

Climate Action Scorecard 2025 - Answers

[Climate Emergency UK](#) mark and score all UK councils on their climate action against [93 questions across 7 different sections](#).

The below answers have been published to help the marking of Bracknell Forest Council.

Buildings and heating

1a. Has the council completed extensive retrofit work on any of its significant buildings to make them low carbon?

The council has supported the decarbonisation of 15 schools through Phase 1 of the [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#), and energy efficiency and renewable energy retrofit works have been completed on [seven different council-owned properties](#) (see page 14).

1b. Does the council have a target to retrofit all significant council buildings (excluding homes) and has this been costed?

The council does not have a target to retrofit all significant council buildings.

2. Are the council's operations powered by renewable energy?

This is marked using an FOI request.

3. Are the homes owned and managed by the council energy efficient?

This is marked using an FOI request.

4. Does the council have a target to retrofit all council owned and managed homes and has this been costed?

The council does not yet have a costed target to retrofit all council owned and managed homes.

5. Is the council part of a programme or partnership to support home retrofitting, through providing the skills and training needed or in other ways?

The council is not part of a programme or partnership to support home retrofitting.

6. Does the council have a staff member employed to work on retrofitting across the council area?

This is marked using an FOI request.

7. Are the homes and buildings in the council area energy efficient?

This is marked using national data.

8. Is the council actively enforcing Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards of homes in the private rented sector?

This is marked using an FOI request.

9. Does the council provide a service to support private homeowners to make their homes more energy efficient?

As well as detailing [energy efficiency and renewable energy retrofit schemes](#) available to residents on the website, [a registration of interest form is available](#) for residents to receive tailored advice from the council on schemes that they are eligible for.

10. Does the council offer funding to private renters or homeowners to retrofit their homes?

The council offers funding through the [Home Upgrade Grant \(HUG2\)](#), and through its own [Warm, Safe and Well scheme](#).

11. Does the council have a scheme to allow residents to purchase renewable energy cheaply, through collective buying?

The council has partnered with iChoosr Ltd to provide [Solar Together Bracknell Forest](#), which is a collective buying scheme.

12. Has the council supported local community renewable energy creation?

This is marked using data from Community Energy England.

Transport

1. Is the council transitioning their vehicle fleet to electric?

[25% of the council's fleet is electric.](#)

2. Has the council set up or supported a shared transport scheme that can be used across their whole area?

Through the My Journey platform, the council supports [a car club](#) and [two voluntary car schemes](#). Bike hire is available at [Swinley Bike Hub](#), and a Shared Cycle Scheme is available through [Bracknell BID](#). The council support [The Ark](#) in providing a volunteer transport service for residents with reduced mobility or a disability, and mobility scooters and power chairs are available for hire from [Bracknell Shopmobility](#).

3. Does the council have enforced school streets across its area?

School streets are not enforced in Bracknell Forest yet.

4. Is the council committed to making 20mph the standard speed limit for most restricted roads?

This is marked using national data.

5a. Has the council introduced a Clean Air Zone or Low-Emission Zone?

A Clean Air Zone or Low-Emission Zone has not been introduced.

5b. Does the council's Clean Air Zone or Low Emission Zone require charges for private vehicles?

A Clean Air Zone or Low-Emission Zone has not been introduced.

6. Has the council taken clear steps to support active travel?

This is marked using national data.

7. Does the council have controlled parking zones across all the residential areas of the local authority?

There is a [residential permit zone](#) around Bracknell Town Centre.

8a. Are there any low emission buses used within the council's area?

[Thames Valley](#) buses that operate in Bracknell Forest have introduced new buses with the latest low emission Euro VI engines. [Reading Buses](#) have also launched Enviro400 buses that operate in Bracknell, which are accredited as low emission buses.

8b. Is bus ridership within the council's area high?

This is marked using national data.

9. Does the council have a workplace parking levy?

The council does not have a workplace parking levy.

10. Has the council supported the expansion of a public network of electric vehicle chargers?

This is marked using national data.

11. Has the council approved, expanded or built a high carbon transport project since 2020?

This is marked using national data.

Planning and land use

1. Is the council's area wide net zero target a strategic objective of the Local Plan?

The [Local Plan](#) supports the move to net-zero as a key objective (see objective D on page 27), with the council's target of eradicating its net contribution to climate change by 2050 outlined on page 50 (this target has since been changed to being [net-zero by as close to 2030 as possible](#) since the publication of the Local Plan). Policy LP 27 (page 169) of the Local Plan also sets out the overall approach to tackle climate change, and to make the Borough a more environmentally sustainable place and net-zero carbon by 2050.

2. Has the council committed to building all future council owned or managed housing to a high energy efficiency or operationally net-zero standard?

Policies in the [Local Plan](#), which was adopted from March 2024, apply to all new housing developments including council proposed schemes. Policy LP 55 of the [Local Plan](#) stipulates that all non-residential development and non-C3 residential development of 500m² (gross external area) or above will meet BREEAM 'excellent' or equivalent standard (see page 280). If it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not viable, developments still need to meet BREEAM 'very good' standard. Policy LP 27 also states that a proactive approach to adapt to climate change will need to be demonstrated, and that this includes using innovative approaches to design and

optimising site layout, orientation and building form to reduce carbon emissions (see page 169).

3a. Does the council require new homes to make an improvement on the Part L building regulations?

As outlined in the [Local Plan](#) (see page 280), all major new dwellings are encouraged to contribute towards the target of net zero carbon for regulated emissions. If it is demonstrated that this is not viable, an improvement in regulated emissions over the target emissions rate in Part L of the Building Regulations, plus a section 106 contribution to offset any remaining carbon emissions to zero is encouraged.

3b. Does the council require a fabric first approach for new development?

Policy LP 55 of the [Local Plan](#) stipulates that all non-residential development and non-C3 residential development of 500m² (gross external area) or above will meet BREEAM 'excellent' or equivalent standard, which exceeds the Part L Target for Fabric Energy Efficiency (see page 280). If it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not viable, developments still need to meet BREEAM 'very good' standard.

3c. Does the council set a requirement that all new homes to be built must be operationally (regulated) net zero?

As outlined in the [Local Plan](#) (see page 280), all major new dwellings are encouraged to contribute towards the target of net zero carbon for regulated emissions. If it is demonstrated that this is not viable, an improvement in regulated emissions over the target emissions rate in Part L of the Building Regulations, plus a section 106 contribution to offset any remaining carbon emissions to zero is encouraged.

4. Does the council require developers to carry out a whole life cycle carbon assessment of new build developments?

The council does not require developers to carry out a whole life cycle carbon assessment of new build developments.

5. Does the council require a higher level of water efficiency for all new homes?

Policy LP 55 of the [Local Plan](#) stipulates that all new dwellings shall meet the water efficiency standard of 110 litres/person/day.

6. Has the council removed minimum parking requirements for new residential homes across their area?

The council has not removed minimum parking requirements for new residential homes.

7. Does the council include a policy in the Local Plan to create 15/20 minute neighbourhoods?

The [Local Plan](#) outlines the need for new developments to create 'cohesive' and 'healthier' communities through mixed uses, a combination of private and public amenity space, and safe and easy routes to walk and cycle to facilities and services (see pages 174-175). Large developments are also required to provide new or

amended street networks, new green spaces, schools, community facilities and other elements of infrastructure (see page 176).

8. Has the council committed to avoiding new building developments on the functional flood plain?

Policy LP 33 of the [Local Plan](#) states that in areas defined as functional floodplain, only water compatible uses and essential infrastructure development will be supported, and only then after meeting a range of tests, approaches and assessments (see page 195).

9. Does the council have a minimum requirement for on-site renewable energy generation for new building development?

Policy LP 55 of the [Local Plan](#) outlines that all major new dwellings will be encouraged to contribute towards the target of net zero carbon for regulated emissions on site (see page 280). Policy LP 27 also states that a proactive approach to adapt to climate change will need to be demonstrated, and that this includes maximising the use of energy from renewable or low carbon sources (see page 169).

10a. Does the Local Plan identify suitable areas for new solar energy, wind developments and district heat networks?

The [Local Plan](#) refers to [The Bracknell Forest Council Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Potential Study \(2011\)](#) which identifies opportunities for screened wind power and hydro power within the borough (see Figure 4 of the study for a map).

10b. Has the Council approved any planning applications for new or expanded solar or wind developments, battery storage, or renewable district heat networks since 2019?

This is marked using national data.

11. Has the Council approved a planning application for a carbon intensive energy system to be built or expanded from 2019?

This is marked using national data.

Governance and finance

1a. Does the council's corporate plan include a net zero target and make tackling the climate emergency one of its main priorities?

Green and sustainable environment is one of the three priorities as outlined in the [Council Plan](#). Since the publication of the Council Plan, a [motion has been passed](#) to commit to achieve net-zero CO2 emissions as close to 2030 as possible. This is outlined in the council's [strategy on climate change](#).

1b. Does the council's medium term financial plan include the council's net zero target and make tackling the climate emergency one of its main priorities?

[The Resources Directorate service plan](#) annually reports on progress and actions required to deliver on the Council Plan, of which a green and sustainable environment is a priority. It links to the council's [strategy on climate change](#), and in

doing so identifies the objective of being carbon neutral by as close to 2030 as possible as an underpinning principle.

2. Does the council's Corporate Risk Register accurately identify the risks of climate change to the local area?

As outlined in the [Strategic Risk Update](#) to the Governance and Audit Committee on 20th September 2023, a new Corporate Risk Register has been created to cover the potential impacts of climate change (see risk 6), and outlines current and further mitigating actions with explicit reference to changes in climate and extreme weather, planning & land use, energy generation, and biodiversity.

3a. Is the council reporting on its own greenhouse gas emissions?

The council reports on its own scope 1 and 2 emissions and part of its scope 3 emissions from 2019 to 2023 [online](#), and states that the reporting is in line with the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard.

3b. According to the council's own reporting, have the council's own greenhouse gas emissions reduced since 2019?

As outlined [online](#), the council's scope 1 and 2 emissions, as reported in line with the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, have fallen from 4,348 tonnes CO₂e in 2019 to 3,649 tonnes CO₂e in 2023, which is a reduction of 16%.

4. Has the council's area wide carbon emissions decreased, according to UK Government data?

This is marked using national data.

5. Has the council adopted a new governance or decision making process to put tackling the climate emergency at the heart of every council decision made?

Climate change implications are considered in council meetings ([see here](#)).

6a. Does the council have a sustainable procurement policy that includes an area wide net zero target and makes tackling the climate emergency one of its main priorities?

The council's [social value policy and procedure](#) exceeds the Procurement Act 2023 requirements, seeking to drive social value in all aspects of its procurement and contracting activity including to help address the climate emergency. The council's [social value matrix](#) contains all social value priorities that have been identified for delivery. One priority is a commitment to carbon emissions savings to achieve net zero carbon before 2030.

6b. Does the councils' procurement policy require tenders to take action to reduce waste, carbon emissions or other environmental actions?

The council's [social value policy and procedure](#) exceeds the Procurement Act 2023 requirements, seeking to drive social value in all aspects of its procurement and contracting activity including in waste and carbon emissions. The council's [social value matrix](#) contains all social value priorities that have been identified for delivery. In terms of reducing waste, a priority is sustainable procurement commitments and certifications (e.g. to use local produce, reduce food waste, reduce total plastic and single use materials, keep resources in circulation longer). In terms of energy

efficiency and carbon emissions, priorities are: 1) the operation of low or zero emission vehicles by contractors; 2) carbon emission reductions through reduced energy use and energy efficiency measures and 3) a commitment carbon emissions savings to achieve net zero carbon before 2030.

7. Does the council have a Cabinet member or Portfolio Holder that has climate change explicitly in their remit?

[Councillor Mary Temperton](#), who is Leader of the Council, is also Executive Member for Council Strategy and Climate Change.

8. What percentage of the council's overall staff work on implementing their Climate Action Plan or other climate change projects?

This is marked using an FOI request.

9. Have all senior management and councillors in the cabinet or committee chairs received climate awareness training?

This is marked using an FOI request.

10a. Has the council raised ring-fenced income for climate action from property development?

The council has not raised finances for climate action by specifically ring-fencing income from property development.

10b. Has the council launched a Climate Bond, Community Municipal Investment or equivalent?

The council has not yet launched a Climate Bond, Community Municipal Investment or equivalent.

10c. Has the council raised income for climate action from any other sources?

The council has raised income for climate action from other sources. Examples include [EV charging](#) funded by the Government's on-street residential charging scheme and Mer UK, and £325,716 of government funding for [bus service improvements](#).

11a. Has the council passed a motion in support of divestment from all fossil fuels from the councils' pension funds?

This is marked using national data.

11b. Has the council's pensions fund committed to divesting from all fossil fuels?

This is marked using national data.

12. Does the council have direct investments in airports or high carbon intensive energy industries?

The council does not have direct investments in airports or high carbon intensive energy industries.

Biodiversity

1. Does the council use peat free compost or soil in all landscaping and horticulture?

As outlined on the [council website](#) (see parks and countryside projects section), the council does not use peat products or suppliers who use peat.

2. Has the council banned the use of pesticides on all council owned and managed land?

This is marked using national data.

3. Has the council stated they are mowing their green spaces less for wildlife?

The council [agreed in 2022](#) to mow green spaces less for wildlife and to enhance biodiversity.

4. Are two thirds of the local wildlife sites in the council's area in positive conservation management?

This is marked using national data.

5. Does the council have a target to increase tree cover and is a tree management plan agreed as they grow?

The [Tree Strategy](#) contains a commitment to supporting new tree planting within new or existing areas where appropriate (see page 18), and a woodland management plan for all council-owned woodlands is central to the delivery of the whole strategy (see Appendix 1).

6. Does the council turn off or dim their street light network to reduce light pollution?

The council dims its [street light network](#).

7. Have the council's parks been awarded Green Flag status?

This is marked using national data.

8. Does the council employ a planning ecologist to scrutinise planning reports for improvements to biodiversity in new developments, such as biodiversity net gain?

This is marked using an FOI request.

9. Does the council require a higher biodiversity net gain commitment from new developments?

As outlined in the [Local Plan](#), development in the borough is expected to achieve a minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity. A higher biodiversity net gain commitment from new developments is not required.

10. Has the council introduced a Green Space Factor to increase habitat in new developments?

The council has not introduced a Green Space Factor.

Collaboration and engagement

1. Do the council's climate pages include information about behaviour changes that residents can take, and are they easy to find?

The council have a dedicated [climate change](#) webpage that is searchable on the site search bar. On the webpage there is a 'what you can do' section with links to what businesses, the community, and schools can do. The [community page](#) includes a link for residents to sign up to the council's community climate change initiative.

2a. Has the council published a climate action plan with SMART targets?

The council reports quarterly on progress made with the [climate change action plan](#), which includes SMART targets.

2b. Has the council published an up to date and easy-to-read annual report on their Climate Action Plan?

The council publishes an [annual climate change report](#), which uses simple English where possible and uses graphics and tables to aid comprehension. It also [reports quarterly](#) on progress made towards SMART targets.

3. Has the council lobbied the government for climate action?

This is marked using an FOI request.

4. Is the council working with external partners or other councils to seek to influence national governments on climate action, or to learn about and share best practice on council climate action?

Together with the other 5 councils of Berkshire, Bracknell Forest Council has formed a new [Berkshire Prosperity Board](#). One of the key workstreams is net zero, which Bracknell Forest Council leads on. The council is part of the [Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership](#) of which [net zero is a key priority](#), and is a member of [ADEPT](#) and [APSE Energy](#). The council has also published an article in [AD & Bioresources News](#) on our successful food waste revolution (see page 3).

5a. Does the council have an ongoing way for residents to influence the implementation of the council's Climate Action Plan?

The council now organises [annual climate summits](#) to collaborate with the residents and organisations of Bracknell Forest on climate action. The council has also established the [Joint Climate Action Board \(JCAB\)](#) (see pages 11-12). A community-led organisation, the JCAB is supported by 10 working groups to facilitate community-wide engagement with climate action and create a Community Climate Emergency Strategy.

5b. Does the council's ongoing engagement with residents include those most affected by climate change and climate action policy?

The council's ongoing engagement with residents through the [Joint Climate Action Board \(JCAB\)](#) (see pages 11-12) is designed to target all community groups and individuals, as all residents and organisations will be affected by climate change and climate action policy. It includes a working group dedicated to voluntary, community and faith groups ([see diagram on page 12 here](#)) to ensure hard to reach communities and those in need are reached and engaged with climate action.

6. Does the council provide funding for community climate action, for example through an environment fund or climate action fund?

The council does not provide funding for community climate action yet.

7. Is the council working in partnership with health services on active travel, home insulation, air pollution, green spaces or other climate action policies?

Environmental health is embedded into the [Berkshire East Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#), and this [Berkshire Public Health Annual Report](#) also demonstrates the mutual consideration of health and climate change. The climate change team and the public health team also work together to provide home energy efficiency upgrades for those vulnerable to the cold due to long-term health conditions or disabilities through the [Warm, Safe and Well scheme](#) (see page 13).

8. Is the council working in partnership with cultural institutions and organisations to encourage decarbonisation within culture and arts locally?

The council have provided funding for solar panels to be installed at [Bracknell Leisure Centre](#) and [South Hill Park Arts Centre](#). [Eco Rewards](#), which was jointly set up between Bracknell Forest Council and Thames Valley Berkshire Smart City Cluster to incentivise sustainable travel, are promoted at places such as [Bracknell Leisure Centre](#). With Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Council has also supported [Involve Community Services](#) to embed and promote climate action in their activities.

9. Is the council working in partnership with schools or other education settings to deliver climate action that young people can engage with?

The council have a [dedicated webpage](#) to support climate action in schools, the [Joint Climate Action Board \(JCAB\)](#) has a dedicated education working group (see diagram on page 12), and the council organise [annual schools' climate conferences](#). The council has also supported the decarbonisation of 15 schools through Phase 1 of the [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#).

10. Is the council working in partnership with local businesses to encourage decarbonisation?

The council have a [dedicated webpage](#) to support local businesses to take climate action. Through the [Berkshire Growth Hub](#), the council has offered [free webinars](#), a [Low Carbon Workspaces grant](#), and [free net zero clinics](#).

11. Has the council passed a motion to ban high carbon advertising?

This is marked using national data.

12. Does the council have an ongoing way for employee representative bodies (including recognised trade unions) to influence the development and delivery of the council's Climate Action Plan?

This is marked using an FOI request.

Waste and food reduction

1. Has the council reduced single use plastic at external events on council land, property or public spaces such as roads and parks?

The council has not yet put in place measures to reduce single use plastic at external events.

2. Has the council taken steps to support a circular economy locally?

[re3paint](#), a Community Paint Reuse initiative, allows residents to collect free tins of full or partly used paint that have been deposited at the Bracknell Recycling Centre. [Pop-up reuse shops](#) have also been hosted at the Bracknell Recycling Centre, and a [Reuse Area](#) is also available there.

3. Does the council support initiatives to redistribute surplus food waste?

The council support and promote [Share Bracknell](#) which is a charity that redistributes surplus food. In 2023 the council also [provided a grant to Share](#) to help them to buy a vehicle to expand the number of food-sharing sessions in Bracknell Forest.

4a. Does the council have a sustainable food strategy?

The council does not yet have a sustainable food strategy.

4b. Is the council part of a sustainable food partnership?

The council is not yet part of a sustainable food partnership.

5. Has the council taken steps to support local food growing?

The council provides several community orchards, such as [Larks Hill](#), [Bluebell Hill](#), [Lily Hill Park](#), [Snaprails Park](#), and [Edmund's Green](#). Funding was also given to schools following the first [schools' climate conference](#) for sustainability initiatives, which included growing vegetables on site.

6. Do schools in the council area serve less meat in school meals?

Caterlink supply 38 schools in the area and have meat-free Mondays ([see menu here](#)).

7. Does the council provide kerbside food waste recycling?

[Kerbside food waste recycling](#) is provided weekly.

8. How high is the councils' area wide annual recycling rate?

This is marked using national data.

9. How low is the councils' area wide level of household waste produced?

This is marked using national data.