



Environmental Action Plan Phase 1

Environmental Working Party

Reducing Carbon Emissions, Enhancing Biodiversity,
Building Community Resilience, Raising Awareness

**For Helston Town Council to Become
Carbon Neutral by 2030**

To be reviewed in January 2025

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Introduction

In 2019, following lobbying from members of its community, Helston Town Council (HTC) declared a Climate Emergency ([Appendix I](#)), alongside Cornwall Council and the UK Parliament. This Climate Emergency Declaration recognises the existential threat posed by [climate change](#) to all our communities, locally and globally, now and in the future.

Human activity has led to the excessive release of [greenhouse gases](#) (of which carbon dioxide is the most abundant), causing [global warming](#) which has led to serious changes in our climate and ecological systems.

There is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all¹. The world is on track for a 2.7°C temperature rise if greenhouse gas emissions from human activity is not halved by the end of this decade².

The 1.5°C target set in the Paris Agreement has already been breached, with a 50:50 chance that within the next 5 years there will be an annual average year over 1.5°C ^{3}.

Preventing excessive global temperature rise is essential to sustaining ecosystems and to enable people to live with health, food, and water security and reduce the risk of conflict within and between nations. It will require almost everyone on the planet (from individuals to organisations to nations) to make changes to how we share the planet's resources.

Since the climate emergency declaration, at Helston Town Council, we have been reviewing policies and making changes to how we deliver our services and manage our assets. The Environmental Policy Statement was updated in November 2021 using Cornwall Council's local government guidance as a framework, developing HTC's most robust Environmental Policy to date. Other progress includes:

- changing our electricity provider so that our energy comes from renewables;
- swapping a leased diesel vehicle for a leased electric vehicle;
- beginning the process of divesting (this means changing financial services to reduce climate related impacts);
- investigating improving the efficiency of the Guildhall heating system;
- planning to install solar panels on the roof to harvest our own renewable energy;
- adding climate and ecological literacy training to officers learning and development schedule and promoting it for members. [Appendix II](#)
- *and* a current trial of managing our outdoor and green spaces without using pesticides.

¹ **AR6 Synthesis Report** [IPCC — Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change]
<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/resources/spm-headline-statements/>

² **Emissions Gap Report 2021** [UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme]
<https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2021>

³ **Temporary breaching of 1.5C in next five years?** [Met Office]
<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/press-office/news/weather-and-climate/2022/decadal-forecast-2022>

(See 'Summary of Helston Town Council Environmental Actions 2018-2023' in [Appendix II](#))

The Environmental Working Party Remit

Until now, we had not formed a coherent plan as to how we will achieve the goals set out in our climate emergency declaration.

To address this in a more strategic way, HTC formed a working party made up of officers and councillors with public representation called "The Environmental Working Party" (EWP) ([see Appendix III](#)), with the following remit:

The Environmental Working Party shall:

Phase 1

- *produce a Carbon Footprint Reduction Action Plan detailing previously agreed actions to reduce the Council's carbon emissions;*
- *draft future recommended actions which are clearly defined, measurable and monitored reduction targets for carbon emissions in line with the Helston Town Council's commitment to be Carbon Neutral by 2030;*
- *oversee implementation and monitor the Town Council's progress in achieving the targets from the Action Plan. As part of the monitoring, the Working Party will, at least annually, identify the level of carbon produced by Helston Town Council using an appropriate Carbon Footprint Tool;*

Phase 2

- *produce an Environmental Action plan to include all the Town Council's services and responsibilities with the goal of maximising the Council's positive impact on the environment and minimising harm; and*
- *conduct an investigation of the Town Council's options to work with the community to achieve carbon neutrality for the Parish of Helston by 2030.*

(from *Environmental Working Party Terms of Reference Terms of Reference* in [Appendix II](#))

This Environmental Action Plan has been produced in response to Phase 1 – to enable a journey towards Helston Town Council being carbon neutral by 2030.

HTC will be [carbon neutral](#) when all the things it does that produce greenhouse gases are stopped or minimised, the things that it does that take greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere (a process known as [sequestration](#)) are maximised - such as tree planting - and any unavoidable emissions are offset or inset until the Carbon Emissions = Zero. You can find

out more about this challenge and why it is so important on Cornwall Council's website⁴. For further details about offsetting and insetting see page 12.

The Wider Response in Helston in Relation to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

Many community groups and organisations in and around Helston have taken a lead on the climate and ecological emergency, (e.g. Helston Climate Action Group, Extinction Rebellion, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth) with grass roots action, projects, information sharing, outreach, collaborations and lobbying. In addition, many community groups, individuals, organisations and businesses are taking action themselves, including Helston Medical Centre and our local schools.

Helston Climate Action Group (HCAG) produced the Helston Climate Action Plan (HCAP) in September 2019, which was unanimously endorsed by HTC in the same year⁵. It was one of the first Community Climate Action Plans to be written in the UK. The HCAP was co-created with the community of Helston, with suggestions for different projects that would support Helston in reducing carbon emissions, enhance biodiversity and build community resilience. Many of these projects have been developed by HCAG in partnership with other individuals and organisations in and around Helston.

In many ways, these members of our community are the experts, and their experience is a critical resource. As a Town Council we need to develop the partnership opportunities that we have with all our community members to reduce the threat of climate breakdown and ecological collapse.

Successful action will require our parish and community to work together to scale up our impact for

- Achieving carbon neutrality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity
- Adaptation, building resilience and Emergency Planning

The EWP has summarised actions to date with respect to protecting and enhancing biodiversity, adaptation and emergency planning and supporting community action and awareness raising. ([Appendix II](#)) but there is much more that we need to do together to reduce the multiple threats that we face.

⁴ **The Carbon Neutral Challenge** [Cornwall Council]

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/the-carbon-neutral-challenge/>

⁵ **Helston Climate Action Plan** [Helston Climate Action Group]

<https://www.helstonclimateaction.earth/climate-action-plan/>

Finally, in addition to declaring a climate emergency, in December 2019 Helston Town Council declared itself an Earth Protector Town⁶, and has many outstanding actions in relation to this declaration. ([See Appendix IV](#))

These issues will be investigated further in Phase 2 of this work.

Feedback

If you have any enquiries about the content of the action plan or any suggestions, you are encouraged to contact the councillors involved, the Senior or Deputy Clerk, or attend one of the HTC formal meetings where the members of the public are invited to speak about issues either on the agenda or that affect the residents, organisations, businesses or visitors of Helston. We welcome your attendance and input.

In addition, you can find out more using the links in [Appendix II](#) or on the Helston Town Council website.

What is a Carbon Footprint?

Almost everything that we do has the potential to either release greenhouse gases into the environment (for example driving a car or buying products from overseas) or to remove it from the environment (for example buying locally produced organic food – which supports soil health – healthy soil is a powerful store of carbon, or planting and caring for a tree).

Greenhouse gas is measured in “Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent” or tCO₂e.

The amount of greenhouse gases emitted or stored (sequestered) by an individual, community or organisation can be measured and is called a [carbon footprint](#) and can be calculated for an organisation using a greenhouse gas audit or accounting tool.

There are some emissions that are easy to measure (for example, because we can say exactly how much electricity or gas we are using). These are called Scope 1 and 2 emissions.

Others are more difficult to measure – for example, how much greenhouse gas was emitted during the extraction of materials and fabrication of things we buy from overseas, how much greenhouse gas was emitted as a result of where our money is invested or the greenhouse gas emissions associated with our computer or telephone system. These are called Scope 3 emissions. In these cases, we do the best we can to reduce our negative impact and maximise our positive impact, even though we may only be able to estimate the emissions we are responsible for. (*See figure 1*)

⁶ **Earth Protector Towns** | <https://earthprotectorcommunities.net/towns/>

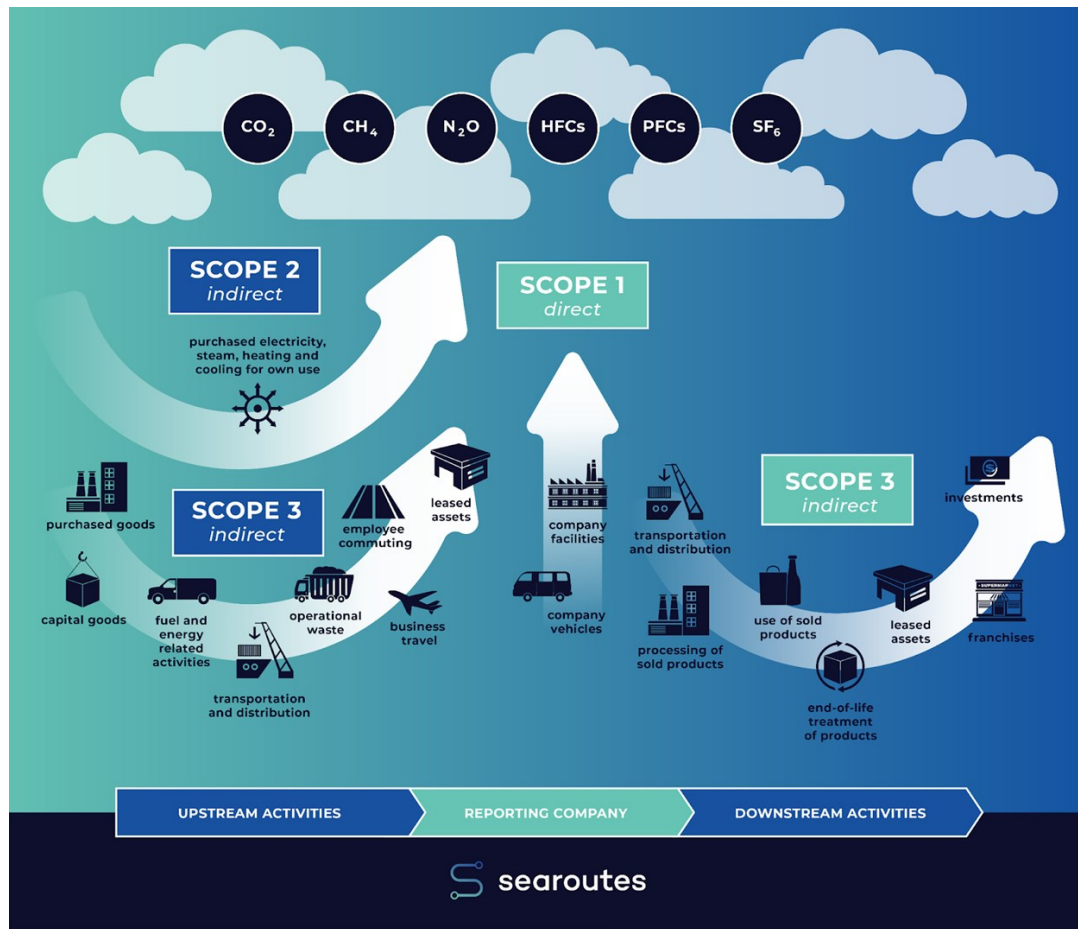


Figure 1

Other factors make it challenging to measure and compare figures accurately from year to year. For example, the organisation that is responsible for the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool updates the annual emissions factors from the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero, which results in changes in greenhouse gas emissions calculations, even when there have been no changes in consumption. This has the potential to make it more difficult to compare each year's emissions and establish if progress has been made.

In addition, as measurement of Scope 3 emissions is better informed, we can measure our impact for activities previously unknown, which has the effect of increasing our carbon footprint on paper - adding further challenge to our comparisons year on year.

These examples highlight the complexity of this work as new information emerges, and what a challenging task this is - nevertheless it is extremely important we do what we can to measure or estimate our impact and reduce our demand for all resources in line with the energy hierarchy. (see figure 2)

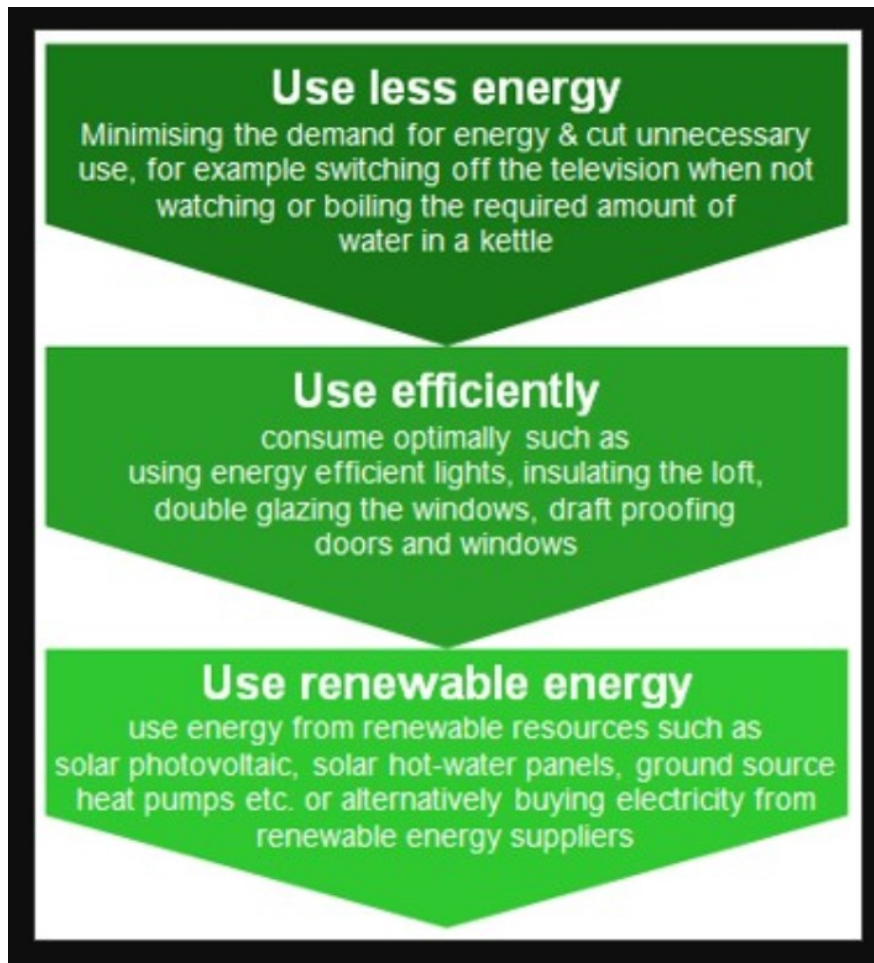


Figure 2 - Source: National Energy Action

Organisational Greenhouse Gas Audit of Helston Town Council

HTC conducted its first organisational Carbon Audit for the period of 2019-2020, where it looked at all the things it does that create carbon emissions and that can be measured, such as using electricity, heating buildings, running vehicles, waste management and using water. The Carbon Audit was completed using the Local Partnerships Green House Gas (GHG) Accounting Tool⁷ This has been repeated for annual figures since and details are shown below (see figures 3, 4 and 5).

In addition, we are now able to calculate the tCO₂e impact of money that we hold in two of the banks we have used over the same period⁸. We can also estimate the impact of money that we hold with two other services using the same online tool. It becomes very clear from the data in Figures 6, 7 and 8 that the impact of banking and investments is on a much bigger scale than all other emissions data combined. This is why taking steps to reduce the

⁷ **Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool** [Local Partnerships]
<https://localpartnerships.gov.uk/resources/greenhouse-gas-accounting-tool>

⁸ MotherTree | <https://www.mymothertree.com/>

climate related impact of our financial services is so important if we are to reach our target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Scope 1	<i>(unit is tons of CO₂ equivalent, or tCO_{2e})</i>			
Heating	7.39	3.67	2.89	5.15
Authority's Fleet	2.02	1.82	2.16	1.80
Scope 2				
Electricity	3.59	2.57	3.58	3.25
Scope 3				
Staff Business Travel	0.65	0.63	0.63	0.63
Transmission and Distribution Losses	0.33	0.24	0.33	0.3
Water	0.76	0.42	0.45	0.35
Total	14.74	9.35	10.04	11.48

Figure 3

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Financial services	<i>(unit is tons of CO₂ equivalent, or tCO_{2e})</i>			
Barclays	14.26	16.39	17.11	17.58
Natwest Bank	15.16	16.87	18.06	19.52
Bank of Ireland	0.85*	-	-	-
CCLA	150.48*	150.48*	150.96*	150.96*
Total	180.75	183.74	186.13	188.06

Figure 4

*Estimated figures based on data currently available

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	<i>(unit is tons of CO₂ equivalent, or tCO_{2e})</i>			
All non-financial services GHG emissions	14.74	9.35	10.04	11.48
Financial services GHG emissions	180.75	183.74	186.13	188.06
Grand Total	195.49	193.09	196.17	199.54
<i>Heating Gas Offsetting (tCO_{2e})</i>	-8	-8	-8	-8
Net Total	187.49	185.09	188.17	191.54

Figure 5

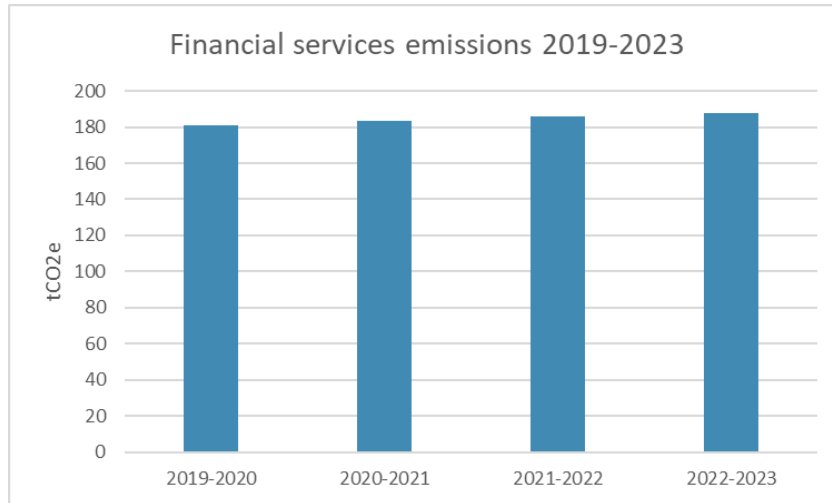


Figure 6

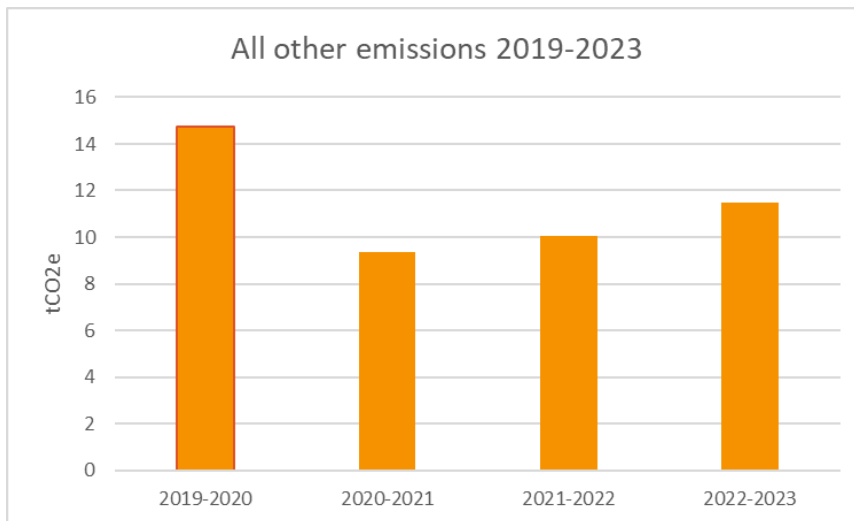


Figure 7

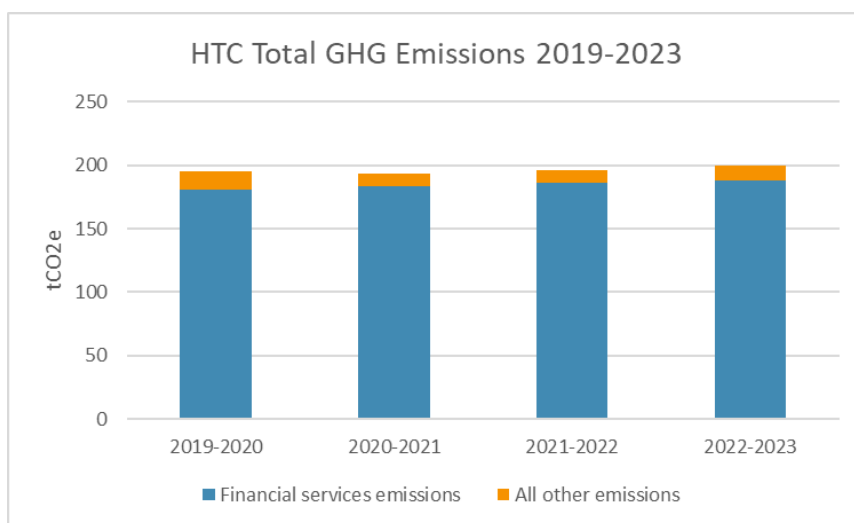


Figure 8

Emissions Reduction Targets

Helston Town Council has identified targets for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This target is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, where measurable, by 15% every year from the period 2023-2024 until 2030, with the goal of being Carbon Neutral by 2030.

Based on our 2022-2023 Greenhouse Gas Audit, this equates to approximately 30 tCO₂e. per year until 2030.

This approach implies that the reductions will be made in a predictable way, however, it makes more sense to think of an overall [carbon budget](#) for the remaining 7 years.

In *figure 9* below, (blue line) you can see the effect of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions in a linear fashion (i.e., the same amount each year), versus the effect of taking swift action to make big early reductions (green line) or, taking relatively slow action (red line). In each case, the area under the curve shows the overall quantity of emissions we are responsible for:

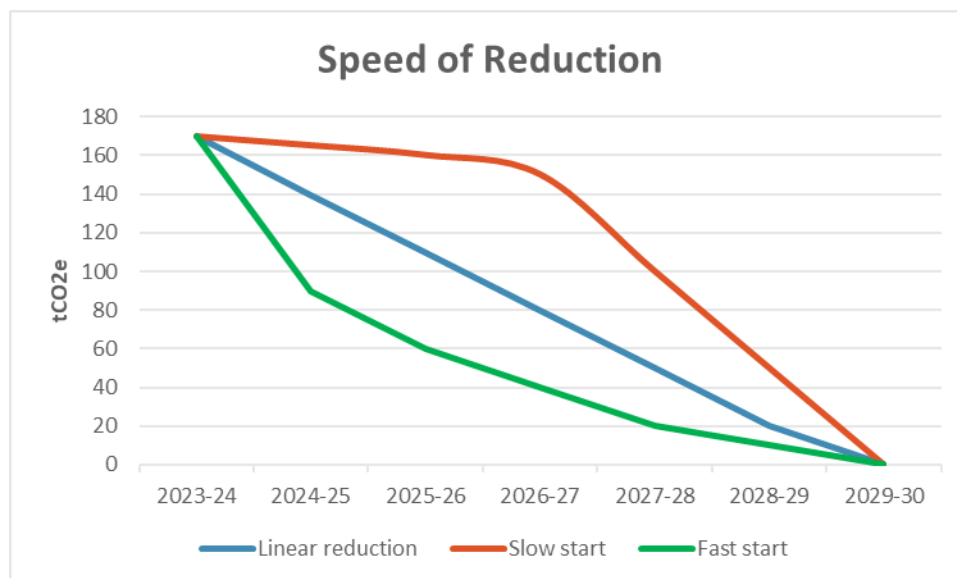


Figure 4: Illustrative figures only

It is clear that taking early action to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions can have a big impact in the overall emissions expended by HTC as we head towards being carbon neutral. This is illustrated in *figure 10*, below :

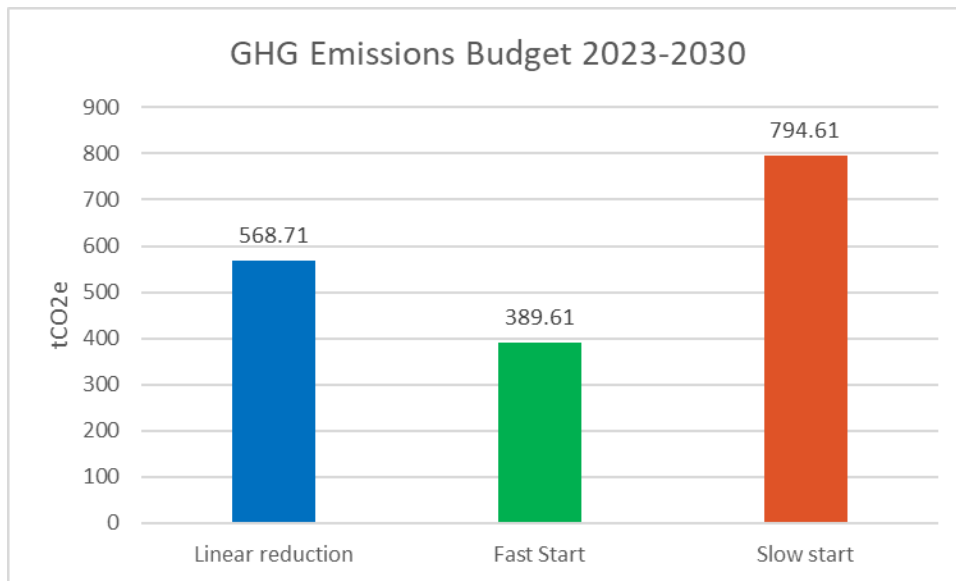


Figure 50: Illustrative budgets, based on data in figure 9

By taking early action, we could save a year's worth of current emissions, and just as easily waste a year's worth of emissions if we start slowly.

It is recognised that some reductions are easier to make than others – so the tendency is to make these first, for example changing from a diesel vehicle to an electric vehicle or changing our electricity supplier. This means that as time goes on, emissions reductions become harder and harder to achieve. To recognise this, in addition to having a linear target of 15% reduction per year, any overachievement of a target will be subtracted from the final year and any underachievement of a target will be added to the next year.

By using this method in conjunction with the “carbon budget model” (*see above*) we hope to monitor our progress and stay on track.

How can we Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions?

Based on our Greenhouse Gas Audit data, we have written a plan to identify actions we can take to reduce emissions based on the different Greenhouse Gas Audit categories. These are detailed in the Environmental Action Plan 2023 Phase 1 (see Implementation section below), with key actions summarised below:

Fleet and Transport:

- Finalise swap of Electrical vehicle and diesel vehicle
- Investigation into options for replacing Beaver Tail Van with more environmentally friendly vehicle once lease end reached in November 2024
- Complete draft travel decision making flowchart for use by officers and members and present to FG&P Committee for consideration

Electricity:

- Following completion of Shared Prosperity Fund bid for Guildhall roof repairs await decision and, if unsuccessful, pursue alternative funding avenues and give update to EWP by March 2024
- Investigate organisations offering energy audit services in order to get quotes and present to FG&P Committee for budget consideration.

Water:

- Identify service provider who can complete annual water Audit for HTC buildings and bring costings to FG&P Committee for consideration.

Finance:

- Establish cost of service to calculate greenhouse gas emissions of HTC financial services and present to FG&P Committee for budget consideration
- To open bank account with The Nationwide Building Society and The Charity Bank in order to transfer funds from Natwest and close account.

Heating:

- Offsetting of Gas usage for the current period (2023-2024) using a suitable offsetting scheme

Since July 2018 we have already made changes in consideration of our greenhouse gas emissions, primarily around changing our electricity supplier to Good Energy, who provide 100% renewable electricity which is sourced via power purchase agreements (PPA's). (<https://www.goodenergy.co.uk/what-makes-good-energy-different/>). We have also moved our financial services away from Barclays Bank. Barclays Bank uses money it holds to fund fossil fuel exploration and extraction, therefore using this bank means as an organisation we must take responsibility for higher greenhouse gas emissions than if we use banking services who do not support the fossil fuel industry.

Can we Increase Sequestration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions?

Different kinds of green space management may contribute to removing more greenhouse gas out of the atmosphere, such as tree and hedgerow planting. This is another emerging area, meaning it is difficult to calculate exactly how our land management might contribute to drawing down or sequestering carbon. One of our actions is to investigate this as we move forward with other areas of the plan.

Offsetting and Insetting

In July 2018, HTC agreed to switch to a green energy supplier for electricity use. In October 2022 HTC agreed to offset the gas usage since the climate emergency declaration using a suitable [offsetting](#) scheme. This has been completed for the period of 2019-2024 by supporting local and global projects. HTC is currently investigating the options to meet the

ongoing agreement by using [insetting](#) (for example action within our own asset management or local community) for the next period of gas usage.

Implementation

Details for implementation are available in the Environmental Action Plan 2023 Phase 1 [Target and Action Summary](#), including targets, timelines, roles and responsibilities and resource requirements.

In order to achieve the goal of being Carbon Neutral by 2030 using the smallest carbon budget possible, as quickly as possible - priority has been given to working on areas where the biggest savings can be made with the setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed) goals. These include finance, electricity, fleet and heating.

Other areas with less impact have outline plans as we work towards a better understanding the positive changes that we can be making.

Monitoring and Reporting

This Environmental Action Plan is a working document, which means it will be changing and updated as progress is made on individual actions, as new discussions and investigations take place and decisions are reached. The document will be updated and formally reported to Full Council on a quarterly basis.

The Environmental Working Party meet on a monthly basis to continue work according to the Terms of Reference.

The chair of the Environmental Working Party will meet regularly with the Deputy Clerk to review progress.

The office will use the "To Do" application to ensure that annual events are linked to the office timetable of work, for example the future carbon audits.

The Environmental Working Party intend to work with the officers to ensure that details about this project and all associated resources are easily available on the council's website and regular updates are accessible for viewing by members of our community.

Education and Outreach

In addition to use of the website to enable access to relevant information and resources about this work, as we move into Phase 2, there will need to be a concerted effort to engage with our community to raise awareness about how we can work together to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, enhance biodiversity, build community resilience, and raise awareness about why this is important.

Internally, HTC already has opportunities in place for Councillors and Officers to access training related to the Climate and Ecological Emergency which is noted for Councillors in the Learning and Development Policy ([Appendix II](#)).

Appendix I — Declaration of a Climate Emergency

In January 2019, community members from Transition Helston attended the full council meeting and requested that HTC declare a climate emergency. As a result, the Council held an informal meeting to discuss the matter which was then raised at the March 2019 full council meeting where;

it was Unanimously RESOLVED – that Helston Town Council:

- a) Declare a climate emergency;*
- b) Pledge to work towards making Helston carbon neutral by 2030;*
- c) Work with Cornwall Council to assist them with their declaration to make Cornwall carbon neutral by 2030;*
- d) Act as a voice for the community to lobby for action on climate change, raise the profile and share lessons with higher levels of government;*
- e) Continue to work with the community of Helston and its surrounding parishes to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans; and*
- f) As a member of the Helston Climate Action Group, assist with the preparation of an Action Plan within six months to address this emergency.*

Helston Climate Action Group (HCAG) was formed with representation from Helston Town Council, and worked with the local community to co-design a Climate Action Plan, the first of its kind in the UK. The Helston Climate Action Plan was published in September 2019 and was unanimously endorsed by Helston Town Council at the October full council meeting. Cllr Potter and Katharine Lewis (one of the founding members of Helston Climate Action Group) attended the Cornwall Council Localism Summit in November 2019, where they presented the HCAP. Chris Dawson, the Senior Clerk at the time, published an article in the National Clerk Magazine about the HCAP ([link needed](#)). As part of succession planning for the HTC project officer, the job description was reviewed and included reference to working with HCAG.

In January 2021 HTC produced their Strategic Plan which included the goal to continue working with HCAG to support the aim for Helston to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Appendix II — Related Documents

[Environmental Policy](#)

[Investments Policy](#)

[Pesticide & Herbicide Policy](#)

[Learning & Development Policy](#)

[Helston Climate Action Plan](#)

[Summary of Helston Town Council Environmental Actions 2018-2023](#)

<https://find-energy-certificate.service.gov.uk/energy-certificate/6259-4303-9768-5664-6731>

[Guildhall EPC 2023](#)

Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool Data – available on request

Appendix III — Environmental Working Party Membership and Terms of Reference

Councillors:	Melissa Benyon (chair)
	Samuel Ramsden
	Paul Andrews
	Damien Willey
	Nicola Boase
Deputy Town Clerk:	Angela Retallack
Public:	Jules Lewis

Environmental Working Party Terms of Reference

The Environmental Working Party shall comprise of a minimum of four Members of the Council. Three Council Members (including officer representatives) of the Environmental Working Party shall constitute a quorum.

The Working Party is also permitted to invite appropriate representatives to the working party meetings on an advisory basis to give information and guidance. These representatives do not have voting ability.

The Environmental Working Party will meet when required.

The first item of business shall be to appoint a Chair.

The Environmental Working Party shall:

- produce a Carbon Footprint Reduction Action Plan detailing previously agreed actions to reduce the Council's carbon emissions;
- draft future recommended actions which are clearly defined, measurable and monitored reduction targets for carbon emissions in line with the Helston Town Council's commitment to be Carbon Neutral by 2030;
- oversee implementation and monitor the Town Council's progress in achieving the targets from the Action Plan. As part of the monitoring, the Working Party will, at least annually, identify the level of carbon produced by Helston Town Council using an appropriate Carbon Footprint Tool;
- produce an Environmental Action plan to include all the Town Council's services and responsibilities with the goal of maximising the Council's positive impact on the environment and minimising harm; and
- conduct an investigation of the Town Council's options to work with the community to achieve carbon neutrality for the Parish of Helston by 2030.

Recommendations of the Environmental Working Party shall be reported to Full Council at the earliest opportunity.

The Working Party will provide Full Council with written and verbal progress updates following the adoption of the Action Plan on a minimum quarterly basis.

The Chair of the Working Party will meet with the participating Officer as required to update the plan with actions or new information.

Appendix IV — Earth Protector Town Status

Further lobbying from the community led to Helston Town Council debating Earth Protector Town status, registering an interest in becoming an Earth Protector Town in October 2019 and resulted in the following declaration;

December 2019: HTC declared itself an Earth Protector Town

- a) in declaring Helston an Earth Protector Town, the Council undertook to collaborate and cooperate with communities, local government bodies, businesses and other organisations to protect land, wildlife, air, soil and water. The Council considered the repercussions of its decisions and rigorous care was observed to avoid environmental harm in the exercise of its functions;
- b) To protect the Earth, this Council would:
 - i. Endorse, support and, through the publication of this declaration, raise awareness of the Earth Protector movement which campaigned to amend the Rome statute and declare ecocide a crime at the International Criminal Court (ICC).
 - ii. Protect the community as best it could from environmental damage.
 - iii. Produce a strategy for the Council's operations, including a date, to achieve a carbon zero future.
 - iv. Work with the community to guide action on becoming a carbon neutral town and programme awareness-raising about climate change into its community work.
 - v. Promote the movement from sustainable to regenerative living wherever possible across the town, including for households.
 - vi. Campaign with and support the community to achieve single use Plastic Free Community status.
 - vii. Work with the community to minimise the Town's environmental impact and create a strategy to protect, enhance and connect ecosystems/habitats/species in and around the town.
 - viii. Raise awareness of climate and ecological emergencies through education, promotion of events and providing appropriate information.
 - ix. Pledge that any future investment decisions consider the environmental practices of the institutions involved, as well as existing legal requirements on public investments.
 - x. Assure transparent and regular reporting of the implementation of the above pledges (including where possible a shared database of participating stakeholders' specific goals and progress achieved in attaining them).
- c) In declaring itself an Earth Protector Town, Helston was publicly supporting the campaign to amend the Rome statute and declare Ecocide a crime at the ICC.

In February 2020, Helston Town was listed on the Earth Protector website as one of the declared towns.⁹

⁹ Earth Protector Communities | <https://earthprotectorcommunities.net/towns/>

Glossary

For further information about different terms, please refer to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Glossary¹⁰ for a comprehensive explanation of relevant terms. Some brief explanations are provided below.

Carbon – In this document “Carbon” is used to represent carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere in addition to other greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxide. The higher the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, the more heat from the sun is trapped (the gases act just like the glass in a greenhouse) causing the land and water to heat up.

Carbon Budget – This is the maximum amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted whilst limiting global warming to a safe level. Carbon budgets can be estimated for individuals, organisations, and at any geographical level.

Climate Change – Long term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns caused by global warming.

Carbon Footprint – the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of an individual, organisation or community. It can also relate to the production and transportation of goods and services.

Carbon Neutral – Almost everything that we do has the potential to either release greenhouse gases into the environment (for example driving a car or buying products from overseas) or to remove it from the environment (for example buying locally produced organic food – which supports soil health – healthy soil is a powerful store of carbon).

Every action, person and organisation has a carbon footprint, they would be considered ‘carbon neutral’ when all of their actions that create greenhouse gases are minimised, with any unavoidable emissions being offset by actions that help to remove, or sequester, greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

Greenhouse Gas – Is the collective term for gases that, when present in the atmosphere above certain levels, create the “Greenhouse Effect” - trapping heat from the sun on the planet surface and causing global warming, which has led to changes in our climate and ecological systems. Greenhouse gases include Carbon Dioxide, Methane, Nitrous Oxide and Ozone.

Global Warming – The average warming of the surface of planet earth caused by the activity of humans and natural changes in the environment.

Insetting – Some greenhouse gas emissions are unavoidable, particularly during the transition to becoming carbon neutral. Insetting is when an action is taken directly within the organisation or local community to reduce or remove greenhouse gases from the

¹⁰ IPCC Synthesis Report 15 - **Glossary**

https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/11/sr15_glossary.pdf

atmosphere to balance out the budget. This might include for example; planting hedgerow on HTC land or supporting local projects reducing greenhouse gas emissions which otherwise would not be able to happen.

Offsetting – Some carbon emissions are unavoidable, particularly during the transition to becoming carbon neutral. For example, HTC currently uses gas to heat the Guildhall. Until we find an alternative method, we will continue to release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, further contributing to climate change. Offsetting is when an action is taken to reduce or remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere to balance out the budget. This is considered a last resort, with the most important actions being to reduce carbon emissions because, globally, we are already well over our budget for greenhouse gas emissions.

Sequestration – carbon sequestration is the long-term storage of carbon in plants, soils, geologic formations and the ocean. This can be enhanced by how we manage our green spaces and by protecting existing natural habitats. Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) are artificial processes to sequester carbon, these are currently highly energy intensive and not scalable to a level where they can support our journey to carbon neutrality.

Further Information

Helston Climate Action Group | [Website](#), [Facebook Page](#)

[Cornwall Council: Climate Emergency](#)

[Earth Protector Communities](#)

Plastic Free Helston | [Facebook Page](#), [Twitter/X](#)

Water Refill Points | [Google Map](#)

Helston Town Council takes no responsibilities for the content on external websites