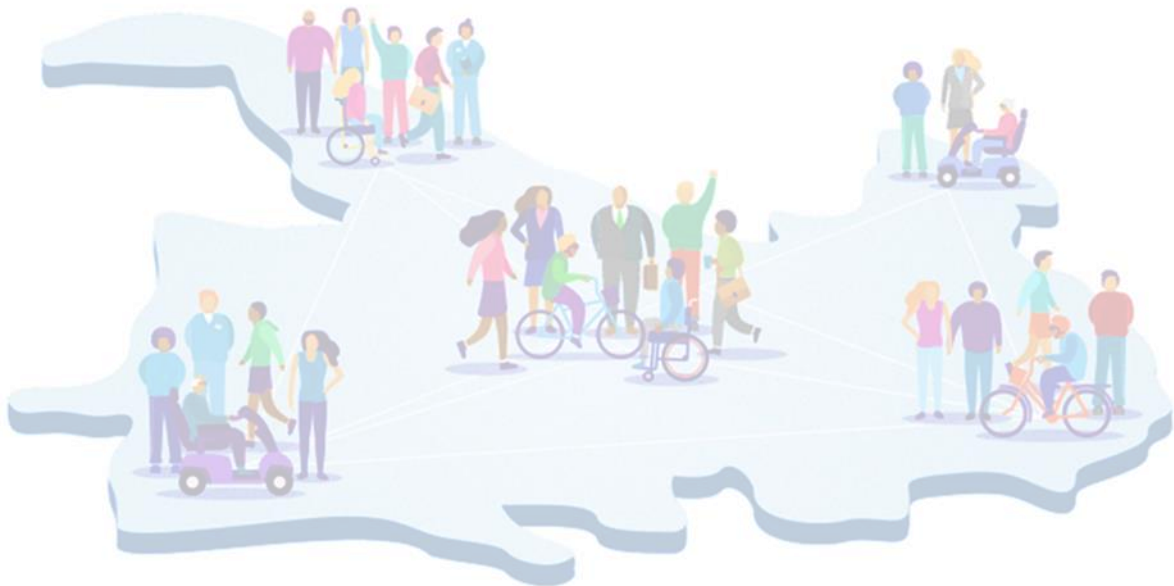


Adult Social Care Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2022 – 2027



Introduction

On 8th October 2019 Members of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council unanimously agreed the following statement of intent to protect the environment:

"Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council recognises the gravity of the climate change emergency and will through its Climate Change Prospectus seek to minimise the environmental impacts of its own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action.

There is an increasing recognition that the problems of climate change, air pollution and reduction of species & biodiversity need to be treated together. Few any longer dispute the existence of the actual problem of climate change. However, the solution requires a recognition that action on many fronts is needed by government, businesses, and individuals, across the globe. We will work with nature, rather than against it, to ensure continued economic success of Solihull in the interests of all its people.

We will work with residents and our partners to navigate a best route to protect the environment. There needs to be a just transition for our residents and for business, taking them with us, so as to protect employment and avoid adverse effects on our people, our economy and our communities."

The Solihull Council Plan recognises the gravity of the climate change emergency. Adult Social Care is all about supporting people to live well at home, and environmental and climate change plans are essential to achieving this. We also know that the effects of climate change and issues such as air pollution are experienced more severely by the poorest in society, so addressing this area also contributes to enhancing social justice. Furthermore, the governments [UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022](#) highlights the implications from climate change for the future delivery of health and social care.

Our Environmental Sustainability Vision, in common with our Directorate vision, is "Making a difference in the right way, every day". We are developing an approach to working together to deliver sustainable services with a 'low carbon' impact in Solihull, as part of our contribution to the Council's intent to protect the environment.



What is our approach?

Improving our approach to environmental sustainability means taking positive action to minimise the environmental impacts of our activities whilst continuing to deliver long-term high-quality services in a financially prudent way.

The objectives of our actions plan are:

- To articulate and celebrate the positive experiences associated with sustainable living and how this will improve our lives and the lives of people we support
- To embed sustainability and carbon reduction throughout the Directorate, through our systems, processes, and culture
- To embrace new opportunities that improve the sustainability of services
- To achieve and report on measurable reductions in our carbon footprint
- To establish the directorate as an exemplar of low carbon adult social care
- To ensure our future plans and contingency arrangements mitigate the risks for the future delivery of health and social care

All plans and actions must take account of the latest Covid-19 related Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidance, and associated use of single-use plastics and harsh cleaning products which, we are required to use by associated local and national guidance. Working with our partners, Solihull's Adult Social Care Directorate will be the catalyst for change to achieve:

Sustainable Service Delivery – how we deliver services

Sustainable Commissioning – how we commission services

Sustainable You – how all of us as individuals and teams can support sustainability



Our story so far

We commissioned the building of an award winning, highly sustainable, and efficient A rated care home facility to act as an exemplar building for the standard of future new build designs.



The building design elements included a full roof of integrated solar photovoltaics, reversible ground source heat pumps (GSHP) for both heating and active cooling applications with desuperheaters for hot water generation and ground loops for passive cooling.

We have championed smarter ways of working across the directorate and embraced the use of digital platforms for meetings.



74.4 tonnes

These changes have resulted in a **61%** reduction in business miles from 223k miles in 2018/19 to 87.7k miles in 2021/22.

An additional consequence of smarter ways of working is the reduction of home to work travel and further work is planned to quantify this.

The impact of working from home and the increased use of emails to send documents has seen a **64%** reduction in the number of pages printed across the directorate from 750k pages 2019/20 compared to 272k pages in 2021/22.

478,074

A4 sheets

28,684

kg carbon

9,561

kWh energy

In support of our objective to deliver sustainable services with a 'low carbon' impact in Solihull, the council has commenced the procurement process to replace the 7 vehicles used by our SMBC residential homes for learning disabilities, with electric vehicles.



19,433 items of returned equipment were processed for reuse by the Community Equipment Service. The purchase value of these items would have been £2.1m and is an example of the opportunities to achieve both environmental and financial sustainability.



In support of the sustainability of our commissioned care services and workforce, we have utilised workforce and retention grants to provide funding to three care providers to use hybrid or electric vehicles. At a time of increasing fuel costs, this is supporting providers to deliver **over 180 care miles per week** using electric or hybrid vehicles as well as achieving improved workforce recruitment and retention.



Additionally, we have also purchased two electric mopeds which will be used by home care providers to travel around the borough, delivering care to people at home, further reducing the environmental impact of social care provision in Solihull.

The Day Services South Team (Parkview Building) have established a Sustainability Champions Staff Group, working with people who attend the day centre to improve sustainability of the centre. Taking proactive steps to **raise environmental awareness and change culture**, through events such as 'switch off fortnight' to monitor and reduce energy usage and improving recycling to reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfill.



Supported by the Corporate Energy Officer the group continue to progress actions to monitor and improve the energy efficiency of the building.

Through the Adult Social Care Directorate Communication Brief we continue to raise awareness and share 'sustainability' articles to promote opportunities for change, including tips to reduce the use of single use plastics, promotion of sustainable transport options, and energy saving tips when working from home.



Sustainable Service Delivery

Overarching aim

To understand and reduce the environmental impacts of our service delivery.

Objectives

Improve the energy usage within our buildings

Improve the sustainability of business-related travel

Understand and act on the causes of our carbon impact

Key actions

- Continue to investigate the opportunities for improving energy usage in our buildings.
- Continue to raise awareness of actions for a sustainable workplace.
- Promote alternatives to car-based travel to minimise the amount of business miles travelled.
- Maximise opportunities to minimise the carbon impact of 'community equipment delivery' related travel.
- Maximise the opportunities for agile working for support staff to work from home.
- Maximise the use of electronic systems and processes to reduce the use of paper and hard copy documents.
- Maximise the use of and the developments in technology enabled care.
- Maximise the recycling of stock and equipment by the Community Equipment Service.
- Monitor the levels of printing across ASC and investigate areas of high usage to identify opportunities for reduction.
- Improve recycling in our workplace.



Sustainable Commissioning

Overarching aim

To positively influence the sustainability performance of the care providers in Solihull and the sustainability credentials of the goods and services that we purchase.

Objectives

Ensure our commissioning activity supports carbon reduction

Maximise sustainable travel opportunities for commissioned services

Source sustainable products and services

Key actions

- Consider and act on environmental impacts and benefits within tender processes when commissioning, including the use local suppliers or services where possible.
- Commission services that connect the provision of care and support and the well-being benefits from activities that support sustainability.
- Recognise and celebrate sustainability achievements of the services we commission.
- Support opportunities to minimise the carbon impact of 'home care' related travel.
- Pilot and support the use of electric and alternatives to car-based travel for the care workforce.
- Identify opportunities to use sustainable products and materials to reduce the impact on the environment.
- Commit to work with NHS partners to share learning and identify opportunities to work together.
- To evaluate and learn from the environmental sustainability design of our first care home with an 'A' rated EPC to influence future standards for new buildings.
- To work with the care market to develop contingency arrangements to mitigate the risks from climate change for the future delivery of health and social care.



Sustainable You

Overarching aim

To raise awareness of the impact we all have as individuals, either at work or at home, on the environment and the actions and opportunities for change.

Objectives

Encourage sustainable travel opportunities for travel to work

Maximise recycling of personal and office waste

Raise awareness of lifestyle changes, well-being, and financial benefits of sustainability

Key actions

- Promote and encourage the use of sustainable travel arrangements to and from work.
- Launch a directorate employee sustainability charter.
- Include information on carbon reduction & sustainability within the directorates' induction process.
- Enable staff to share and suggest practical improvements for carbon savings and sustainability.
- Share information to promote opportunities for change to improve sustainable living.
- Promote the health and well-being benefits from supporting sustainable wildlife and nature activities and volunteering.



Our Aspirations for 2027

In five years, we hope the actions in this plan will mean that:

- We have switched to electric vehicles for all SMBC vehicles used across the Directorate.
- Non-petrol/diesel forms of transport for homecare are mainstreamed.
- We have achieved our first carbon 'net neutral' home care visit.
- We have reduced the energy consumption in our buildings.
- We have reduced the amount of waste we produce and where this is not possible, we maximise opportunities for reuse or recycle.
- Where available, we have switched to environmentally sustainable products.
- Through our commissioning actions and influence we support social value supply chain to use local suppliers or services where possible.
- We have evaluated the impact of our first care home with an 'A' rated EPC and significant sustainable features, e.g., ground source heat pump and full roof of integrated solar photovoltaics, to evaluate both carbon savings and energy cost savings, to inform future developments.
- We have contingency arrangements in place to respond the risks from climate change for the future delivery of adult social care.



**YOUR
FUTURE
SOLIHULL**

Solihull Adult Social Care

**Making a difference in the right way,
every day**

