CORNWALL COUNCIL
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Council of the ISLES OF SCILLY

Funded by:
South West NET ZERO HUB

CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY

LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLAN

Summary Report

Introduction

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Area Energy Plan (CIOS LAEP) sets out how our area can reduce its reliance on fossil fuels (like oil, gas and petrol) that need to be imported from around the world and contribute to climate change. This adds to the costs we pay for our energy and reduces local economic benefits.

The views of residents, businesses and organisations were gathered to develop this plan. An important message was the need to take action to change our energy system with support for more renewables, the opportunity to make greater use of our local resources (solar, wind, geothermal, biomethane) to reduce our reliance on energy coming from outside of the country; to support community benefit and local jobs; and to make our homes healthier and more affordable to heat.

Local Area Energy Planning looks at electricity, heating and transport. It takes into account local needs and opportunities such as our rural and island setting, building types, where we get our energy from today and what energy we will need in the future.

The Plan shows how things could be, not how they will be. The Plan will be used to shape local, regional and national planning, investment and decision making related to energy.

The CIOS LAEP has been co-developed with over 4000 individuals and organisations, including local residents and businesses, National Grid Electricity Distribution (who manage our electricity grid), Wales and West Utilities (who manage the gas network), local energy producers, transport and housing representatives..

This was far more engagement than usually happens within energy planning and it informed every part of the process - helping us to understand what was important to local people and businesses, what might prevent the changes from happening and what we may have missed.

- Promote cost-effective solutions for energy generation, distribution, and consumption whilst reducing carbon emissions.
- Enhance the efficiency, security and resilience of the local energy system via sector-based interventions.
- Enable local leadership in supporting a clean transition planning of energy infrastructure that aligns with the current and future needs.
- Stimulate economic development and job creation through the growth of local clean/green energy industries.
- Address causes of fuel poverty and sources of energy inequality to maximise well-being and other wider community benefits.

Key things to know about our current energy system

Road transport uses the most energy, followed by housing, and the industrial and commercial sector.

At **20.5 MWh per person** Cornwall is just below the national average for energy demand.

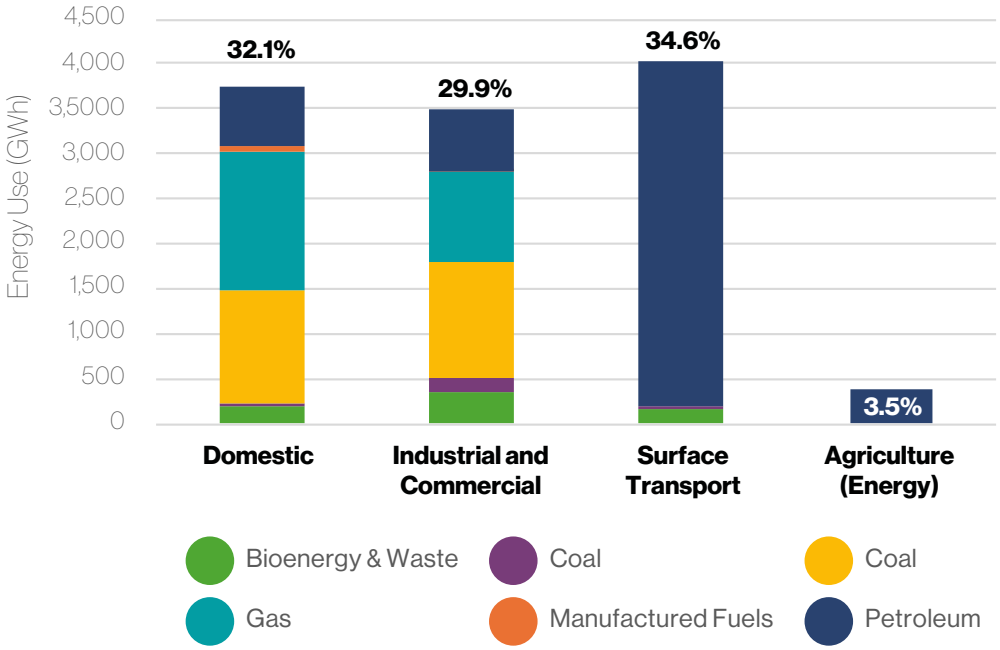
Energy related Emissions **fell by 34%** between 2005 and 2019, largely due to using less coal and gas to make electricity. Transport emissions remain relatively high due to rural dependency on cars.

Cornwall spends over **£1bn** on energy each year.

46% of Cornwall's electricity demand is met by renewable sources.

Cornwall used **11,661 GWh** of energy

The England local authority average is 3,904 GWh.



Electricity and gas networks require significant upgrades. The need to upgrade the electricity grid is stopping us connecting renewable energy and some public EV charging.

95% of vehicles in 2024 used petrol or diesel. There were 7600 hybrid and electric cars (1.8%)

Road based transport accounts for most of our transport energy demand. Fuel for cars is the biggest demand.

Lots of our homes are not connected to the gas network'and rely on **oil or electric heating**, which are costly and carbon intensive

Many homes are poorly insulated and **expensive to heat**.

High reliance on fossil fuels **(petrol, diesel and gas).**

All data is for 2019 unless stated.

Exploring the options for our future energy system

Different options were mapped out to help people understand how we could change the energy system. This allowed people to think about how much energy we use and where we could get our energy from.

The work showed how we could help meet our energy needs locally and how much the change might cost. The options were shaped by local people and organisations and lined up with existing local and national targets.

This approach meant that the options were well-informed, and took on board local opinions and opportunities like geothermal energy.

All of the different options were reviewed and a 'Best Outlook' option was created. This best outlook took bits of each option and showed the things that would help us to change our energy system but in a way supported by local residents, businesses and organistions. This final option focuses on technologies that are available today. As new technologies are developed, national policy decisions made and alternative fuels become more available, this LAEP will need to be updated.

CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY
LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLAN

Our future energy system will be cleaner, more affordable and resilient, retaining the social and economic benefits of the transition in the region.

This will enable us to:

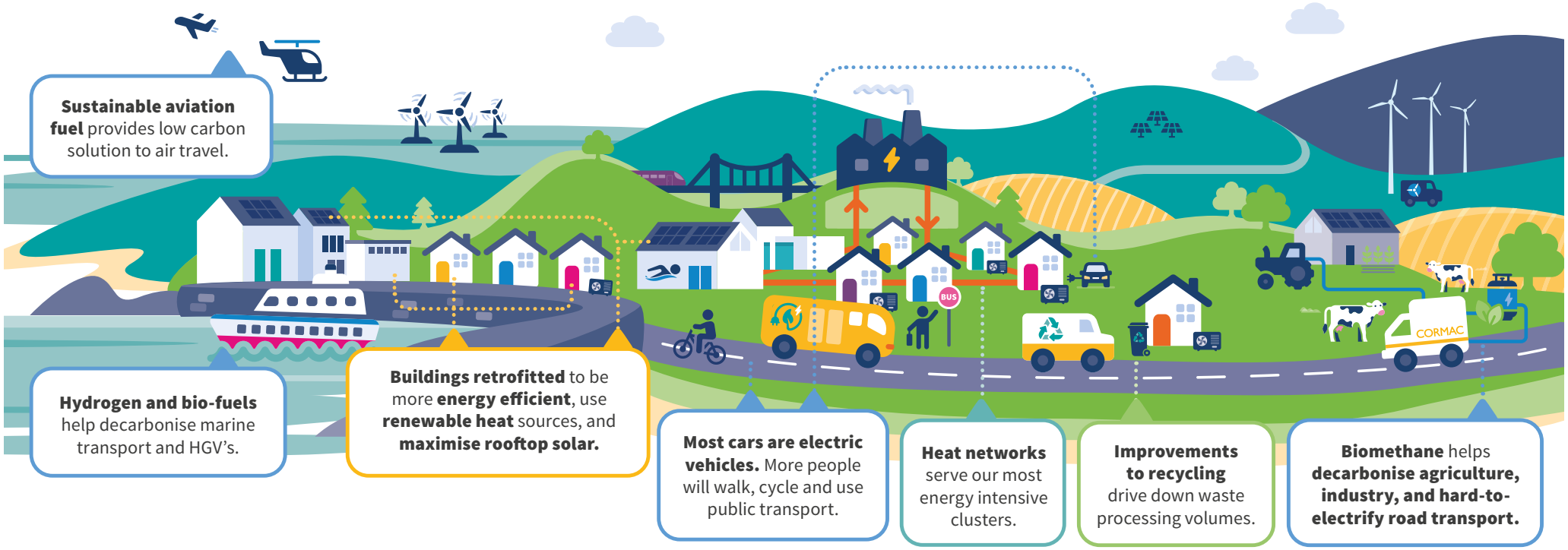
Tackle energy inequalities: Making our homes, businesses and transport greener and more affordable

Improve energy security: Generating, owning and using our energy locally to reduce bills and reduce our reliance on imported energy sources

Retain the benefits locally: Growing our economy through unlocking infrastructure, investment, jobs, skills and supply chain.

Delivered through five Net Zero Missions:

- TRANSITIONING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ALTERNATIVE FUEL SUPPLY
- DECARBONISATION OF BUILDINGS, HEAT AND COOLING DEMAND
- DECARBONISING THE PUBLIC SECTOR ESTATE
- DECARBONISATION OF INDUSTRIAL, WASTE AND AGRICULTURE PROCESSES
- DECARBONISING TRANSPORT



Sustainable aviation fuel provides low carbon solution to air travel.

Hydrogen and bio-fuels help decarbonise marine transport and HGV's.

Buildings retrofitted to be more **energy efficient**, use **renewable heat** sources, and **maximise rooftop solar.**

Most cars are electric vehicles. More people will walk, cycle and use public transport.

Heat networks serve our most energy intensive clusters.

Improvements to recycling drive down waste processing volumes.

Biomethane helps **decarbonise agriculture, industry, and hard-to-electrify road transport.**

Costs and benefits

The plan sets out how much it will cost to change our energy system and what it might mean for us. The Best Outlook could cost as much as £23bn for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This is clearly a lot of money and cannot be paid for by residents and businesses alone.

It is £9.7bn more than estimated costs of keeping things as they are. However, we need to remember that keeping things 'as they are' still needs funding as equipment wears out as it gets older, and we would still need to import energy if we do not generate it within locally.

Investing in the change shown in the Plan (such as clean technologies like renewables, heat pumps, electric vehicles and the infrastructure to support them) is estimated to support 6000 jobs and result in savings in energy bills which can help tackle fuel poverty and improve business resilience.

By 2050, this could cut household energy bills by £620 a year.

Today, most of the electricity and fuels used locally are imported, making residents, businesses, and public bodies reliant on expensive energy supplies like oil and gas. They mainly come from global fossil fuel markets, with much of the money leaving the local economy.

Under the plan set out in the LAEP, Cornwall will produce more electricity than we need each year, meaning we have more control over it and help keep money in Cornwall.

To reach a Net zero energy system by 2050, CIoS requires capital investment of:

£23.9 Billion

The total new investment needed on top of keeping things as they are. Including the cost of large scale renewables.

£9.7 Billion

Including: **£2.2** Billion

In domestic properties, including building fabric upgrades and heating systems but excluding district heating.

Bringing potential local benefits of approximately:

Additional **permanent and temporary** jobs enabled by the investment in Net Zero to 2050

1,008 Temporary jobs

6,004 Permanent jobs

Indicative 2050 total and household domestic **fuel savings**

£620 annual household bill saving

£134.5 Million total domestic fuel saving

£112 Million

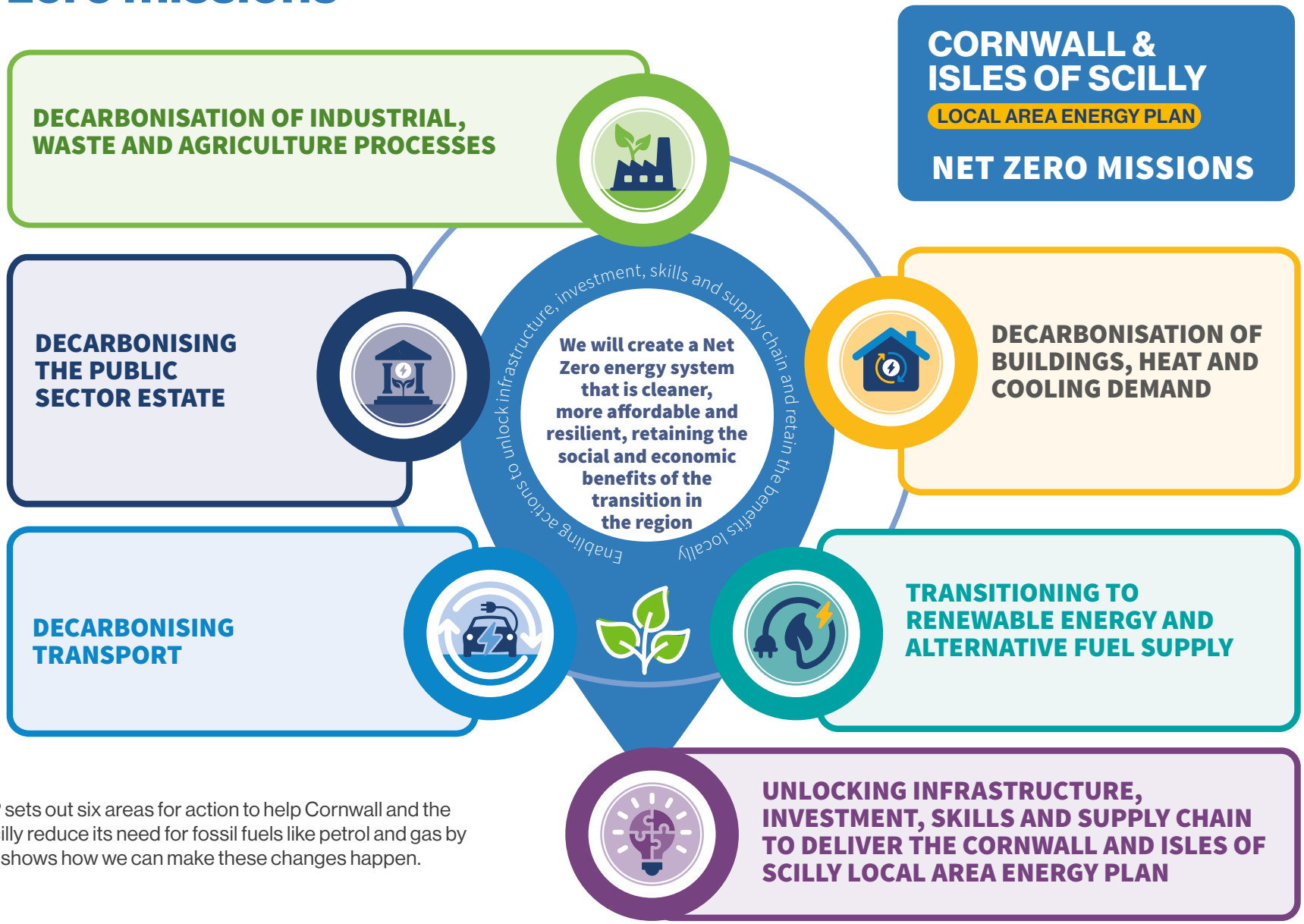
Indicative 2050 total and household domestic **fuel savings**

Delivering: Potential 99% **emissions reductions** from the 2019 baseline.

14,750 ktCO2e

99% decrease from baseline

Net zero missions



The LAEP sets out six areas for action to help Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly reduce its need for fossil fuels like petrol and gas by 2045 and shows how we can make these changes happen.

Creating the conditions for change

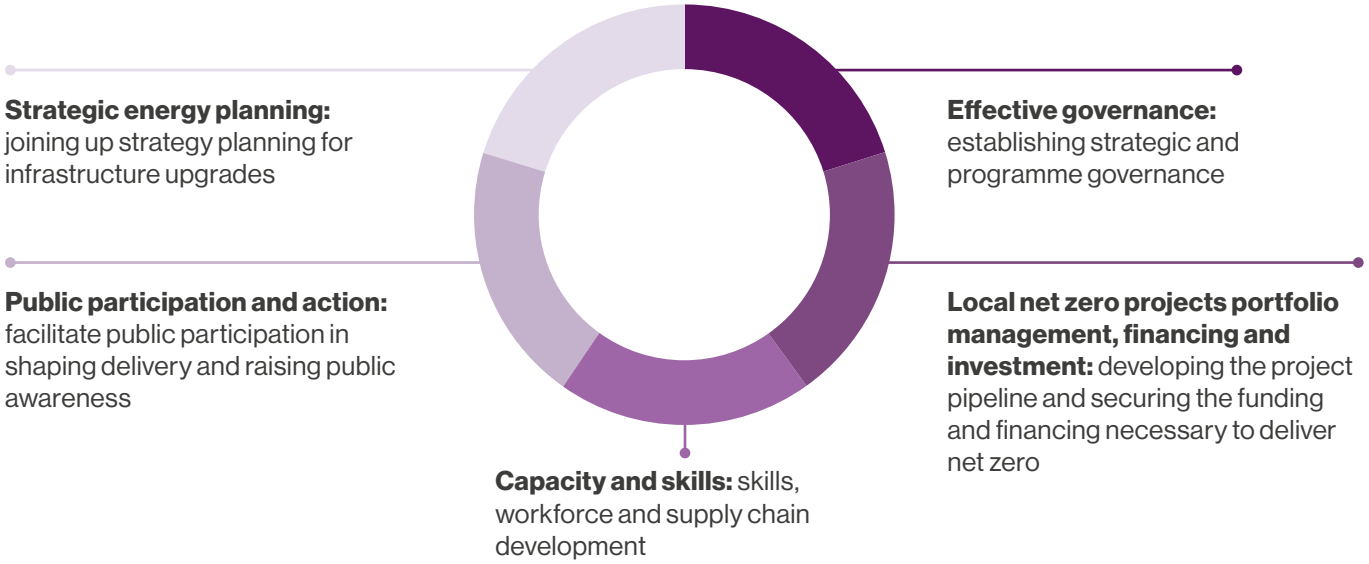
Reducing our need for fossil fuels needs everyone to act from the Council and NHS, businesses, community groups, residents, national partners like energy companies and government bodies. Cornwall must build on its history of partnership and bring people together, learning from past successes and models from elsewhere.

Strong public involvement and support is really important. Residents have already helped shape the LAEP, and there need to be ways to ensure continued involvement as the plan is put into action. This means setting up ways for residents and communities to be part of shaping future plans as well.

Reducing the use of fossil fuels like petrol and gas in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly will need more funding than the government or the council can provide. Local investment plans will need to be developed to allow local people to invest to make sure money stays in the region as well as attracting private funding from other investors to help us move quickly.

There will be a range of jobs and skills needed to deliver projects including engineering skills to design, build, and maintain new technologies alongside a range of business and project management skills. This will give people the chance to retrain and get new skills.

CIoS LEAP Cross cutting actions



Improving the energy grid

If Cornwall wants to meet its electricity demand with local renewables by 2030, meeting Government targets, we will need the electricity grid to be modernised and make it quicker to connect new technologies.

Although some things, like buses and HGV's might use alternative fuels, such as biomethane (from cow manure), most of our future energy—particularly for heating and transport—is likely to rely on electricity.

Investment in the local electricity grid is underway, but we will need more to meet increasing demands from EVs and electric heating. The LAEP hopes to help improve the way local needs are thought about in energy planning locally and nationally.

The headline action areas to help unlock infrastructure, investment, skills and supply chain to deliver the LAEP and help keep the benefits locally are shown in the diagram on this page.

Reducing our **need for fossil fuels** needs everyone to act from the Council and NHS, businesses, community groups, residents, and national partners like energy companies and government bodies.

TRANSITIONING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ALTERNATIVE FUEL SUPPLY

Enable industry, businesses and communities to realise the opportunities presented by established and emerging technologies to power our economy and retain the benefits locally.

- Maximising rooftop solar
- Re-powering existing on-shore wind
- Geothermal for heat and power
- Unlocking the potential of off-shore wind
- Supporting community energy
- Developing alternative fuels

Renewable energy

The LAEP sets out how we can expand renewable energy generation and benefit local people. Our natural resources give us the chance to meet our future electricity needs and help the rest of the country sometimes.

Key renewable interventions

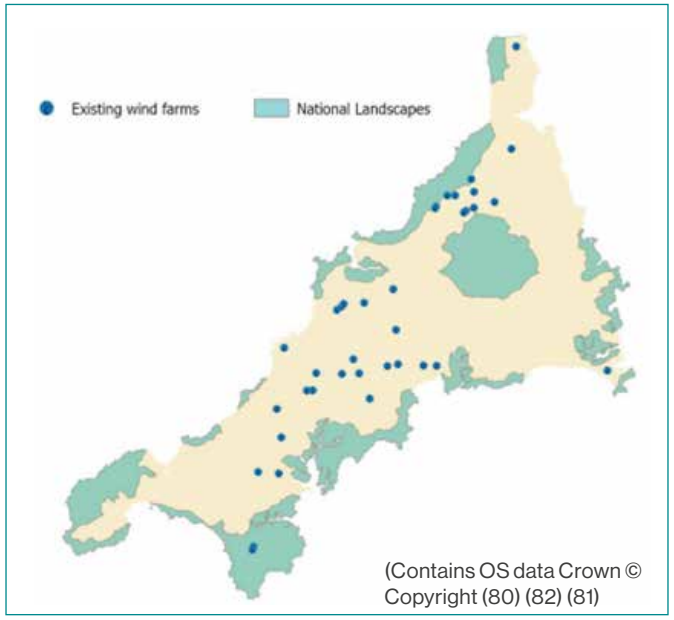
Solar PV

We have already taken great strides in the use of solar on the roofs of our homes and businesses but there is an opportunity to go much further. Rooftop solar will help households and businesses to reduce energy costs and generate additional income through selling what they do not use to others.

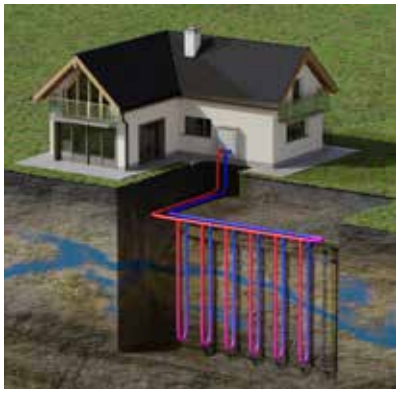
Onshore wind

Although we will need some new wind turbines, replacing Cornwall's existing, older wind turbines with modern, better performing ones gives us an opportunity to increase our energy generation while reducing the need for additional land. Repowering as it is called can, in some cases, mean nearly three times the amount of electricity is generated by a wind farm with less turbines on the same site.

Existing onshore wind sites and national landscapes



Geothermal energy



The granite beneath our feet could provide Cornwall with clean power and renewable heat for some of our houses and industries such as greenhouse-based agriculture, brewing and drying wood.

Accessed through deep (over 2000m deep) or shallow (less than 2000m) wells or through existing mine works, geothermal energy can provide heat and power 24/7 which sets it apart from other renewable energy sources. Cornwall is already leading the way in the UK. There are two deep geothermal projects, one at United Downs near Redruth and one at the the Eden Project. Having drilled the longest and deepest wells in the UK, reaching depths of over 5000ms, the temperature of the fluid coming back to the surface is hot enough to generate electricity.

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Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW)

Although major offshore wind farms are expected to serve national energy demand, Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) could supply Cornwall with renewable electricity in evenings and winter months when solar output is low. Having FLOW as part of Cornwall's future energy mix will complement locally generated solar power to reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels as more and more heating and transportation goes electric. FLOW could also help produce green hydrogen generated from electricity that cannot be used locally, helping to reduce Cornwall's industrial, aviation, and maritime uses of diesel and other fossil fuels.

Alternative fuels

Alternative fuels include hydrogen, gas created from natural or waste sources (such as food, grass or methane/biogas), hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO, that uses waste cooking oil amongst other sources) and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). These will play a critical role in our net zero transition and future energy mix.

£4.0
Billion
Investment required

5,962
Permanent jobs

The use of alternative fuels will be important in sectors like **aviation, maritime, heavy-duty** and **specialist road vehicles, agriculture,** and **industry**.

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Actions

The actions in the plan that will help deliver our renewable energy and alternative fuel supply mission are:

- Maximise the use of solar panels on buildings
- Support communities to benefit from renewable energy
- Make the most of our existing wind turbines to provide as much energy as possible to reduce how many new sites are needed (called ‘re-powering’)
- Support the development of geothermal energy
- Support the development of alternative fuels (including hydrogen and biomethane)
- Unlock the potential of offshore wind opportunities
- Work with government to achieve Cornwall’s energy ambitions

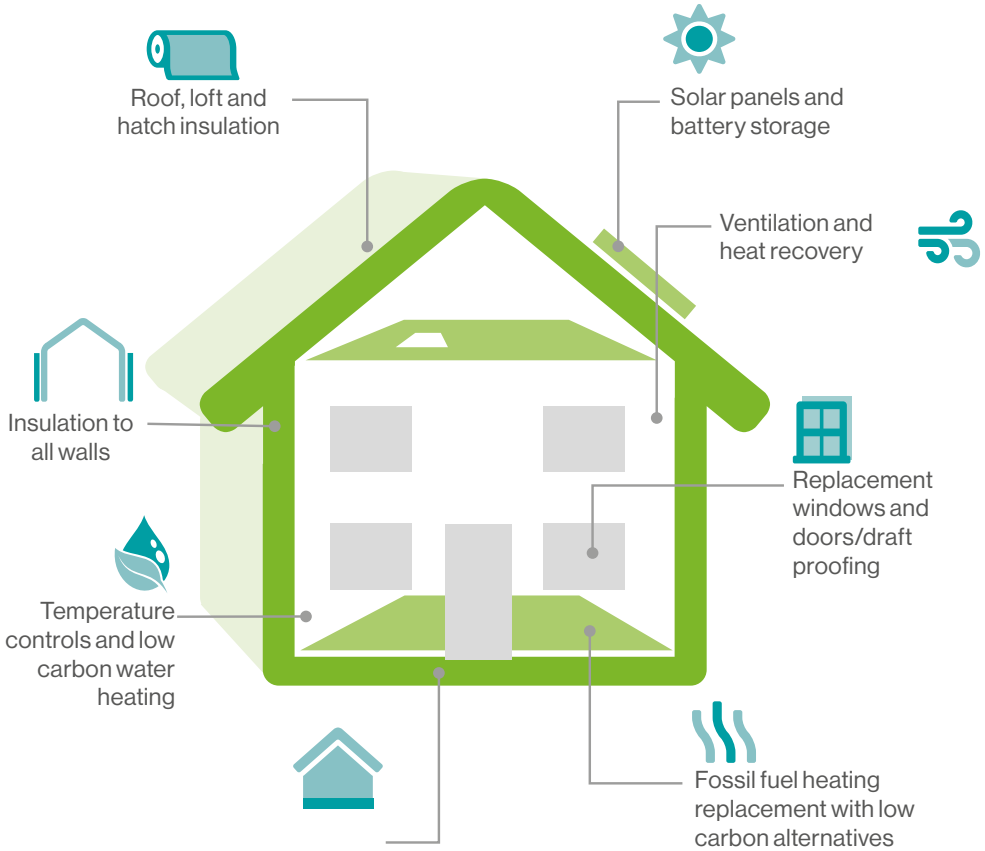
DECARBONISATION OF BUILDINGS, HEAT AND COOLING DEMAND

Tackle fuel poverty by working with government, homeowners and housing providers to improve household energy efficiency in new and existing properties. Unlock the deployment of low carbon heating and cooling technologies and maximise opportunities for heat networks where appropriate.

- Improving energy efficiency of buildings
- Replacing fossil fuel boilers with heat pumps
- Heat networks
- Building zero carbon building standards into new builds

Our homes and other buildings

A big challenge is that our homes and other buildings could use over half of all energy use by 2050. Action is needed to reduce how much electricity we use and how much gas and oil is needed to heat our buildings. To do this, we need to support people to save energy, to reduce the need for heating and cooling in our buildings, add more solar panels to generate our own electricity, and move away from the need for oil and gas heating systems. A key goal is to ensure homes meet good standards; with at least an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C.



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Key homes and other buildings interventions

Improving our buildings

Over 60% of Cornwall's homes have an EPC rating of D or below. This means that most homes in Cornwall will need some energy efficiency improvements, helping to reduce the amount of energy we use and lower bills for residents, helping to reduce levels of fuel poverty.

Homes in Cornwall have low levels of loft insulation, with 51% of the homes requiring more, compared to 38% nationally. Improving roof insulation levels in homes is an easy way to reduce the energy we use, lower bills and improve comfort levels for residents.

Cornwall Council focuses on helping low-income and vulnerable households with things like insulation, installing heat pumps and other energy-saving upgrades. Public Health Cornwall works with Inclusion Cornwall and local partners through the Winter Wellbeing Partnership to find eligible households, help them access funding, and make sure the upgrades are done to a high standard.

Private landlords renting homes have to make sure they have an EPC of at least band E. However, the UK Government is currently consulting on increasing the requirement for private rented homes to meet EPC band C by 2030.

Buildings that are not homes are all very different, with more complex needs and uses. Measures will need to be considered carefully for each individual building to limit the disruption on a business when being installed.

Low regret measures

- ✓ **Loft insulation**
- ✓ **Cavity wall insulation**
- ✓ **Draught proofing**
- ✓ **LED lighting upgrades**

Extensive retrofit measures

- ✓ **Solid wall insulation**
- ✓ **Floor insulation**
- ✓ **Glazing upgrades**

Moving away from oil and gas heating systems

Reducing our use of fossil fuels as a source of energy will need a mass replacement of current gas and oil boilers. This aligns with the UK Government plans to phase out oil and gas boilers by 2035.

Air source heat pumps (ASHPs), that take heat from the air and use electricity to heat it, are expected to be the most common option because they cost less to install. However, ground source heat pumps (GSHPs), taking heat from the ground, will also play an important role, especially in places where a system can be shared across multiple properties - like the recent Heat the Streets project in Stithians.

The lack of access to the mains gas network for many buildings across Cornwall has resulted in higher energy bills. People are forced to use more expensive fuel sources such as oil, electric, LPG and coal. However, as heat pump performance improves and we move to clean power this could be a real opportunity for Cornwall.

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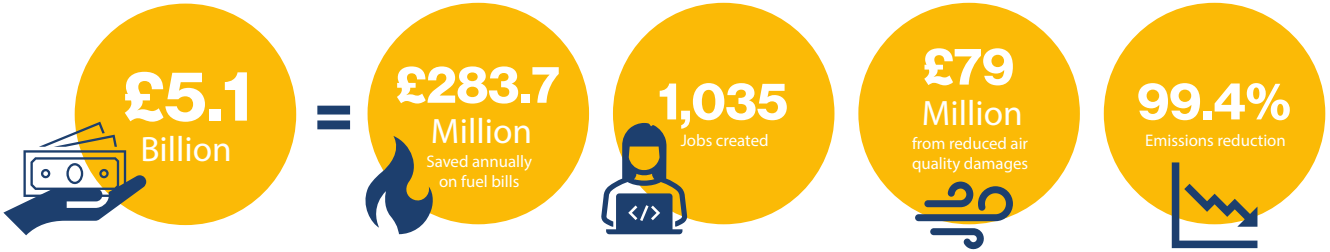
Heat networks

Renewable heat networks could provide a way of delivering heat in some, suitable areas. Geothermal projets capture heat that can be used in shared heat networks (called a 'district heating system') and for industrial sites.

While heat networks may not always be the cheapest option for homes, they become more affordable where there are large heat users (anchor loads) like businesses or industries. Large-scale new build developments, such as Langarth Garden Village, could be an opportunity for a district heat network. The amount of heat needed in some parts of Cornwall such as Camborne, Pool and Redruth, Truro, St Austell, and Falmouth and Penryn, have been identified for further investigation as places for heat networks in the future.

The actions needed to help deliver our buildings mission are listed on the next page;



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DECARBONISING THE PUBLIC SECTOR ESTATE

Coordinate action across public sector partners to reduce carbon and costs by accelerating the transition to low carbon practices.

- Deploying renewable energy across the public sector estate
- Reducing energy demand and decarbonising heat

Our public buildings

As one of the largest energy consumers and employers in Cornwall, the public sector - incuding Cornwall Council, the NHS and Police have a responsibility to lead by example in moving away from using fossil fuels, reducing energy use, and adopting clean energy solutions like solar panels. By moving away from fossil fuels public sector organisations can reduce their costs and help create a demand for private businesses to fill, helping to create jobs.

Key public sector actions

Making better use of public sector buildings

Make better use of the buildings and reduce distances that people are travelling by bringing teams together in more local settings. This is already happening with the NHS working with Cornwall Council in a number of places. Reducing the amount of buildings will also reduce the cost of changing heat systems and running costs. It could also help move services close to people reducing the need for travel.

Maximising solar potential

Lots of public sector organisations have already started using solar panels to help reduce energy bills, but there is more that could be done. For example, Cornwall Council is already putting solar on all suitable council buildings and has its first solar car park canopy.

Heating public sector buildings

The majority of public sector buildings will move to air or ground source heat pumps for heating their buildings. Public sector buildings could also have an important role in providing a reliable and consistent heat demand for heat networks, particularly in the Truro, St Austell and Redruth areas. This is neccessary to make them financially viable. Alongside this, it is also important to make public sector buildings as energy efficient as possible by investing in upgrades to lighting, windows and insulation.

Actions

The actions in the plan that will help reduce carbon emissions from the public sector are:

Public sector organisations to all work together to:

- reduce overall energy needs, including by sharing buildings
- Continue to replace heating systems with renewable sources
- Continue to maximise renewable energy across the public sector estate

DECARBONISATION OF INDUSTRIAL, WASTE AND AGRICULTURE PROCESSES

Strengthen engagement with local businesses to understand their energy use and facilitate opportunities to accelerate their net zero transition, reducing bill and improving business resilience. Alongside promoting activities to decarbonise waste collection and processing, including opportunities for the generation of green gases.

- Smart Local Energy Systems
- Hydrogen for high temperatures processes
- Biomethane and bio-gas to support on farm energy

Industry, waste, and agriculture

The use of oil and gas in high-temperature industrial processes and heavy-duty equipment make it really difficult to reduce fossil fuel use by our industries.

However, more renewables energy could help move some of the processes and equipment to be powered by electricity which could also make the processes cheaper. Hydrogen, that can be generated from unused renewable electricity could also be used by high temperature processes like the production of china clay or the processing of lithium.

Although it will be challenging for businesses, there are also opportunities to use any waste heat available from processing, mines and waste treatment, along with capturing methane from agriculture to produce an alternative fuel.

Extractive industries (mining)

As extractive industries grow in Cornwall, energy demand will rise. In areas like the St Austell Clay Country, home to major china clay and lithium operations, there is a chance to bring together a group of high energy users to make better use of local renewable energy and support hydrogen production to replace fossil fuels in high-temperature processing and fuel heavy vehicles used during the mining process.

Waste processing

Waste treatment in Cornwall offers ways to generate energy and biofuels. If a suitable user can be found there are opportunities to use the waste heat generated from the Cornwall Energy Recovery Centre. Another option is to develop a food waste processing facility to create biogas, which could be used for energy or added to the gas network.

Agriculture

Cutting emissions from farm energy use and machinery in Cornwall is challenging. Although Cornwall has the chance to produce Biogas and biomethane made from waste like food, manure or sewage. If farming methods change—like using more grass cuttings or capturing more gas from slurry pits — we could make even more.

Producing and using biomethane directly on farms is a big opportunity. Biomethane could also play a role in powering industries and transport systems that are hard to switch to electricity. Cornwall could supply all the biomethane needed locally with the right support.

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Actions

The actions in the plan that will help reduce carbon emissions from industry, waste, and agriculture are:

- Support information sharing between businesses
- Explore opportunities for businesses to work together to reduce their carbon emissions
- Support and promote energy independent farming - enabling farmers to use energy generated on-site, such as biomethane
- Continue to develop ways to reduce carbon emissions from waste collection and processing

DECARBONISING TRANSPORT

Work with government, regional, and national partners to advance transport electrification and support the transition to low-carbon fuels, reduce travel demand, and promote sustainable travel modes. Alongside exploring opportunities to decarbonise freight, aviation, and maritime sectors.

- Planning for transport decarbonisation
- Fleet decarbonisation
- Demand reduction and modal shift
- Rail connectivity and decarbonisation
- Green travel planning
- Maritime and aviation decarbonisation

Transport

Cornwall's Local Transport Plan published in 2022 recognises the need to encourage walking, cycling, and public transport to provide people with choices for their journeys and help reduce emissions. However, given how rural our area is, we expect that cars will still be a necessary way for people to travel.

Road transport

Electric Vehicles (EVs) already make up about 15% of new car sales in the UK, and this is expected to rise with government plans to end new petrol and diesel car sales by 2030. Although there are currently less EVs in Cornwall than there are across the rest of the country the amount will grow as they get cheaper and battery range and access to public charge points continues to improve. To meet the rising demand for charging, Cornwall needs a strong, accessible public charging network for residents, visitors, and business fleets. Private chargepoint operators are expected to increase the network in busy areas, while Cornwall Council will need government funding to fill in any gaps.

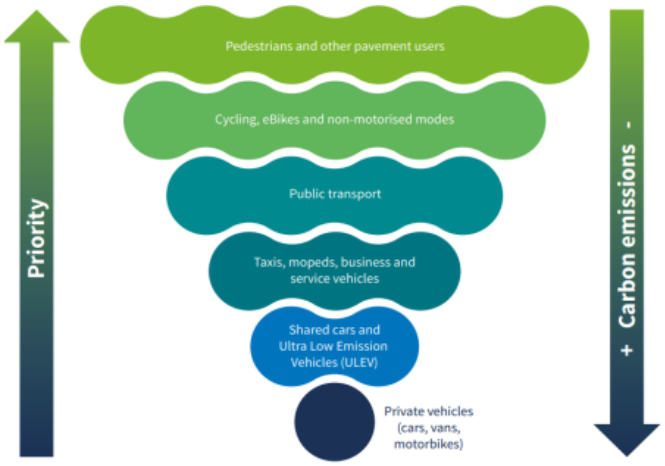
In the future hydrogen is expected to have an important role in fuelling bigger vehicles like buses and HGVs. In the short-term however, biofuels like biomethane and Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) are likely to be used until electric or hydrogen solutions become more widespread.

Rail, maritime and aviation

By 2050 we think the main railway line in and out of Cornwall and our branch lines will use battery-electric passenger trains. Until then, a mix of trains using diesel and electric power will be used.

Different ways to fuel flights are still developing but it looks like planes will move to hydrogen fuel cells, and helicopter routes will use Sustainable Aviation Fuel. This is because they will need to align with the government's Jet Zero Strategy and move away from fossil fuels by 2050.

Cornwall's ports and harbours will need to change to meet the needs of new types of boats. This will include adding electric charge points for smaller boats and the need for hydrogen storage and refuelling stations for larger boats. HVO could also be a different fuel for diesel boats.



This diagram shows which transport users should be prioritised in Council plans.

£14.8 Billion investment required = **£10** million from reduced quality damages

99.7% Emissions reduction

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- Demand reduction and modal shift
- Rail connectivity and decarbonisation
- Green travel planning
- Maritime and aviation decarbonisation

Actions

The actions in the plan that will help reduce carbon emissions from transport are:

- Support more sustainable travel and transport
- Continue to install more electric vehicle (EV) charge points
- Support the switch to low carbon vehicles in public organisations (e.g. councils, NHS, police) and businesses
- Explore opportunities for organisations to work together on green travel plans and vehicle sharing
- Continue to work with rail providers to improve train connections
- Better understand energy use in maritime and aviation to identify ways to cut carbon emissions

Next steps

The LAEP has brought people and organisations together from across the region to develop a plan on how to change (transition) the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly energy system in the future. To support greater energy security, make better use of the renewable energy resources we have in our area (for example solar, wind, geothermal and biomethane) and to ensure that the benefits are felt locally (jobs, new skills and economic impact). Developing a plan is just the start of the process. The next steps are:

- Work in partnership across the area to set up a way to deliver the actions needed to change our energy system
- Develop the projects we need, including identifying the finance and investment needed to deliver them
- Represent Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly in regional and national energy planning meetings to ensure our grid and other infrastructure needs are addressed

If you would like this information in another format or language please contact us:

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