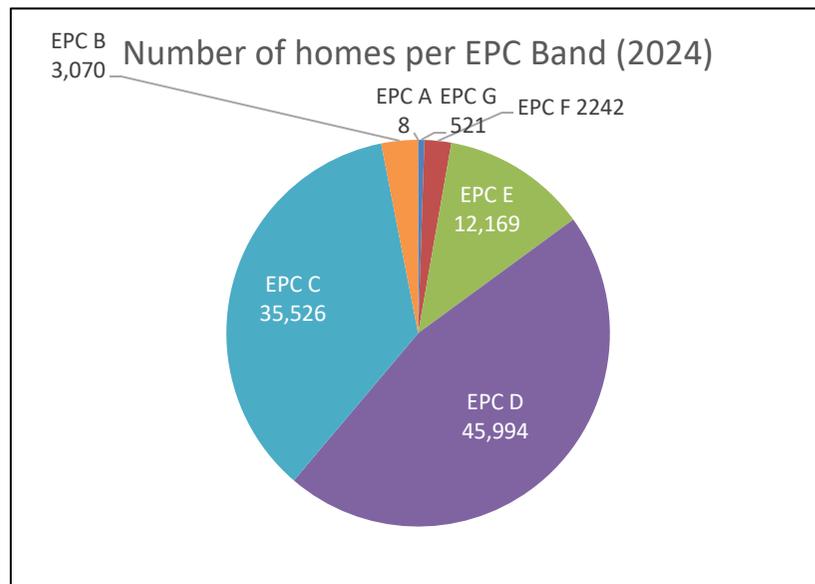


Figure 12; EPC banding of houses in Cheshire West borough (Source – Parity, 2024).

Figure 13; House types in Cheshire West borough (Source – Parity, 2024).



Decarbonising housing is directly linked to improve the physical and mental health of our communities. Energy efficient homes are an essential factor in preventing fuel poverty and tackling inequality. Excess winter deaths occur with three times the frequency in the coldest quarter of homes compared to the warmest quarter.

The investment needed to decarbonising houses – whether improving older houses, new build, rural or city centre dwellings, social housing or private – is costly. Improved construction methods and technologies are used which also requires different skills and training requirements nationally. Based on a report by Parity Projects, the cost to bring all houses within west Cheshire to Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) Band C is £473.6m, with the cost of achieving net zero on these properties standing at £3.5bn.

At a national and regional level, this is being addressed and significant progress has already been made. However the scale of investment required is still a substantial challenge. A number of grants have been made available nationally to help address the challenge, but far more investment is required at a national level.

8.2 Local context

Residential property makes up a substantial proportion of Cheshire West and Chester’s greenhouse gas emissions, at 728,000 tons carbon dioxide equivalent per year. This is the third largest element of the borough’s emissions, following industrial and commercial emissions and transport.

The Council takes a holistic approach to improving energy efficiency in homes across the borough. Whilst reducing carbon emissions, improving energy efficiency has far wider health and societal benefits for our communities. We work collaboratively with our communities and partners to try and achieve the best outcomes possible.

In addition, the Council has been successful in applying to funding bodies for delivery of energy efficiency schemes and works closely with affordable warmth practitioners within the borough signposting eligible residents into local schemes which install measures and provide energy efficiency advice and guidance.

8.3 Aspiration:

We are working with partners and communities across the region to improve energy efficiency in homes. Our plan for this is through:

- **Retrofitting homes in the borough**
- **Building ‘Net Zero’ homes in the borough, in collaboration with Partners**
- **Acting in a regulatory role to support net zero homes**



8.4 Retrofit

'Retrofitting' is an important strategy in decarbonising the borough, especially due to the significant portion of carbon emissions from domestic buildings. Retrofitting refers to the process of making additions or changes to existing buildings to improve their energy efficiency. This can include actions like enhancing insulation, upgrading heating systems and installing renewable energy sources.

Our vision is that by 2045 no homes will use fossil gas for heating or cooking and all grid electricity will be generated from clean, renewable sources. Many homes will generate their own power using renewable technologies and use will be substantially reduced due to improved efficiency.

8.5 Net Zero new build

The national and local push towards Net Zero is a strategic drive as part of the decarbonisation priorities. Net Zero in the context of new housing construction outlines an approach where buildings greenhouses gas emissions are balanced by reducing and offsetting an equivalent amount of these emissions.

This implies a state where the carbon dioxide equivalent emissions are zero. For developers and architects, this translates into using materials and designing structures that are energy efficient and considering renewable energy sources right from the planning phase. It also encompasses taking accountability for the building's entire life cycle, including the embodied carbon within its materials.

In Cheshire West, the vision for net zero new housing involves creating a built environment that is not only carbon neutral but also promotes a high quality of life for its residents with clean air, thermal comfort and biodiversity. Achieving this goal demands a holistic approach where building design, urban planning and innovative technologies come together to drive down emissions whilst ensuring the affordability and liveability of homes.

The environmental benefits of net zero are indisputable but one of the most significant challenges is ensuring that these homes are affordable for our residents. There is also an education and awareness challenge in working with builders and consumers of the long-term cost benefits of net zero homes.

8.6 Residents; owner occupiers and renters

Communities play an integral part in how the borough needs to respond to housing decarbonisation. Each action contributes to the broader goal of decarbonising the housing sector. The cost of decarbonising houses brings a large challenge locally and nationally. Whilst a number of government grants are available to help support the wider challenge, these alone will not address the scale of the challenge.



We need residents to play their part in the housing decarbonisation challenge. This involves:

- Accessing information and case studies provided by the Council to see the benefits that housing decarbonisation can bring
- Engaging with the Council about potential opportunities to improve and accelerate how we address the decarbonisation challenge. This includes opportunities for the Council to better engage with our diverse range of Landlords in the community.

8.7 Industry; developers and social housing providers

Social housing providers and housing developers play an integral part in how the borough needs to respond to housing decarbonisation. The way that we build new houses and cater to existing residents is integral to responding to the housing decarbonisation challenge. We need to work together to bring innovative solutions to create long-lasting, sustainable housing.

We need developers and social housing providers to play their part in the housing decarbonisation challenge. This involves:

- Working with the council to find affordable and sustainable housing solutions
- Engaging with the residents and the council to respond to planning and construction challenges to provide the best possible outcomes for residents
- Supporting job creation within the decarbonisation industry
- Commit to investing in training of their staff and students in the borough
- Commit to local supply chain where reasonably possible
- Social value commitment as part of awarded contracts



8.8 Climate Emergency Response Plan Engagement: Outputs of residents' survey on housing

The Council ran an engagement exercise to enable the Council to understand the issues affecting the borough's residents, businesses and visitors through online and in person surveys. The outputs of the survey element of this process for this sector are presented below. Further analysis from this engagement process is available in the full report on the Engagement process.

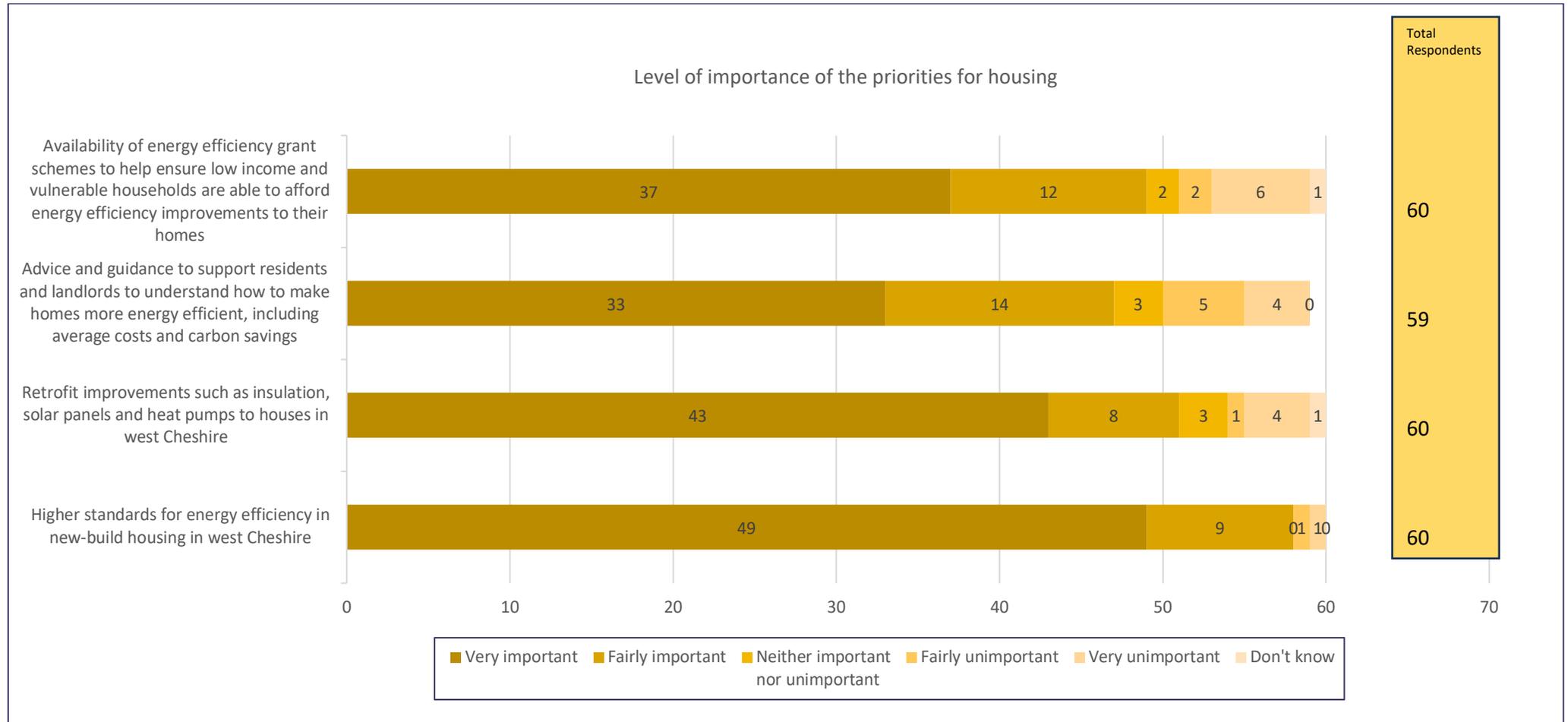


Figure 14: Housing Engagement Feedback⁸

8.9 Outcomes by 2030, informed by engagement

Ref	HOUSING SECTOR OUTCOME	OUTCOME Delivered by?	TIMESCALE Short, Medium or Long Term	CO-BENEFITS
O23	Effective systems and educational institutions are confident in delivering retrofit skills to meet the challenge across the region.	Local Authorities, Delivery Partners, Businesses, Industry, and Partner Authorities	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, decrease unemployment, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security
O24	All homes in the borough will be EPC band C by 2030.	Local Authorities, housing providers	Short, Medium & Long Term	Health and wellbeing, readiness for additional retrofit measures
O25	Houses within west Cheshire are using more sustainable technologies such as solar panels to reduce energy bills and enable wider efficiencies. This would be achieved through central government funding and collective purchasing power.	Local Authorities, Central Government, Delivery Partners, Housing Providers	Short, Medium & Long Term	Stimulate the market, green economy, growth and prosperity, energy security
O26	Fuel poverty is reduced in the borough through working with our communities, action the Council's Fuel Poverty strategy and working holistically as a Council and with our Partners.	Local Authorities, Central Government,	Short, Medium & Long Term	Health and wellbeing, energy security, growth and prosperity

⁸ Figure 14 presents the outputs of the engagement process related to the housing sector, and outlines the views people expressed on the priorities proposed.



		Delivery Partners, Housing Providers		
O27	'Welcoming Spaces' will continue to be available for our communities during colder months.	Local Authorities, Delivery Partners, Businesses, Industry, and Partners	Short, Medium & Long Term	Health and wellbeing, energy security, growth and prosperity

8.10 The Council's commitments

Ref	Action	Outcome Linked to	Influence	Cost	Carbon
A26	Develop and contribute to communication and education programmes for our communities.	1,2,3,4,5	Influence	Low	TBC
A27	Help to enable smart meters to be installed in void properties for social housing.	1,2,4	Influence	Low	TBC
A28	Enact planning policies and strategies to create a positive and proactive environment to enable 'net zero' technologies in new build houses.	1	Direct	Low	High
A29	Work with local industries and suppliers to develop standard retrofitting solutions for common building archetypes including those that are 'hard to-treat' (e.g Park Homes). Homes will be built to industry standards, such as Future Homes Standard 2025.	1,2,3,4	Influence	Medium	Medium
A30	Work with local construction industries and business to encourage them to become accredited to environmental surveying, installation and maintenance standards such as ISO14001, Trustmark, PAS2035 etc	1,2,3	Influence	Low	Medium
A31	Work with schools and colleges to develop education programmes around developing skills for installation of new heating technologies.	1	Influence	Low	High



A32	Work with financial partners and regional local authority to scope out mechanisms to enable affordable renewable energy and efficient products for housing.	1,2,3,4	Direct	Low	High
A33	Work within the organisation to prioritise additional areas of the property portfolio for retrofitting such as adult social care homes.	1,2,3,4	Direct	Medium	Medium
A34	Explore and act on suitable funding opportunities in relation to sustainable housing and working with the 'willing to pay' market.	1,2,3,4,5	Direct	Low	High

8.11 What our partners can do:

1. Take action within their own areas of influence.
2. Review decarbonisation opportunities for their own housing stock.
3. Provide guidance and expertise.
4. Provide the right level capital of investment.

8.12 What our residents can do

1. Co-produce the plan through the engagement and consultation processes.
2. Consider switching to electricity for cooking
3. Switch provider to one that provides sustainable energy
4. Ensure your home has LED lighting and draught-proofing.
5. Upgrade your home insulation – loft, cavity wall and draught.
6. Turn down your heating where you can, while remaining comfortable.
7. Think about whole-house retrofit, particularly if carrying out renovations.
8. Review government grant opportunities to improve homes.
9. Consider opportunities for community-led housebuilding

8.13 Case Study

Funding for housing retrofit to support the Council's vision and ambitions is a significant challenge. The Council has been successful in applying for various rounds of national funding for housing retrofit in the borough which helps to support our decarbonisation ambitions.



In 2022, the Council and Sanctuary Housing received a grant of £596,000 from DESNZ (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) to carry out retrofit improvements to housing stock in Blacon, Chester. Working in partnership (with additional funding from Sanctuary) the scheme delivered retrofit improvements to 123 homes in Blacon with various measures. The works included Solar PV, air source heat pumps, external wall insulation.

The scheme was praised by DESNZ for the way that the partners worked with the community to encourage and support residents to have retrofit measures in their homes. Residents attended community sessions held by the contractors managing the works and additional quality assurance checks on site gave them confidence in the works. The contractors tried to be as quick and efficient as possible in the homes and received praise from residents for their quick response and professional attitude.

9 Land Use, Adaptation and Climate Repair

9.1 Land Use and Climate Repair

This section primarily focuses on agriculture at this makes up the bulk of emissions from land use within Cheshire West and Chester. It integrates and forms part of a network of strategies with the Land Action Plan, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (in development), and the Council's existing flood maps and planning. Emissions within Cheshire West and Chester from agriculture stand at 448ktCO₂e in 2022.

Cheshire is a county renowned for dairy production, because of its temperate climate which supports grass to grow well, is home to some of the country's leading dairy farms and dairy industries. Across the Northwest region, Cheshire is the only county that has more cattle than sheep, the agricultural land quality is good with 77% of land being Grade 3 and above. Land quality decreases from west to east as indicated by sheep numbers which increase as one moves eastward.

In historic county of Cheshire, more than 7,000 people are employed on 2,804 farm holdings covering nearly 160,000 hectares of land and 41% of the land mass in Cheshire West and Chester borough. Cheshire is home to 229,000 cattle, a quarter of the Northwest region's herd. The environment in Cheshire is suitable to grassland growing, and historically, dairy production has flourished.

In response to the challenges arising from agriculture and land use, Cheshire West and Chester Council adopted a Land Action Plan for climate and nature emergencies in 2022, to support the delivery of the Climate Emergency Response Plan's (CERP) land use, adaptation, and climate repair theme which addresses emissions from agriculture and land use.



Land use and land use change and forestry (LULUCF) include farming and food production, are sources of emissions and also present opportunities for sequestration through improved soil carbon management, low carbon farming, reduced tillage practices, anaerobic digestion, woodland creation and habitat creation including hedgerows.

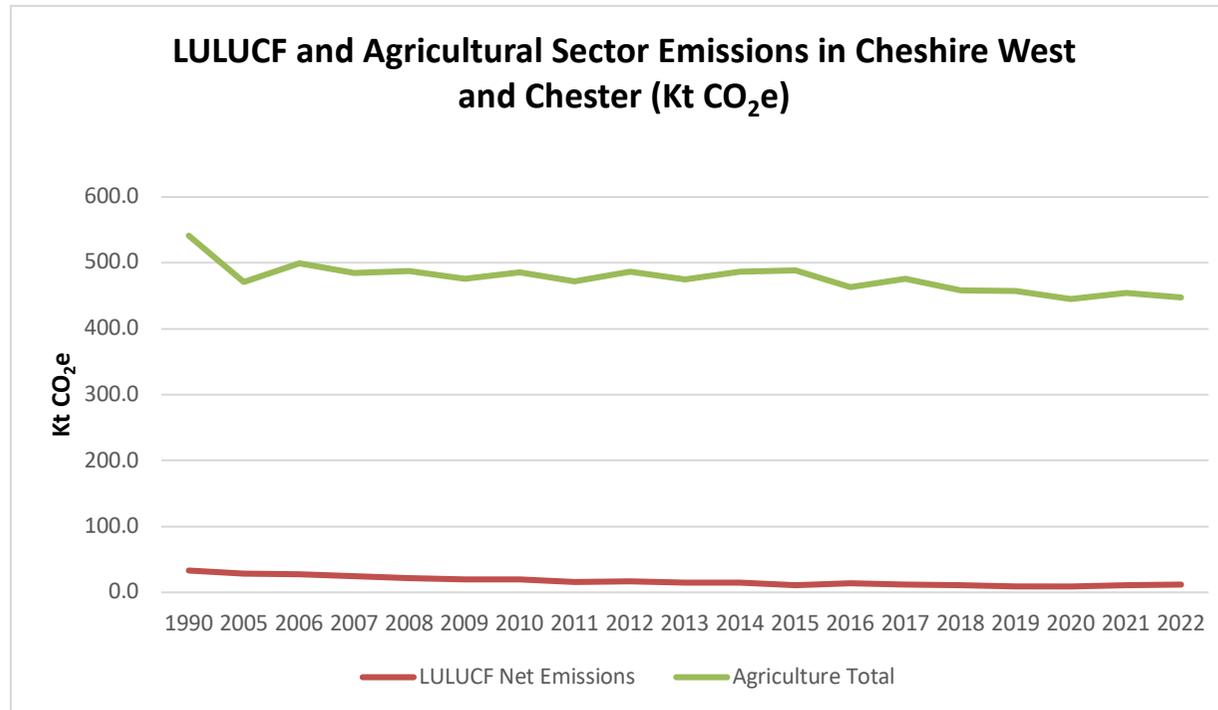


Figure 16: Emissions from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry, and Agriculture, in Cheshire West and Chester between 1990 and 2022⁹

9.2 Adaptation

Adaptation is a critical element of the Council's approach to climate preparedness. It refers to the process of making our communities and places more resilient to the effects of climate change that are already apparent. The Council has a range of mechanisms to manage these pre-existing risks, which take account of climate

⁹ Figure 16 the emissions over time from the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry Sector, and the Agriculture sector.



change, including our Local Plan, which includes climate projections, and our Flood Risk Management strategies¹⁰. The Council's approach to a range of land related considerations, are informed by the Land Action Plan¹¹, which this Plan sits alongside.

9.3 Nature

The Council is the accountable body for the production of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Cheshire and Warrington¹². The Council has a range of inter-linked policies and priorities intended to protect nature, which are kept regularly updated on the Council's Biodiversity¹³ webpage. As this Plan has been produced in advance of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which has a primary focus on nature recovery, it would be premature to make new commitments in this Plan related to nature until the co-production, engagement and consultation process for the LNRS has been concluded.

¹⁰ [Flood risk management | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

¹¹ Land Action Plan: <https://participatenow.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/12608/widgets/35875/documents/24840>

¹² [Gathering your views for a nature-friendly Cheshire and Warrington | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

¹³ [Biodiversity | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)



9.4 Climate Emergency Response Plan Engagement: Outputs of residents' survey on land use adaptation & repair

The Council ran an engagement exercise to enable the Council to understand the issues affecting the borough's residents, businesses and visitors through online and in person surveys. The outputs of the survey element of this process for this sector are presented below. Further analysis from this engagement process is available in the full report on the Engagement process.

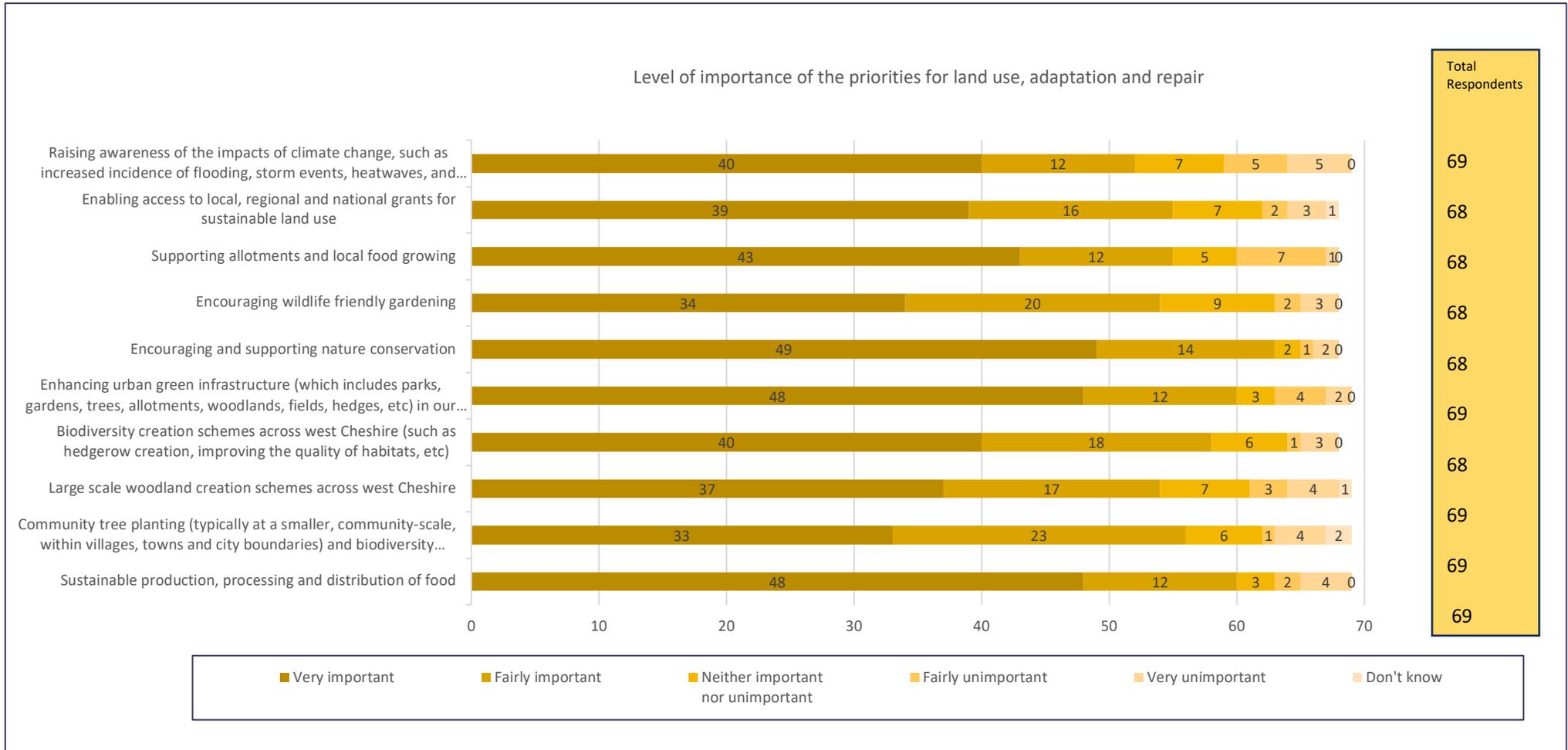


Figure 17: Land Use, Adaptation and Repair Engagement Feedback¹⁴

9.5 Outcomes by 2030, informed by engagement

Ref	LAND USE OUTCOMES	OUTCOME Delivered by?	TIMESCALE Short, medium or long term	CO-BENEFITS
O28	Creating a decarbonised local economy and Net Zero farming & land use	Cheshire West and Chester Council, farmers, businesses, partners, residents.	Short, medium, long-term	Thriving biodiversity and improved natural capital, route to NetZero
O29	Reducing nutrient and chemical pollution & thriving aquatic life and improved water quality	Businesses, farmers, utilities, Cheshire West and Chester Council, partners, residents.	Short, medium long-term	Reduced emissions and nutrient pollution. Improve circular economy, waste management & nutrient cycling, attain resilient farming system less dependence on chemical fertiliser
O30	Regenerated and improved soil health – reduced erosion	Farmers and land managers	Short, medium long-term	Positive behavioural changes and practice adoption, reduced flooding
O31	Recovering species and increasing biodiversity	Cheshire West and Chester Council, farmers,	Short and medium term	Nature recovery, climate resilience,

¹⁴ Figure 17 presents the outputs of the engagement process related to the Land Use, Adaptation and Repair sector, and outlines the views people expressed on the priorities proposed.



		businesses, partners, residents.		health benefits, environmental justice
O32	Reduced flooding events and impacts	Cheshire West and Chester Council, communities, land managers	Short and medium term	Reduced financial impact, enhanced health and wellbeing
O33	Greener and cooler urban environments	Cheshire West and Chester Council, partners, Mersey Forest, businesses and housebuilders, residents and businesses.	Short, medium long-term	Enhanced health and wellbeing, climate resilience

9.6 The Council's commitments

Ref	Land use Actions	Influence	Linked to goal	Cost	Carbon
A35	Establish, maintain, and manage woodlands and other habitats on Council farms for carbon sequestration and biodiversity net gain (BNG)	Direct	1,2,3,4,5,6	Medium	Medium
A36	Support the development and implementation of borough-wide of anaerobic digestion scheme, majority of dairy herds are carbon neutral and improve air quality (AD), livestock waste recycled to diffuse water pollution.	Influence	1,2,3,4,	High	High



A37	Promote low carbon/regenerative/sustainable/agroecological farming methods	Influence	1,2,3,4,5	Medium	High
A38	Support allotments and local food growing	Direct	1,2,3,4	Low	TBC
A39	Support adoption and implementation ELMs policies including the sustainable farming incentive	Influence	1,2,3,4,5,6	High	High
A40	Develop implement the Local Plan strategy and policies and manage development within the borough to attain Net Zero, install sustainable urban drainage SuDS to reduce flooding events in vulnerable areas and during high rainfall periods	Direct	1,5	Low	High
A41	Implement & coordinate the Cheshire wide local nature recovery strategy (LNRS), including peat management & restoration.	Direct	1,2,3,4,5,6	Low	High
A42	Enhance urban green infrastructure (which includes parks, gardens, trees, allotments, woodlands, fields, hedges, wildlife friendly and permeable gardens in our city, towns and villages	Influence	1,2,3,4,5,6	Low	Low
A43	Manage river catchments including natural flood management and riparian woodlands, cover cropping to reduce flooding, point source pollution events and improve water quality and infiltration rates for future abstraction	Influence	1,2,3,4,5,6	Medium	Medium
A44	Enabling access to local, regional and national grants for sustainable land use	Influence	1,2,3,4,5,6	Low	Medium



9.7 Barriers and Challenges to emissions reduction Land Use and Agriculture

1. Lack of a multifunctional national land use framework, a process that supports better, more sustainable decisions about land, by all those who need to make them, including local and national government, businesses and communities
2. Lack of funding for and lack of viability of on-farm anaerobic digestion projects
3. Lack of clarity of government policy on ELMs and funding

9.8 What Government needs to do:

1. Provide clarity on number of policies areas including ELMs, UK agriculture and food security and food system, woodland and habitat creation/land sharing and land sparing; three compartment model.
2. Provide funding for on-farm anaerobic digestion which is important for decarbonising the important dairy industry in west Cheshire
3. Promote and accelerate and fund research on technologies that enable reduction of enteric emissions in livestock including circularity of waste in agriculture and research into efficient high yielding crop varieties and livestock breeds
4. Engage with farmers and the agricultural sector in ways that create behavioural changes which align with government policy and an economic case for farmers and landowners that enables viable land use changes.
5. Review policy on biochar

9.9 What our partners can do:

1. Take action within their own areas of influence.
2. Provide guidance and expertise.
3. Provide the right level capital of investment.

9.10 What our residents can do

1. Co-produce the plan through the engagement and consultation processes
2. Get involved in nature/environmental activities including citizen science to identify monitor species across the borough
3. Practise sustainable agricultural practices to attain NetZero farming
4. Identify land and work with the Council and the Mersey Forest to establish, manage community or large-scale woodlands and habitats.



5. Grow and consume local food where possible.
6. Practice wildlife friendly gardening

9.11 Case study

Grosvenor Farms – Soil management and nutrient cycling

Soil carbon – an indicator of soil health

As part of this integrated farming system the organic manures from the cows are used as natural fertilisers for crops, returning nutrients to the soil. 83% of feed in 2021 was grown without any artificial fertiliser.

- Use conservation tillage, minimising the soil's exposure to the elements, to grow crops more sustainably and to stop soil carbon escaping into the atmosphere. Fields are planted year-round to help protect soils from erosion and recover nitrogen, an essential nutrient for growing, from the atmosphere.

These initiatives have resulted in an increase of soil carbon – an indicator of its health and quality – averaging 3%, almost double the UK average for cultivated soils.

- Grosvenor manage approximately 12% of land to support greater biodiversity and improve natural habitats. They have planted 24,000 hedge plants, over 100,000 trees and restored 34 ponds in the last three years.
- Field margins are planted with a combination of woodland edge strips, pollen and nectar flower mixes and winter bird foods to improve biodiversity. These strips connect 340 hectares of woodland habitats and help to create wildlife havens across the farm.
- Over the past four years 72 hectares of flood plain on the River Dee has been regenerated into species rich flood meadows and a further 52 hectares has been restored into wetland habitats supporting increasingly rare flora and fauna including the critically endangered water vole and breeding sites for lapwing and snipe.



10 Waste, recycling and circular economy

10.1 Waste, recycling and circular Economy

Cheshire West and Chester Council was formed in 2009 and achieved a recycling rate of 47.95% during the first year of operations. This was an upper quartile level of performance for an English local authority. Recycling performance improved in the first decade under Cheshire West and Chester Council to 56.35% by 2019/20 with waste related emissions significantly, mainly due to a move away from landfill as the main disposal route in favour of Energy from Waste treatment for non-recyclable black bin/bag waste. The increase in recycling was primarily driven by the launch of the recycle first kerbside service in 2012.

Cheshire West and Chester Council remains one of England's leading waste and recycling authorities, consistently in the top 5% for recycling performance. The Council operates an established collection system offering a wide range of recyclables collected at the kerbside, including food waste.

A 15.5% reduction in total household waste per household has been achieved between 2009/10 and 2023/24, alongside a 33.6% reduction in non-recyclable household waste per household during the same period. Whilst this is a great achievement, the amount of non-recyclable waste generated per household is higher than other councils with similar recycling rates (up to 25% higher than some of these councils). We know that a third of this is food waste that could have been recycled through our weekly food waste service. Encouraging greater participation in this service will be one of the best ways the Council can reduce emissions through the waste service. By April 2026, all homes in the UK must have a food recycling service by law, so there is an opportunity for everyone to play their part to reduce the impact of their waste on climate change.

Since 2021, the Council has delivered kerbside services through its own wholly owned company Cheshire West Recycling. This provides us with flexibility to respond to changes in National Waste Policy and legislation. This change gave us the opportunity to significantly change the design of the kerbside services. Larger, more convenient recycling containers were provided to the majority of homes, and a greener fleet was commissioned, able to run off HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) fuel. The total miles travelled to empty all the containers was also reduced through a routing efficiency project. As a result of the re-design, the Council's recycling rate reached its joint highest ever level in 2023/24 of 59.1%.

The Council's wholly owned company will operate all recycling centres from April 2026, focussing on recovering unwanted items in partnership with local charities and re-use groups within our communities.



The Council's ten year Waste Management Strategy adopted in 2021 seeks to limit the environmental impact of all waste collected by the Council, and created by homes and council services throughout the Cheshire West and Chester area¹⁵. The strategy aligns with the Government's National Waste Strategy, which sets out how they will preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy in England. The key objectives within the strategy are to:

- reduce overall waste
- maximise recycling
- deliver an efficient and cost-effective waste collection, recycling and processing service

The outcomes set out in this plan reflect the ambitions of the waste strategy, and build on the achievements to date.

¹⁵ [Waste management strategy | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)



10.2 Climate Emergency Response Plan Engagement: Outputs of residents' survey on waste, recycling and circular economy

The Council ran an engagement exercise to enable the Council to understand the issues affecting the borough's residents, businesses and visitors through online and in person surveys. The outputs of the survey element of this process for this sector are presented below. Further analysis from this engagement process is available in the full report on the Engagement process.

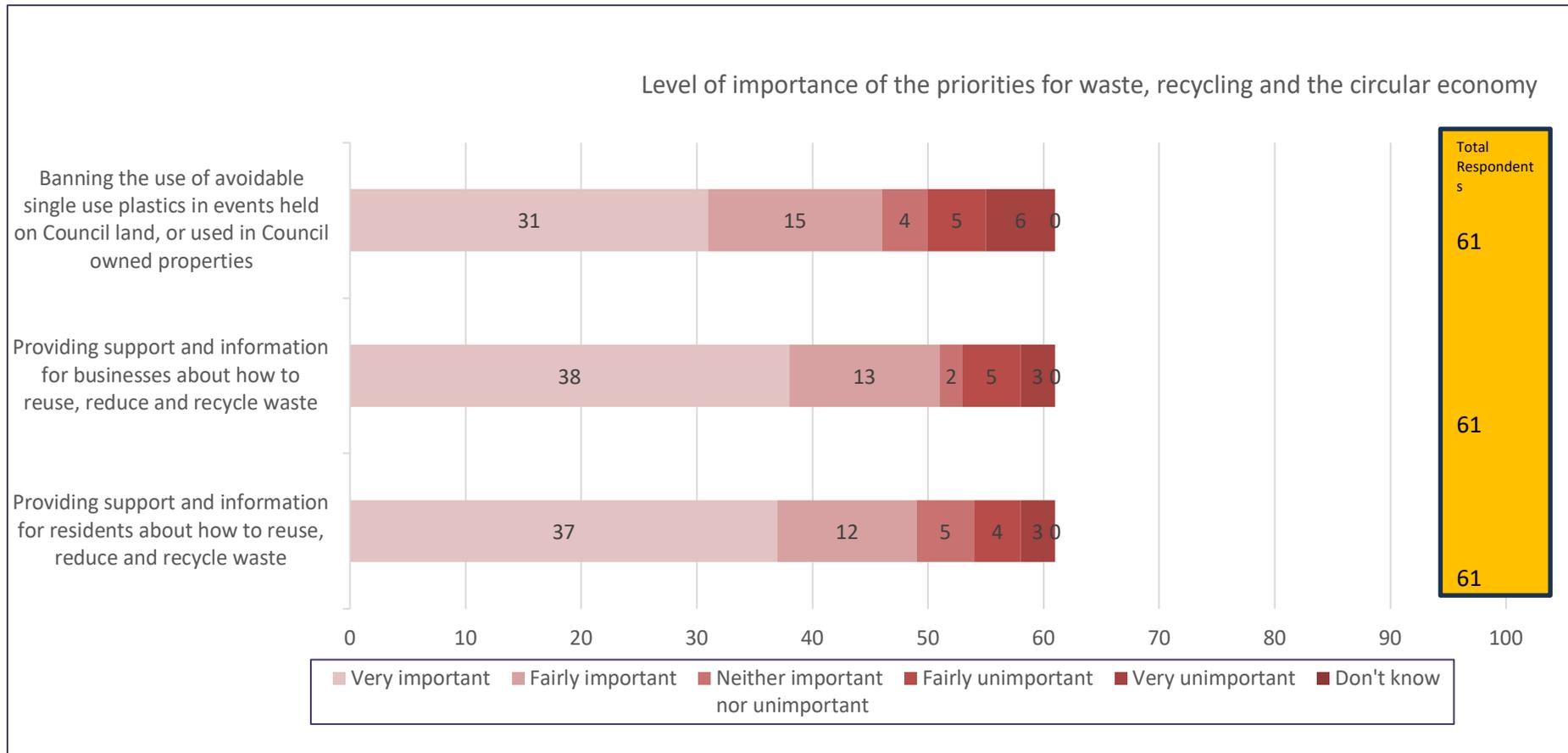


Figure 17: Waste and Recycling Feedback¹⁶

¹⁶ Figure 17 presents the outputs of the engagement process related to the Waste and Recycling sector, and outlines the views people expressed on the priorities proposed.



10.3 Outcomes by 2030, informed by engagement

Ref	WASTE, RECYCLING AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY OUTCOMES	OUTCOMES Delivered by?	TIMESCALE	CO-BENEFITS
O34	To support the use and production of green energy sources through the management of waste related resources, including our landfill sites, depots and fleet	Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire West Recycling and other Service Providers	Short, medium and long-term	Positive behavioural changes and practice adoption, reduced flooding
O35	To ensure carbon avoidance, reduction and capture schemes are in place minimise the impact of residual waste treatment on emissions, and support the development of local alternative waste treatment technologies where possible by 2028.	Cheshire West and Chester Council, Waste treatment and waste technology providers, Universities, colleges and other research bodies, partners, landowners, central Government.	Medium and long-term	Nature recovery, climate resilience, health benefits, environmental justice
O36	Increasing the social value commitments through our waste contractors and partners to support community and charitable organisations involved in re-use, repair and upcycling projects to keep items in circulation for as long as possible.	Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire West Recycling Central Government	Medium and long term	Increasing Social Value and delivering on the Council's co-operative principles
O37	To increase the capture rate of food waste for recycling (anaerobic digestion) by at least 20% by 2030, through a comprehensive long term behaviour change plan, including offering food waste recycling to schools and all remaining Cheshire West and Chester homes.	Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire West Recycling Central Government CWAC Schools	Short, medium and long term	Positive behavioural changes, reduction in waste sent to Energy from Waste treatment facilities.



		WRAP (Waste Resource Action Programme)		and keeping products/items in circulation for as long as possible, recycling them at their highest value.
O38	Provide more information and guidance to encourage home composting for garden waste– especially the benefits of loose compost heaps to local wildlife.	Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire West Recycling Central Government CWAC Schools Wildlife organisations and rescue centres.	Short, medium and long-term	Nature recovery Carbon emission reductions
O39	Take steps to prevent unauthorised waste from entering the Council’s household waste sites and carry out proactive enforcement and engagement to reduce waste crime.	Cheshire West and Chester Council, Environment Agency Neighbouring councils, HWRC service provider Private Landowners	Short, medium and long-term	Pollution control Improved local environmental quality Reduced cost related to clearance of illegal waste deposits
O40	The council will provide more information on our website to tell people where the recycling goes, to help people understand the importance of separating their waste and signpost people to alternative community based recycling and re-use projects.	Cheshire West and Chester Council Cheshire West Recycling Community based waste projects	Short, medium and long-term	Pro-environmental behaviour change



10.4 The Council's Commitments

Ref	Waste, Recycling and the Circular Economy Actions	Influence	Linked to outcome	Cost	Carbon
A45	Reduce the use of Single Use Plastics across the Council and delivery partners (including events held on Council land and premises) and proactively support the production of more environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic products within communities, partners, businesses and local industry.	Direct	6,7	Low	Low
A46	To reduce the amount of non-recyclable waste produced per household to 405kg/household/year by 2027/28 through waste prevention projects and encouragement of pro-recycling behaviours amongst residents. This will include a review of the frequency of waste collections and container capacity.	Direct	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	Medium	High
A47	To increase the percentage of municipal waste recycled to at least 64% by end of 2027/28.	Direct	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	High	High



10.5 What Government needs to do:

1. **Clarify and provide funding for managing the recovery of packaging waste:** Ensure regular and timely payments for Producer Responsibility fees and Councils are reimbursed fairly for costs related to handling packaging waste.
2. **Hold manufacturers accountable:** Ensure that companies are responsible for the entire life of the products they sell and encourage them to make items with materials that are easy to recycle.
3. **Encourage circular economy practices:** Motivate businesses to create products that are durable, repairable, and not just single use, to help reduce waste.
4. **Invest in new technology and reprocessing infrastructure in the UK:** Support the use of new technologies like AI-based sorting systems and help develop better ways to recycle plastic film.
5. **Fund education and awareness campaigns:** Provide funding for national campaigns that teach the public how to recycle properly and separate their waste correctly.
6. **Support food waste collection:** Provide funding to help collect food waste recycling from all households.
7. **Expand Producer Responsibility:** Include more materials, like textiles and hygiene products and blister packs in the Producer Responsibility program, especially those that contain fossil fuels and are often found in general waste.
8. **Allow flexible waste collection schedules:** Give local councils the power to decide how often they collect general waste, with the goal of reducing fossil-fuel-based materials and cutting down emissions.
9. **Give councils time to adjust:** Allow local authorities a clear, four-year period to fully implement all the new recycling policies, so they can make the most of these changes to improve waste management.

10.6 What our partners can do:

1. **Encourage waste reduction and sustainability:** Lead by example by buying goods and services that are sustainable—choose items with less packaging, and work with suppliers to reduce waste. Promote reusing and repairing things like furniture, appliances, and clothes. Support community activities like swap shops, donation centres, or repair cafes through their social value responsibilities
2. **Support community involvement:** Encourage local groups, volunteers, and organizations to get involved in waste and recycling efforts, such as hosting educational workshops, organizing cleanups, or running environmental programs focused on reducing waste.
3. **Develop guidance, education tools and resources:** Support the Council to signpost residents, businesses, schools and interest groups to relevant information and encourage recycling and reuse champions within their own organisations.
4. **Landlords, property managing agents and housing associations** to support the council to encourage better waste management practices relating to communal (shared) waste provision and bin stores.



10.7 What our residents can do

We all need to change our habits and here are some suggestions to help make a difference:

1. Reduce, reuse and recycle: By reducing the amount of waste sent for disposal you can make a massive difference.
2. Reduce your use of single-use plastics
3. Buy products that use less packaging
4. Consider buying second hand items, rather than new, or borrowing items you don't use that often.
5. Repair items to keep them for longer, and donate useable unwanted items through charity shops, the Household Waste Recycling Centres, or online platforms.
6. Learn how to reduce the amount of food you waste¹⁷ and ensure unavoidable food waste is composted or recycled
7. Make sure recyclable items are not put in your black bin/bags;
8. Buy local to support local agriculture and reduce transport emissions.

¹⁷ [Food waste | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)



Appendix 1: Engagement Report

Introduction – Report on Climate Emergency Response Plan Engagement – November 2024

The Council's current Climate Emergency Response Plan is being refreshed and as such we wanted to engage with our residents and stakeholders to help to shape the new Plan.

The Response Plan covers all sectors of our economy, and the engagement aimed to identify the key priorities that respondents feel the Council and the wider borough should act on.

The themes and priorities were developed through engagement with internal and external stakeholders before being put forward for wider engagement with residents. This was a process led by the Climate Change Team, in partnership with colleagues from Housing, Transport, Waste, Economic Growth, Biodiversity, Environmental services, Public Health, and a range of other internal stakeholders. This process has also been shaped by our Climate Emergency Taskforce, on which a range of partner organisations are represented, including the NHS, the University of Chester, local environmental groups, Chester Zoo, the Environment Agency, alongside our Councillors and other stakeholders.

The results of the engagement will be used to help develop a draft of the full Climate Emergency Response Plan which will later be consulted on in Winter 2024.

How the engagement was carried out

The engagement was open from 26 July to 1 September 2024. Residents and stakeholders were invited to take part by visiting the online Climate Emergency Response Plan webpage where they could complete a survey, submit ideas on how to tackle climate and nature emergencies, and pin where climate action is currently taking place on a map. People could also attend one of the five in-person drop-in sessions which were held in Northwich, Winsford, Ellesmere Port, Malpas and Chester. People were also able to respond to the engagement by email, letter or telephone.

In addition, three focus groups were held, two with members of the Council's Citizens Panel, and one with young people who attend Cheshire College South and West, and the outputs are included in the report below for completeness.

Communication methods to ensure that key stakeholders were made aware of the engagement and given the opportunity to have their say included emails to key

stakeholder organisations, a Member Briefing, communications via the Climate Newsletter which has more than 5000 subscribers, social media, and attendance at community meetings.

The engagement received a total of 474 responses, comprising of 421 survey responses, 18 ideas board contributions, 33 people attending focus groups and drop-in sessions, and 2 emails received.

Key messages:

Across all responses received in response to the engagement the following considerations were identified by respondents as the most important:

- The importance of a rapid transition to renewable energy for all forms of energy use. This is demonstrated in the survey related to Energy, where 47 out of 57 respondents thought that “Enabling renewable (e.g. wind, solar, hydro-electric) energy generation in west Cheshire” was very or fairly important.
- That businesses should be supported to become more environmentally sustainable, such as via using renewable energy, suggestions on how to do this included monitoring their supply chains to use lower-carbon products and services, insulating their premises, and by improving the efficiency of their processes. This is demonstrated in the survey related to industrial and commercial emissions, where 33 out of 46 respondents felt this was very or fairly important. That local places should be designed to promote active and low carbon travel. This is demonstrated in the survey resulting to transport, where 113 respondents of 125 categorised this as very or fairly important.
- That the Council should promote energy efficiency in new build homes by reviewing the elements of the local planning framework relating to this, by lobbying government, and by setting a positive example. This is demonstrated in the survey related to housing, where 58 of 60 respondents indicated higher standards of energy efficiency for new build housing was very or fairly important.
- The importance of conserving nature, by ensuring that nature is a factor in all decision making, by promoting biodiversity, and by planting and preserving trees (and other forms of natural carbon sinks). This is demonstrated in the survey related to land use, where 63 of 68 respondents see this as very important or fairly important.
- That residents should be supported with information to enable them to reduce, reuse and recycle effectively. This is demonstrated in the survey related to waste and recycling, where 49 of 61 respondents considered this very or fairly important.

The outputs of the focus group sessions, including key messages, is included on page 18.

The following section presents an overview of the responses on a section-by-section basis, and key messages received.

Summary of engagement findings:

The engagement findings include feedback from the survey, ideas boards, the interactive map and emails.

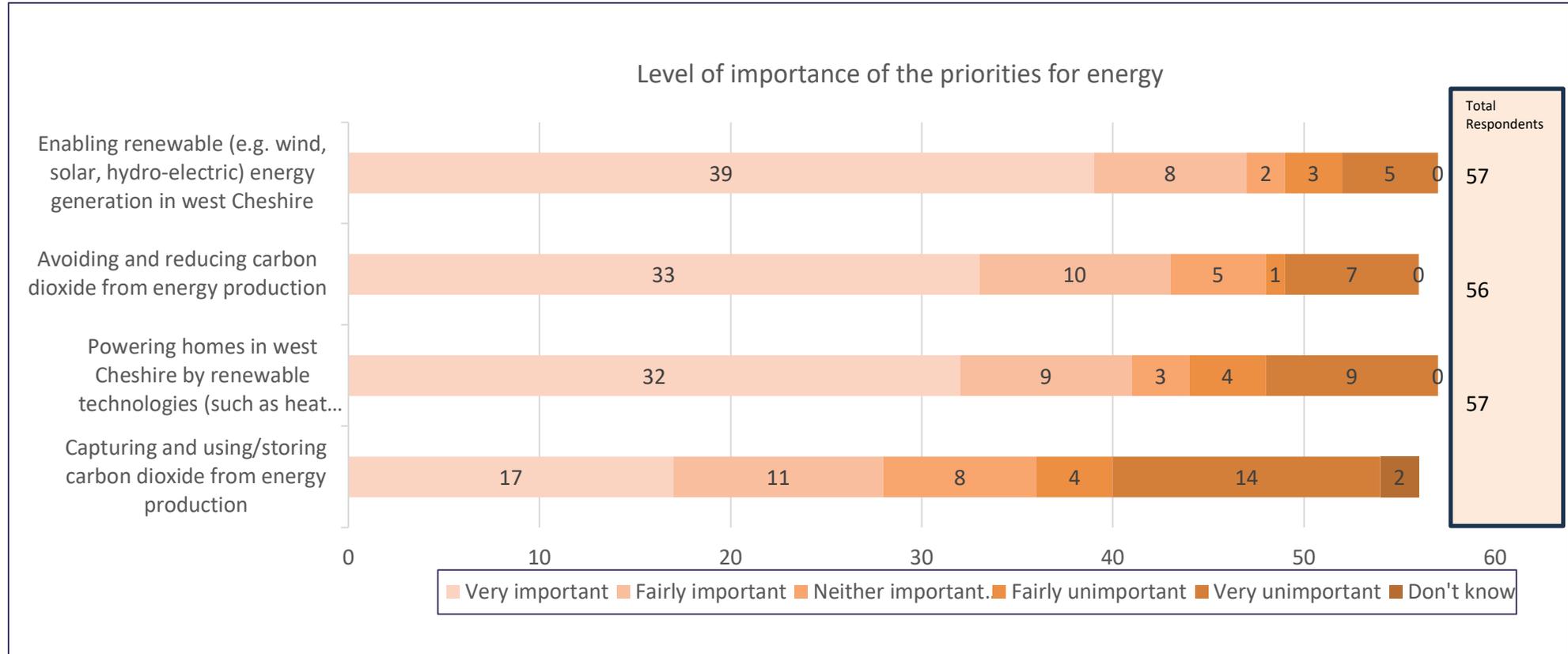
Detailed survey and online engagement feedback

There were six themes that people could choose to respond to with a survey and ideas board for each theme. You can find these on the following pages.

Energy

In the survey about energy respondents were asked: 'How important, or unimportant, do you think each of the following priorities are to help respond to the 'energy' challenges and opportunities related to climate change in west Cheshire?'

Graph 1: Level of importance of the priorities for energy



Enabling renewable (e.g. wind, solar, hydro-electric) energy generation in west Cheshire: Very important: 39, Fairly important: 8, Neither important nor unimportant: 2, Fairly unimportant: 3, Very unimportant: 5

Avoiding and reducing carbon dioxide from energy production: Very important: 33, Fairly important: 10, Neither important nor unimportant: 5, Fairly unimportant: 1, Very unimportant: 7

Powering homes in west Cheshire by renewable technologies (such as heat pumps): Very important: 32, Fairly important: 9, Neither important nor unimportant: 3, Fairly unimportant: 4, Very unimportant: 9

Capturing and using/storing carbon dioxide from energy production: Very important: 17, Fairly important: 11, Neither important nor unimportant: 8, Fairly unimportant: 4, Very unimportant: 14, Don't know: 2

The graph above shows that 47 out of 57 respondents thought that “Enabling renewable (e.g. wind, solar, hydro-electric) energy generation in west Cheshire” was very or fairly important. 43 out of 56 respondents answered that “Avoiding and reducing carbon dioxide from energy production” was very or fairly important. 41 out of 57 respondents felt that “Powering homes in west Cheshire by renewable technologies (such as heat pumps)” was very or fairly important. 28 out of 56 respondents felt that “Capturing and using/storing carbon dioxide from energy production” was either fairly or very important, with 8 respondents saying this was neither important nor unimportant, and 17 answering it was fairly unimportant or very unimportant.

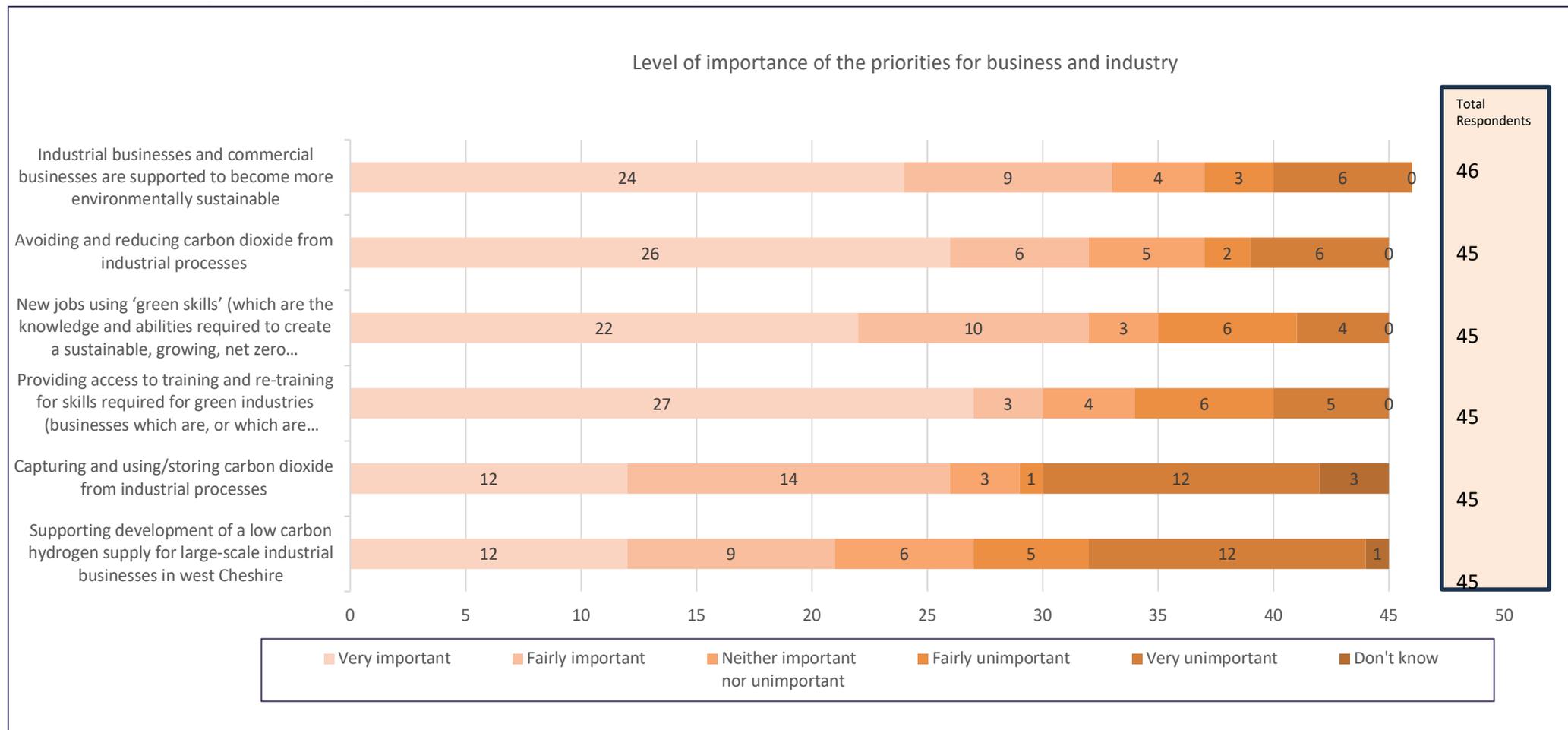
Respondents were also asked to share any comments on the priorities for energy. Feedback was collected through the survey, ideas board and map. In total, 60 comments were received via the survey and the key messages from the comments included:

- Some respondents thought that solar panels and heat pumps should be installed wherever possible, including the roofs of car parks and large commercial buildings.
- Some respondents felt that support and advice was needed for households to transition to renewable energy.
- Some respondents felt that carbon capture encourages the continued use of fossil fuels.
- Some respondents felt fossil fuel use should be stopped as soon as possible.

Industry and Business

In the survey about industry and business respondents were asked: 'How important, or unimportant, do you think each of the following priorities are to help respond to the business and industry challenges and opportunities related to climate change in west Cheshire'.

Graph 2: Level of importance of the priorities for business and industry



Industrial businesses and commercial businesses are supported to become more environmentally sustainable

. Very important: 24, Fairly important: 9 Neither important nor unimportant: 4, Fairly unimportant: 3, Very unimportant 6, Don't Know: 0

Avoiding and reducing carbon dioxide from industrial processes. Very important: 26, Fairly important: 6, Neither important nor unimportant:5 Fairly unimportant: 2: Very unimportant 6: Don't Know: 0

New jobs using 'green skills' (which are the knowledge and abilities required to create a sustainable, growing, net zero economy) in west Cheshire:

Very important: 22, Fairly important: 10, Neither important nor unimportant: 3: Fairly unimportant: 6 Very unimportant: 4, Don't know: 0

Providing access to training and re-training for skills required for green industries (businesses which are, or which are working towards net zero) in west Cheshire: Very important: 27,

Fairly important: 3, Neither important nor unimportant: 4, Fairly unimportant: 6, Very unimportant: 6 Don't know: 0

Capturing and using/storing carbon dioxide from industrial processes: Very important: 12, Fairly important: 14, Neither important nor unimportant: 3, Fairly unimportant: 1, Very unimportant: 12 Don't know: 3

Supporting development of a low carbon hydrogen supply for large-scale industrial businesses in west Cheshire. Very important: 12, Fairly important: 9, Neither important nor unimportant: 6, Fairly unimportant: 5, Very unimportant: 12, Don't Know: 1

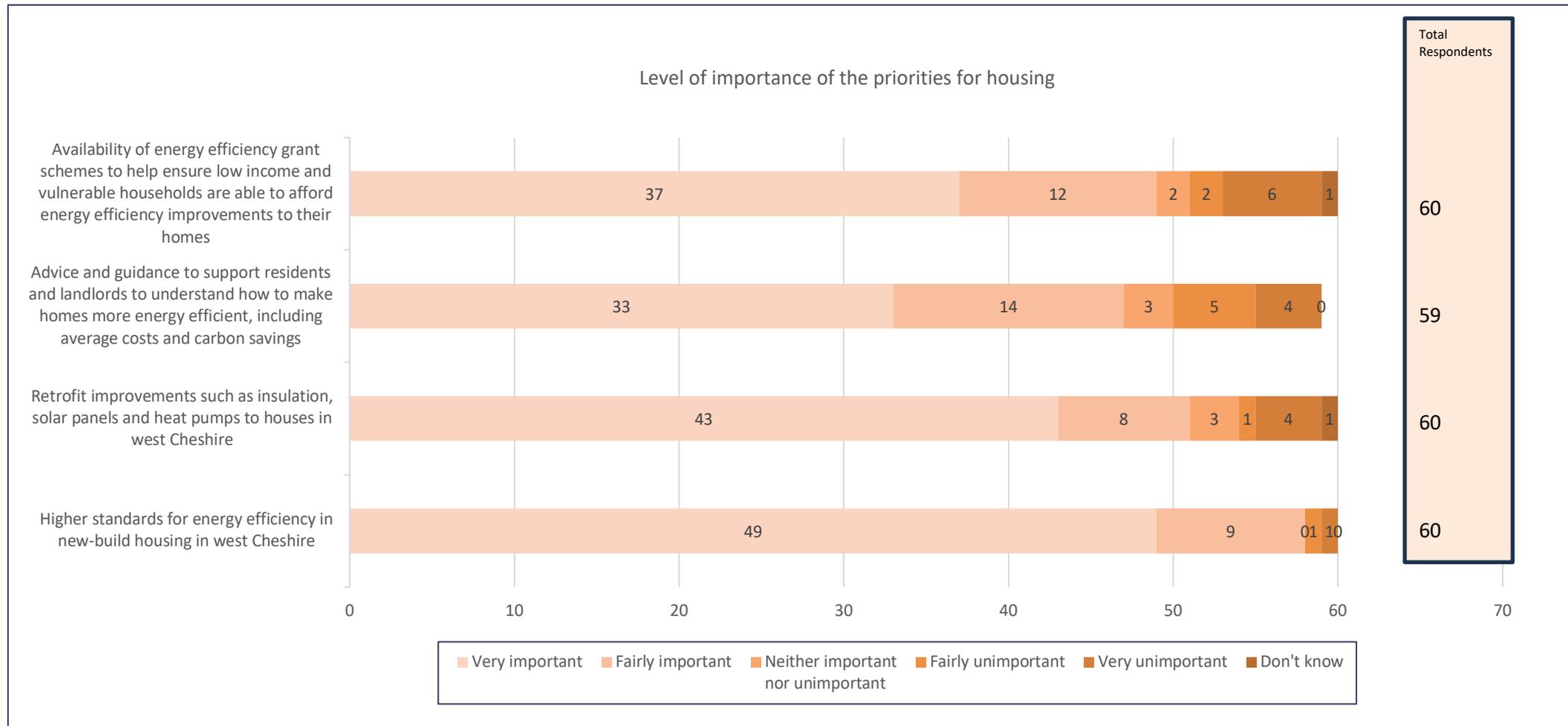
Respondents were also asked to share any comments on the priorities for business and industry. Feedback was collected through the survey, ideas board and map. In total, 50 comments were received and the key messages from the comments included:

- Some respondents thought that carbon capture and storage is insufficiently proven, and promotes the continued use of fossil fuels.
- Some respondents thought that different types of hydrogen have different climate impacts, and this needs further research.
- Some respondents thought that existing businesses need support to reduce their carbon emissions such as via their procurement, processes and on-site energy use.

Housing

In the survey about housing respondents were asked: 'How important, or unimportant, do you think each of the following priorities are to help respond to the housing challenges and opportunities related to climate change in west Cheshire'

Graph 3: Level of importance of the priorities for housing



Availability of energy efficiency grant schemes to help ensure low income and vulnerable households are able to afford energy efficiency improvements to their homes: Very important: 37, Fairly important: 12, Neither important nor unimportant 2 Fairly unimportant: 2, Very unimportant 6 Don't know 1

Advice and guidance to support residents and landlords to understand how to make homes more energy efficient, including average costs and carbon savings: Very important: 33, Fairly important: 14, Neither important nor unimportant 3 Fairly unimportant: 5, Very unimportant 4 Don't know 0

Retrofit improvements such as insulation, solar panels and heat pumps to houses in west Cheshire: Very important: 43, Fairly important: 8, Neither important nor unimportant 3 Fairly unimportant: 1, Very unimportant 4 Don't know 1

Higher standards for energy efficiency in new-build housing in west Cheshire: Very important: 49, Fairly important: 9, Neither important nor unimportant 0 Fairly unimportant: 1, Very unimportant 1 Don't know 10

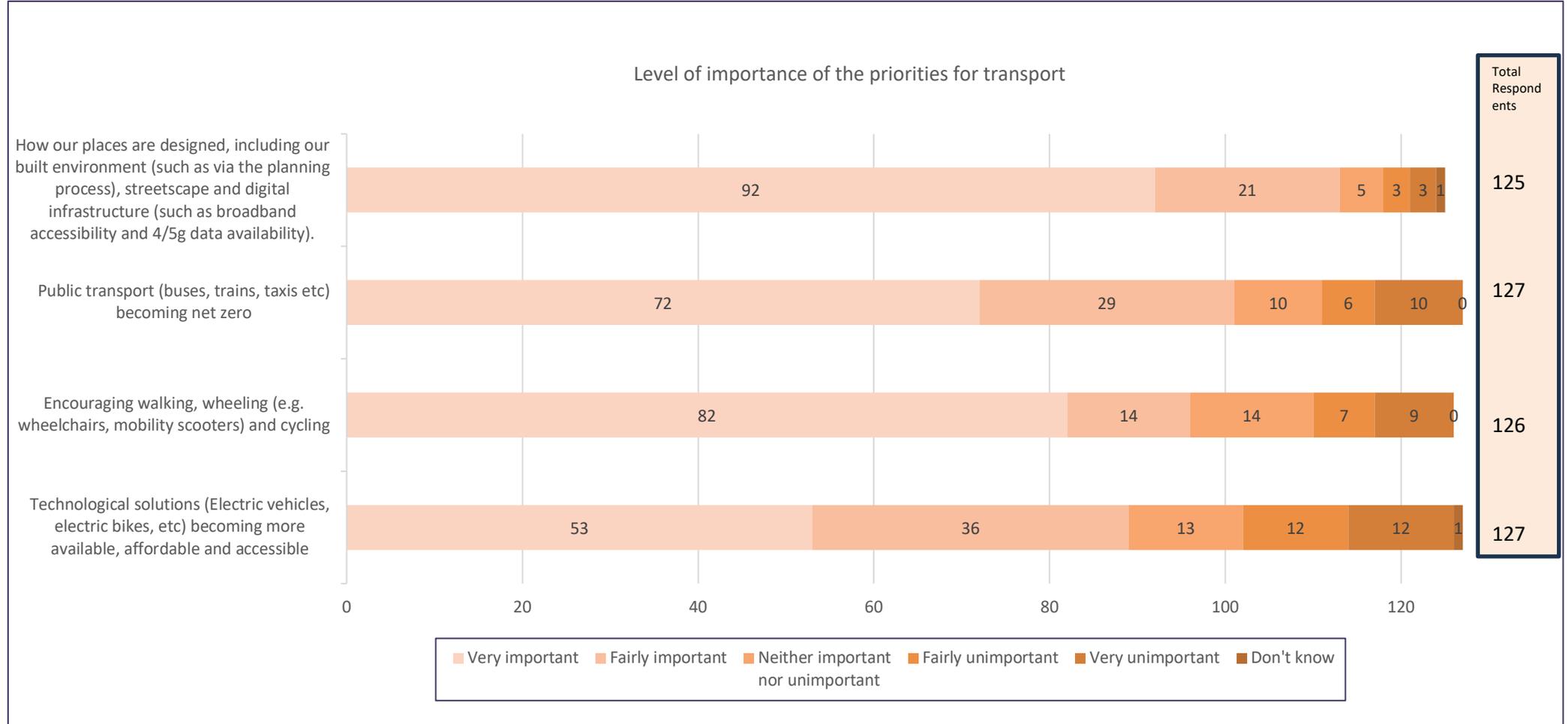
Respondents were also asked to share any comments on the priorities for housing. Feedback was collected through the survey, ideas board and map. In total, 63 comments were received and the key messages from the comments included:

- Some respondents thought that all new builds should be as energy efficient as possible, and that this should be required by the Council's planning department.
- Some respondents thought that grants to support people to improve the energy efficiency of their homes should be available to all.
- Some respondents thought that information on energy efficiency measures should be made easily available, to ensure people know what measures will make an impact in their home.

Transport

In the survey about transport respondents were asked: 'How important, or unimportant, do you think each of the following priorities are to help respond to the transport challenges and opportunities related to climate change in west Cheshire'

Graph 4: Level of importance of the priorities for transport



- For making technological solutions like electric vehicles and electric bikes more available, affordable, and accessible, 53 out of 127 respondents consider it very important, 36 see it as fairly important, 13 as neither important nor unimportant, 12 view it as fairly unimportant, another 12 as very unimportant, and 1 didn't know.
- Regarding encouraging walking, wheeling (e.g., wheelchairs, mobility scooters) and cycling, 82 respondents rated it as very important, 14 as fairly important, 14 as neither important nor unimportant, 7 as fairly unimportant, 9 as very unimportant, with none unsure.
- For public transport (buses, trains, taxis, etc.) becoming net zero, 72 respondents consider it very important, 29 see it as fairly important, 10 as neither important nor unimportant, 6 as fairly unimportant, 10 as very unimportant, with none selecting 'don't know'.
- Concerning the design of our places, including our built environment (such as through the planning process), streetscape, and digital infrastructure (like broadband accessibility and 4/5G data availability), 92 respondents find it very important, 21 fairly important, 5 neither important nor unimportant, 3 fairly unimportant, 3 very unimportant, 3 fairly unimportant, 3 very unimportant, and 1 didn't know.

Respondents were also asked to share any comments on the priorities for transport. Feedback was collected through the survey, ideas board and map. In total, 158 comments were received and the key messages from the comments included:

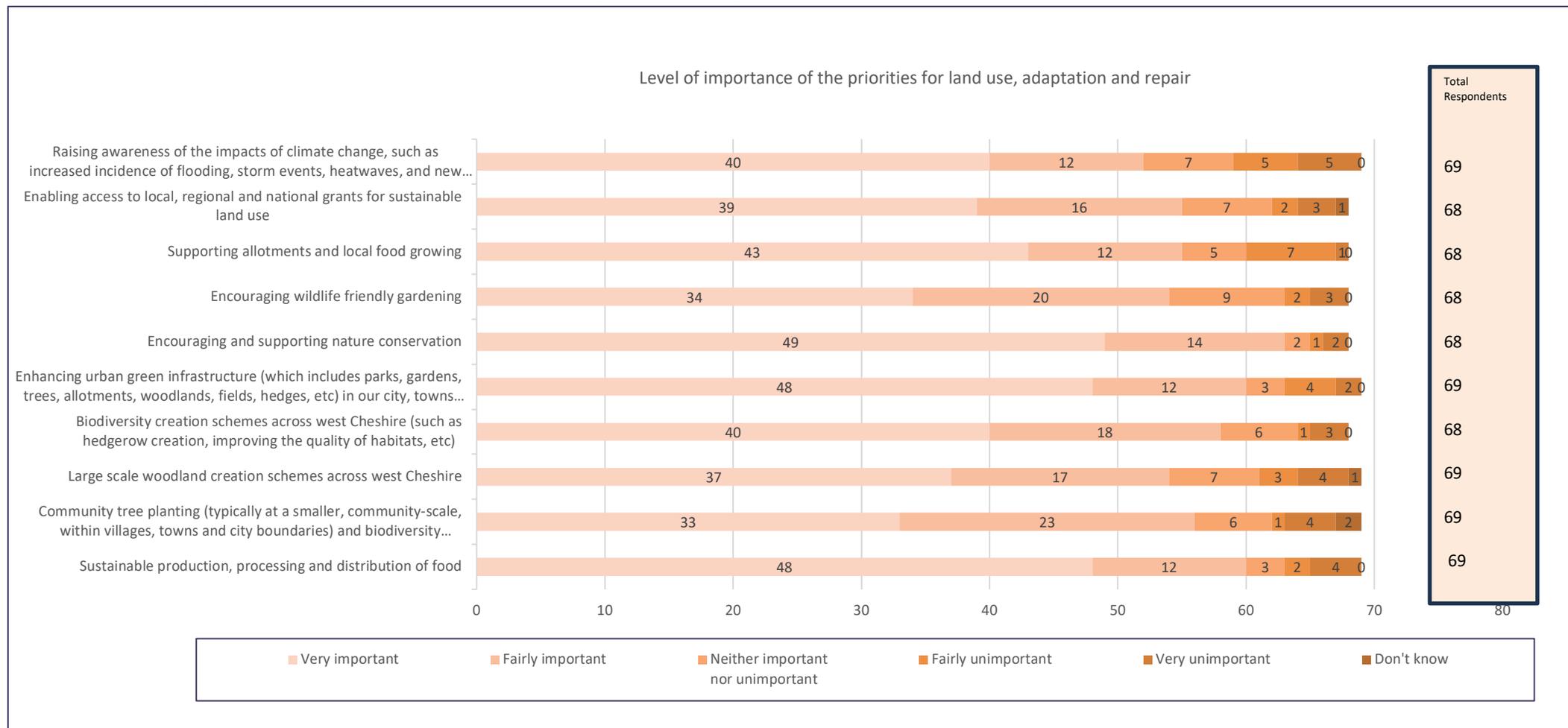
- Some respondents thought that active travel options such as walking, wheeling and cycling should be strongly supported by the Council, partners and central Government.
- Some respondents thought that bus and train travel should be strongly supported by bus and rail operators, the Council, partners and central Government.
- Some respondents thought that bus and trains should be less expensive, to make them more accessible to people of all income levels.

The engagement also received feedback from the Youth Senate, which commented on the importance of accessible transport for young people. They expressed that it sometimes felt unsafe walking or cycling to school, especially where there was not dedicated walking or cycling infrastructure. They felt there should be an increase in investment in public transport infrastructure, and that fares should be capped permanently to enable more people to access public transport.

Land Use, Adaptation and Repair

In the survey about land use, adaptation and repair respondents were asked: 'How important, or unimportant, do you think each of the following priorities are to help respond to the land use, adaptation and repair challenges and opportunities related to climate change in west Cheshire'

Graph 1: Level of importance of the priorities for land use adaptation and repair



- Sustainable production, processing, and distribution of food: 48 respondents consider it very important, 12 fairly important, 3 neither important nor unimportant, 2 fairly unimportant, 4 very unimportant, with none unsure.
- Community tree planting and biodiversity schemes: 33 respondents rate it as very important, 23 as fairly important, 6 as neither important nor unimportant, 1 as fairly unimportant, 4 as very unimportant, and 2 didn't know.
- Large scale woodland creation schemes across West Cheshire: 37 consider it very important, 17 fairly important, 7 neither important nor unimportant, 3 fairly unimportant, 4 very unimportant, and 1 didn't know.
- Biodiversity creation schemes across West Cheshire: 40 respondents find it very important, 18 fairly important, 6 neither important nor unimportant, 1 fairly unimportant, 3 very unimportant, with none unsure.
- Encouraging and supporting nature conservation: 49 respondents view it as very important, 14 as fairly important, 2 as neither important nor unimportant, 1 as fairly unimportant, 2 very unimportant, with none unsure.
- Encouraging wildlife-friendly gardening: 34 rate it as very important, 20 as fairly important, 9 as neither important nor unimportant, 2 as fairly unimportant, 3 very unimportant, with none unsure.
- Supporting allotments and local food growing: 43 consider it very important, 12 fairly important, 5 neither important nor unimportant, 7 fairly unimportant, 1 very unimportant, with none unsure.
- Enabling access to local, regional, and national grants for sustainable land use: 39 respondents find it very important, 16 fairly important, 7 neither important nor unimportant, 2 fairly unimportant, 3 very unimportant, and 1 didn't know.
- Raising awareness of the impacts of climate change: 40 rate it as very important, 12 as fairly important, 7 as neither important nor unimportant, 5 as fairly unimportant, 5 very unimportant, with none unsure.

Respondents were also asked to share any comments on the priorities for land use adaptation and repair. Feedback was collected through the survey, ideas board and map. In total, 71 comments were received and the key messages from the comments included:

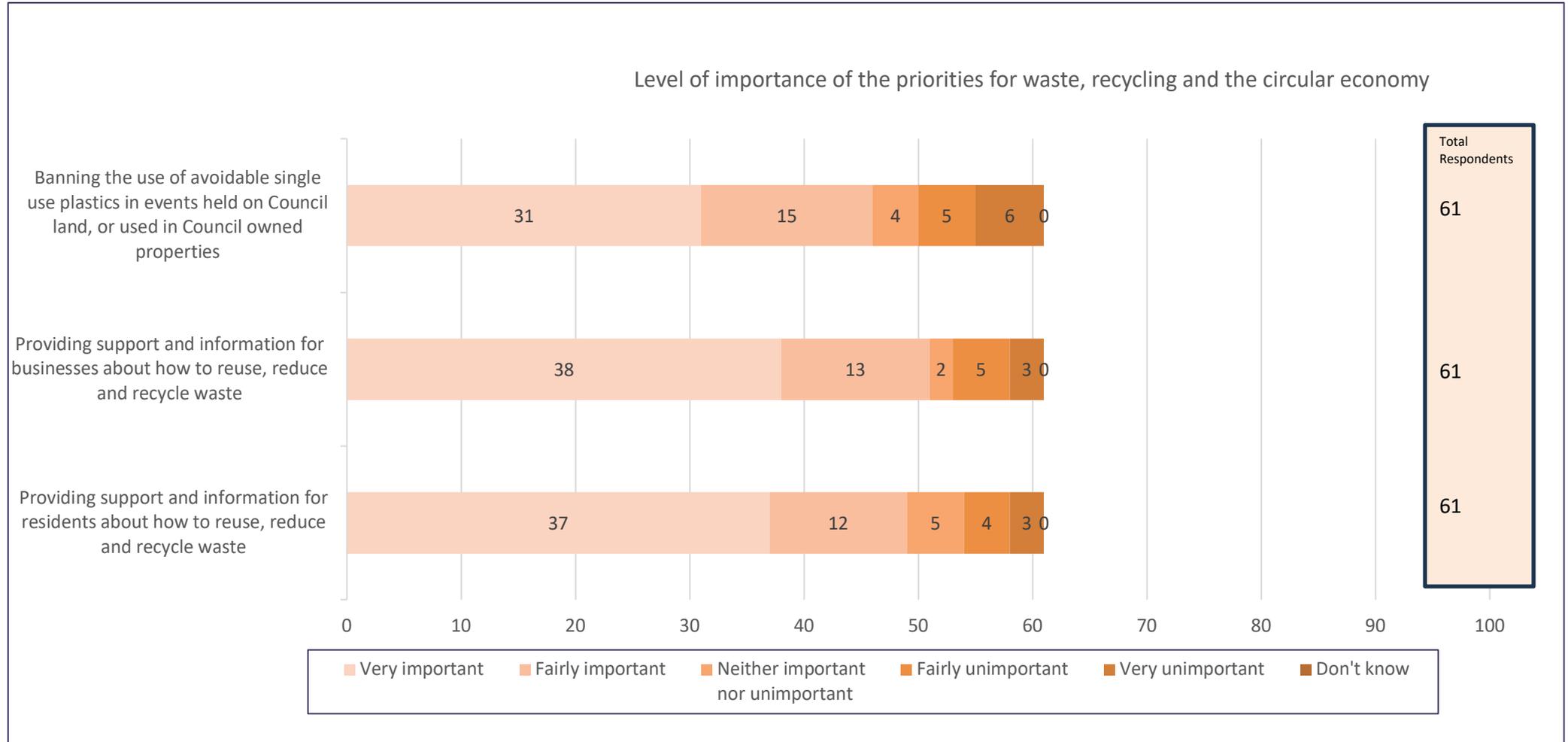
- That tree planting should be encouraged and funded by central government.
- That the natural environment should be considered in all decisions, and that brownfield land (land that has been previously developed, that is under-utilised) should be reused.
- That farming practices should be adapted to promote a sustainable food supply, suggestions on how to do this included using more regenerative agricultural techniques (utilising less artificial fertiliser, among other methods).

The Council also received an email with detailed comments primarily related to the Council's approach to tree and woodland management, and biodiversity creation, which recommended that a long-term, asset based approach to trees and woodland be adopted.

Waste, Recycling and the circular economy.

In the survey about waste, recycling and the circular economy respondents were asked: How important, or unimportant, do you think each of the following priorities are to help respond to the waste and recycling challenges and opportunities related to climate change in west Cheshire?

Graph 1: Level of importance of the priorities for waste, recycling and the circular economy



- Providing support and information for residents about how to reuse, reduce, and recycle waste: 37 respondents consider it very important, 12 fairly important, 5 neither important nor unimportant, 4 fairly unimportant, 3 very unimportant, with none unsure.
- Providing support and information for businesses about how to reuse, reduce, and recycle waste: 38 respondents rate it as very important, 13 as fairly important, 2 as neither important nor unimportant, 5 as fairly unimportant, 3 very unimportant, with none unsure.
- Banning the use of avoidable single-use plastics in events held on Council land, or used in Council-owned properties: 31 consider it very important, 15 fairly important, 4 neither important nor unimportant, 5 fairly unimportant, 6 very unimportant, with none unsure.

The results show that the majority of respondents agreed that these priorities were either very or fairly important.

Respondents were also asked to share any comments on the priorities for waste, recycling and the circular economy. Feedback was collected through the survey, ideas board and map. In total, 55 comments were received and the key messages from the comments included:

- That single use items such as some single use plastics should be banned by the Government, with advice provided on alternatives.
- The importance of education on reuse/recycling.
- That rewards should be provided for reuse and recycling.

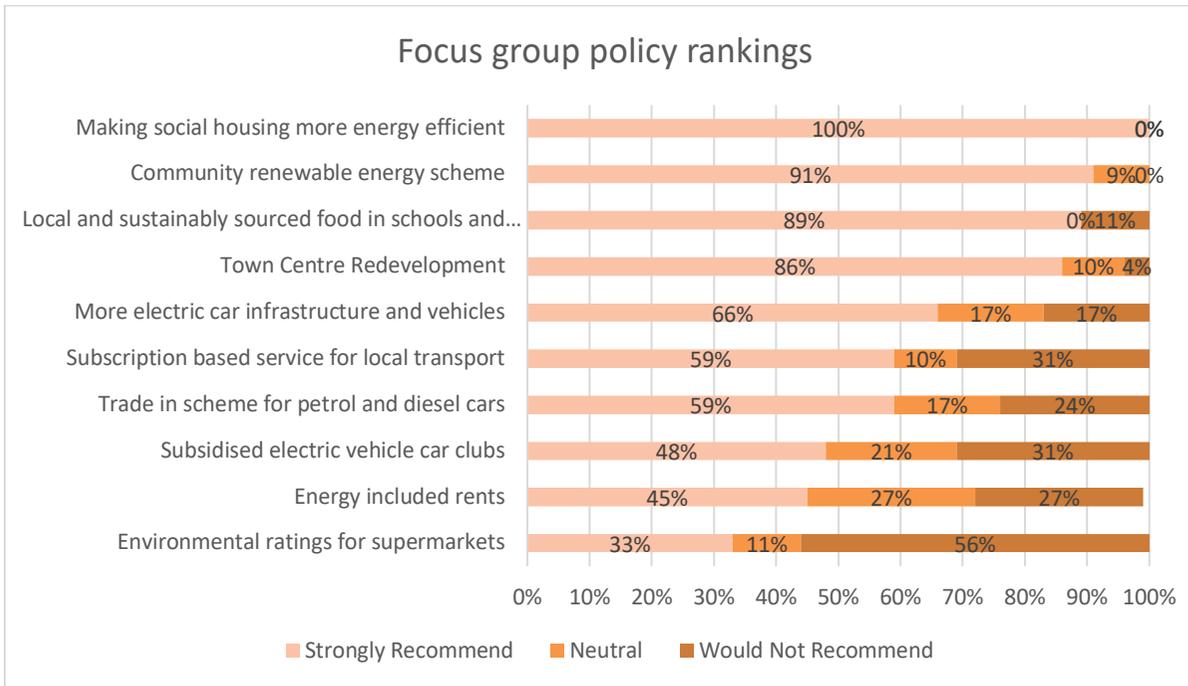
Detailed focus group feedback

Three in-person focus groups were carried out with different groups of people to understand residents' views on three key topics, housing, transport and food. Two groups were with members of the Council's Citizens Panel (the Participate Panel), and one group was with young people who attend Cheshire College South and West. The focus groups were carried out by NESTA, a charity specialising in innovation for social good. NESTA used a structured method, involving ipads for interactive polling followed by discussion on people's choices as a way to explore the topic.

In total, 29 participants attended the discussion groups. Each group focused on two topics. One group considered housing and transport, while the other two considered transport and food. In total, across the 3 groups, housing was discussed by 11 participants, transport by 29 participants, and food by 18 participants. This was captured as quantitative data to provide consistency between the focus groups. A limited amount of qualitative feedback was also captured, and the key messages were as follows:

- **EV infrastructure:** Some residents felt that significant investment was needed in EV infrastructure to reduce concerns on range and charging. Some participants felt that EVs will reduce in cost over time as production ramps up. Some felt that the quietness of EV vehicles was dangerous.
- **Town Centre Regeneration:** Some participants felt that reducing the number of empty shops will help create more vibrant town centres. Some felt that rural public transport is limited, and more public transport should be used. However, others felt that money should be spent on roads rather than town centre regeneration.
- **Mobility as a service:** Some participants felt that the reason they did not use public transport was because they did not want to be dependent on others, and that they could play their own music. Some felt that mobility apps might work better in larger cities than smaller towns. Some participants felt that a mobility app would be more suitable for younger people.
- **Fairness:** Some participants felt that organisations need to do more to communicate and bring communities along with them on a journey, rather than change too fast. Some felt that accurate information was needed on the cost of change. Some said that tax was rising too fast considering the services provided. Others felt that we needed to pay for change, and that positive community spirit was required.

The qualitative priorities of the participants are set out below.



**Total
Participants**

29
29
29
29
29
29
29
29
29
29

1819

1. 100% of participants strongly recommended the proposal to make social housing more energy efficient.
2. 91% of participants strongly recommended the proposal to support community renewable energy schemes. 9% were neutral.
3. 89% of participants strongly supported locally sourced food in schools and hospitals. 11% would not recommend this.
4. 86% of participants strongly supported proposals to redevelop town centres. 10% were neutral. 4% would not recommend this.
5. 66% of participants strongly supported more electric car infrastructure and vehicles. 17% were neutral. 17% would not recommend this.
6. 59% of participants strongly supported proposals for trade in schemes for petrol and diesel cars. 17% were neutral. 24% would not recommend this.
7. 59% of participants strongly supported a subscription-based service for local transport. 10% were neutral. 31% would not recommend this.
8. 48% of participants strongly supported subsidised electric vehicle car clubs. 21% were neutral. 31% would not recommend this.
9. 45% of participants strongly supported rent which include energy bills. 27% were neutral. 27% would not recommend this.
10. 33% of participants strongly supported environmental ratings for supermarkets. 11% were neutral. 56% would not recommend this.

¹⁸ This graph shows whether focus group participants, having taken part in the session and heard from the facilitator and their peers, would recommend, were neutral about, or would not comment this policy proposal.

¹⁹ Source: Nesta. Available in web format via: <https://strategyroom.uk/explore>
 To access results from all CW&C sessions, select Filters, "Council", and then select Cheshire West and Chester Council.

The engagement process received one response from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), which commented on a range of priority areas within the engagement. Below are some of the key messages from this response.

- Transport:
 - It was noted that the Council had progress to make on decarbonising transport and recommended the adoption of CPRE’s approach to prioritising which modes of transport people should be supported to use, prioritising digital communications, active transport infrastructure (such as walking and cycling), public transport, and sustainably fuelled vehicles.
- Housing:
 - It was noted that the Council would benefit from setting out how much it would cost to retrofit homes in the area and recommended that the new Local Plan (the area’s planning framework, set by the Council) should set high requirements for developments in respect of their environmental credentials.
- Land Use, Adaptation and Climate Repair:
 - It was recommended that more thought was given to the title of the section, suggesting that it be re-focused on biodiversity and natural capital.
- Energy:
 - CPRE’s solar rooftop campaign was noted, alongside an opposition to renewables (such as solar and wind) being installed on agricultural land.
- Waste, Recycling and the Circular Economy
 - The CPRE praised the Council for their recycling performance and suggested that more information could be provided on current recycling performance to ensure residents and stakeholders are informed of progress.

Next steps

All the feedback from the engagement will be used to help draft the full Climate Emergency Response Plan. The draft Plan will set out the detail for what achieving the priorities would entail, and the actions that will be required to achieve the priorities.

A consultation on the draft Climate Emergency Response Plan will take place in the winter of 2024.

A1: Profile of respondents who completed a survey

Table 1: Who took part

	Energy	Transport	Business	Housing	Waste, recycling and circular economy	Land use, adaptation and repair
A local Resident	52	117	42	55	58	63
A local business	3	2	2	2	3	4
An employee of CWAC	0	6	4	1	2	2
An elected member of CWAC	1	1	1	1	1	0
An elected town or parish councillor in CWAC	3	1	0	2	2	2
A representative of a partnership organisation	2	1	0	1	1	1
A member of a voluntary or community organisation	6	13	8	7	5	5
Other	1	6	2	1	0	2

Table 2: Gender

	Energy	Transport	Business	Housing	Waste, recycling and circular economy	Land use, adaptation and repair
Male	27	64	24	27	30	33
Female	16	41	12	20	26	29
Prefer to use own term	0	1	1	1	0	0
Prefer not to say	5	12	4	4	2	3

Table 3: Age group

	Energy	Transport	Business	Housing	Waste, recycling and circular economy	Land use, adaptation and repair
Under 16	0	1	0	0	0	0
25 - 34	3	1	5	4	2	25
35 - 44	7	15	2	7	9	5
45 - 54	4	16	6	6	10	8
55 - 64	11	27	9	12	14	18
65 - 74	14	28	14	19	16	14
75+	6	6	3	2	4	8

Table 4: Illness, health issue or disability

	Energy	Transport	Business	Housing	Waste, recycling and circular economy	Land use, adaptation and repair
Yes	4	16	9	6	6	9
No	40	92	30	42	49	47

Table 5: Disability profile of respondents

	Energy	Transport	Business	Housing	Waste, recycling and circular economy	Land use, adaptation and repair
Physical impairment that causes mobility issues, e.g. wheelchair user	1	4	0	1	1	4
Visual Impairment	1	2	1	1	1	2
Mental Health issue	1	5	3	3	2	3
Hearing impairment	0	1	1	1	0	1
Learning disability or difficulty	0	1	0	0	0	1
Long standing issue or health condition	3	8	6	5	6	5
Other	1	5	2	1	1	2

Table 6: Ethnicity

	Energy	Transport	Business	Housing	Waste, recycling and circular economy	Land use, adaptation and repair
White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	42	93	33	41	50	53
White – Irish	0	2	0	1	0	0
White - Any other White background	1	4	0	0	2	0
Asian or Asian British - Chinese		2	0	1	0	1
Prefer not to say	6	13	6	8	0	6
Other	0	1	1	1	4	0

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

Council information is also available in audio, Braille, large print or other formats. If you would like information in another format or language, including British Sign Language, please email us at:

equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

إذا أردت المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، نرجو أن تطلب ذلك منا.

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

Pokud byste požadovali informace v jiném jazyce nebo formátu, kontaktujte nás

Jezeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਚੁਗਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ।

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

Türkçe bilgi almak istiyorsanız, bize başvurabilirsiniz.

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

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