

Cambridge City Council Climate Change Strategy

Public engagement results
26 January 2026



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Introduction

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Introduction

What is the Climate Change Strategy 2026-2031 and why do we need it?

Cambridge City Council has been taking action to address climate change since the launch of the first Cambridge Climate Change Charter in 2007 and its first Climate Change Strategy in 2008. The Council declared a Climate Emergency and a Biodiversity Emergency in 2019, and the Council's current Climate Change Strategy 2021-2026 shared a vision for the city of Cambridge to be net zero by 2030. The strategy also set a target to reduce the Council's own direct carbon emissions from its operational and administrative buildings, fleet vehicles and business travel to net zero by 2030.

The Council is now developing a new Climate Change Strategy (2026 – 2031) to build on the achievements to date, respond to changes in policy and to set out how a plan for continuing to work towards its net zero vision for the city and for the Council; and to deliver the associated benefits of improved health, wellbeing, and livelihoods for current and future generations. A public engagement survey was carried out to help inform and shape the development of the new strategy

Introduction

The Climate Change Strategy 2026-2031

Cambridge City Council engaged with the public on seven key thematic objectives to consider for the development of the new strategy. The views received will inform a new strategy to drive the council's pathway to net zero and increase climate resilience, while providing flexibility supported by emerging and evolving opportunities and priorities.

Seven strategic themes

Transport	Reducing travel powered by fossil fuels and encourage low/zero carbon transport.	Waste minimisation	Support a circular economy and reduce waste.
Energy and Retrofit	Improve energy efficiency and climate resilience in homes and buildings. Support low-carbon heating.	Communications and behaviour change	Decrease emissions while maximising social and environmental value from procurement and partnerships.
Nature and Water	Increase tree canopy cover, enhance nature, safeguard water sources, and support climate adaptation.	Businesses, supply chain and finance	Enable low-carbon behaviour change through communication and accessible/inclusive support.
Sustainable Foods	Promote local, seasonal, low-impact food and reduce food waste.		

Introduction

The Climate Change Strategy 2026-2031

Continued

The draft strategy outline includes five new areas of focus to be introduced from 2026, along with identifying four key thematic areas of climate action to support this.

Focus Areas

1. Reducing the council's own emissions and increase climate resilience
2. Support the city reduce emissions and build climate resilience
3. Protecting and increasing nature and biodiversity
4. Improve people's daily lives
5. Ensuring climate action is fair and inclusive

Climate action

1. Reducing emissions
2. Tree planting
3. Biodiversity and nature-based solutions
4. Supporting new technologies

Further actions and focuses

The new areas of focus from 2026 include working with suppliers to support them to reduce emissions (Councils scope 3 emissions), reducing emissions from commercial properties and exploring addressing unavoidable residual emissions through offsetting, Another element highlighted. was the commitment to take a collaborative approach to develop a city-wide climate plan informed by the inputs from organisations.

Public engagement

Public engagement

A draft outline version of the Cambridge City Council Climate Change Strategy underwent public engagement from 1st of October 2025 until the 9th of November. (See the methodology section for details on how the engagement was conducted). The engagement exercise provided an opportunity for feedback from Cambridge residents, organisations, and businesses to shape early drafting.

Why is public engagement important?

Providing an opportunity for Cambridge residents and workers to submit their input and feedback is important to gain an understanding of how the public feels about the topics discussed within the Climate Change Strategy. It also serves as an opportunity for Cambridge residents, organisations, and businesses to shape the emerging Climate Change Strategy.

Methodology

02

Methodology

Approach to public engagement

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have several shared services and have been working closely together to align priorities and actions that are reflective of a shared ambition of addressing climate change and enhancing nature.

The two Councils jointly hosted the engagement survey to recognise these shared services and the reality that there are a number of residents and businesses who interact with the two areas, depending on where they live and work.

The survey aimed to capture responses on how the people who live and work in Cambridge felt about the emerging Climate Change Strategy and provide an opportunity for the public to shape the strategy to reflect the needs and ambitions of Cambridge and its residents.

In addition to the survey, both Councils hosted face-to-face drop-in sessions with six sessions taking place across Cambridge in libraries, community

centres and shopping centres, which attracted limited attendance.

Format of survey

The survey was conducted in two parts:

Part 1 – General Awareness and Understanding

This section of the survey aimed to capture the concerns respondents had about climate change and nature loss as well as any steps that the individuals and organisations have already taken. Part 1 also allowed the respondents to identify areas where they needed support to take further action on addressing climate change and enhancing nature in Greater Cambridge.

This section combines the responses of both Cambridge respondents and South Cambridgeshire respondents to develop an analysis for Greater Cambridge. Note that there were 486 responses to the survey, but the majority of the responses reflect 484 responses. This is because

two responses were received in a format that did not respond to the survey in its entirety and the themes from these two responses were adapted into the wider qualitative responses.

Part 2 – Cambridge City Council's specific questions

This section focuses on Cambridge's specific strategies and priorities. This section aims to get direct feedback on the emerging Climate Change Strategy.

Please note the survey response analysis begins with question 17 and omits question 16 which asked respondents to indicate if they would like to provide further feedback to the Cambridge Climate Change Strategy or South Cambridgeshire Climate and Nature Strategy. There were 273 overall respondents to the Cambridge City Council's specific questions. Note that there are some variances in number of respondents across each question based on where people chose to respond.

Greater Cambridge

Public engagement results

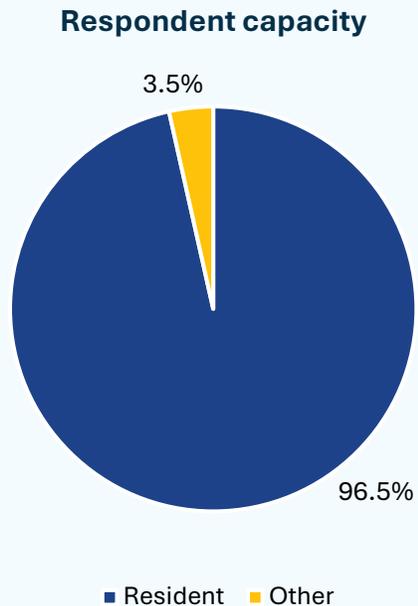
03

Note: This section of the report presents the results from the Greater Cambridge, Part 1- General Awareness, portion of the survey. The results reflect feedback received from both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge residents, organisations, and businesses. The quantitative and qualitative responses are represented with appropriate graphs and text.

Question 2: In which capacity are you responding to this survey?

For this question, participants were asked to identify if they were responding as a resident and/or responding from another capacity. Additionally, it was optional to provide the organisation on which they were responding on behalf of (question 3). See the table on the right to see the other entity category options available to select.

96% of respondents identified themselves as a resident of Greater Cambridge.



Total responses: 486

Category	Number of responses
Resident	469
A member of the public who visits Greater Cambridge for work, study or leisure	5
An elected representative	1
On behalf of a parish council	1
Private Company	1
Private Company less than 10 employees	1
Private Company more than 10 employees and less than 250	1
Private Company 250 or more employees	1
Public sector organisation	1
Community or voluntary organisation	5
An individual from outside Greater Cambridge	1
Education or Research organisation	n.a.
A representative group representing multiple members	n.a.

Note: a small number of residents identified themselves as an additional entity, as well as a resident.

Question 3: If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of it?

As a part of question 2, participants were given the option in question 3 to identify the organisation they are associated with if they were responding to the survey on behalf of that organisation. The organisations identified are shown in the table on the right.

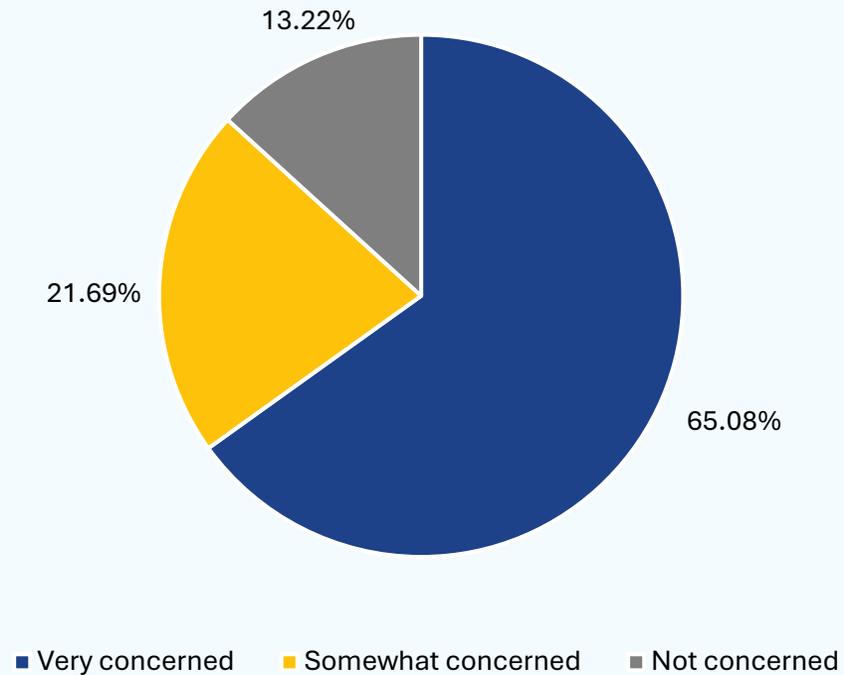
Organisation
28th Cambridge Beaver Colony
2G3S Green Group for Sawston, Stapleford and Shelfords
Cambridge Past Present and Future
Cambridgeshire Climate Leaders; The Great Collaboration
Cambridgeshire Families for Sustainable Travel
Carbon Neutral Cambridge
Chesterton Community College
Clay Farm Allotment Society
Friends of Stourbridge Common
Gamlingay Parish Council
Mill Road Cemetery Management Committee
Mothers CAN Cambridge
North Newtown Residents Association
Oakington Environment Action Group
PEM
Scouts
Sohnius & Perry Ltd
Sustainable Shepreth

Total responses: 18

Question 4: How concerned are you about the impacts of climate change in Greater Cambridge?

In Greater Cambridge, there is an overall concern for the impacts of climate change. Within the responses, **65% of individuals identified themselves as feeling very concerned about the impacts of climate change.**

Degree of concern on the impacts of climate change



Total responses: 484

Question 5: What do you see as the most urgent climate-related and nature-related challenges in Greater Cambridge?

The question asked respondents to select from the 12 climate and nature challenges based on urgency. Respondents were allowed to select up to three answers.

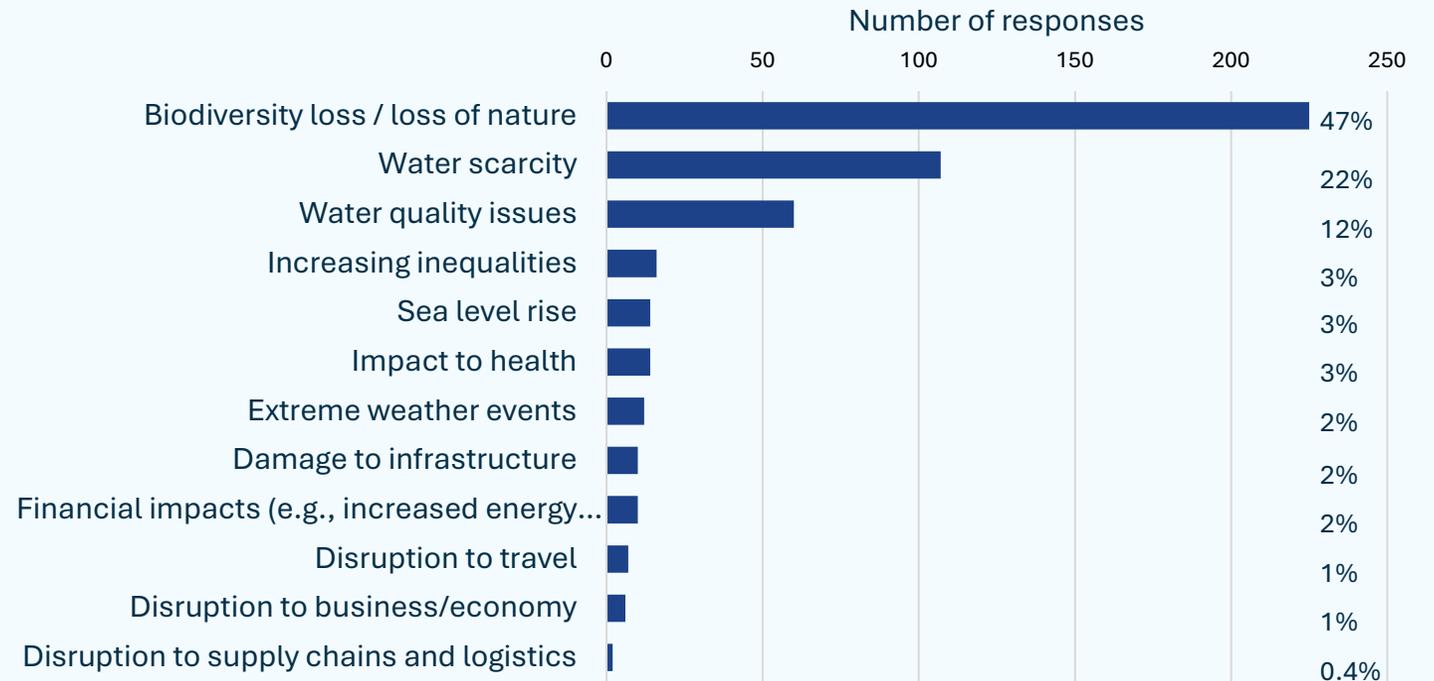
47% of participants responded that biodiversity loss/ loss of nature was the most urgent climate-related and nature-related challenges in Greater Cambridge.

Where respondents selected extreme weather events, they were provided an opportunity to specify further. In these responses, the most common specifications of extreme weather events expressed were the following:

- Flooding
- Heatwaves/ extreme heat/ high temperatures
- Drought/ water scarcity
- Storms/ high winds
- Heavy rain/ rainfall.

Total responses: 483

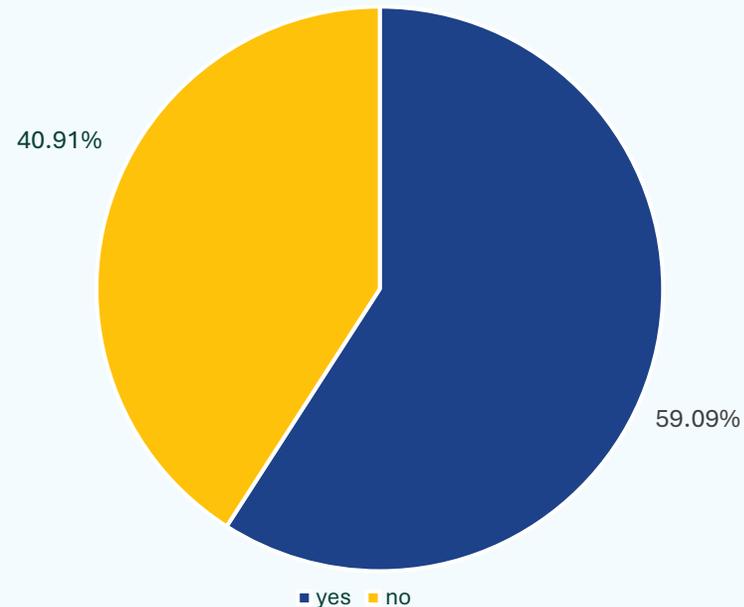
Most urgent challenge selected by survey respondents in Greater Cambridge



Question 6: Have you, your community, or your business already experienced impacts as a result of climate change?

Over half of respondents from Greater Cambridge have expressed they themselves, their community, and/or businesses have already experienced the impacts of climate change.

Experienced the impacts of climate change



Total responses: 484

Question 7: Please specify what the impact was and if you have taken any action as a result of this.

Summary table of key themes

Theme	Example issues/responses
Extreme heat and drought	Overheating homes, health impacts, gardening challenges, air conditioning installations
Water scarcity	Water butts, greywater use, changing gardening practices, anxiety about future supply
Flooding and storms	Property damage, travel disruption, inadequate drainage
Biodiversity loss	Fewer birds/insects, grief over nature loss, community wildlife projects
Economic/social impacts	Rising food/energy costs, climate anxiety, activism
Adaptation actions	Home insulation, shading, solar panels, behaviour change
Policy critique	Frustration with council, calls for regulation
Air/water quality	Sewage overflows, river pollution
Equity and vulnerability	Disproportionate impacts on vulnerable groups, housing inequality

Question 8: How do you think climate change will affect you, your community or your business in the next five years?

Responses to this question reveal that the community is highly aware of the multifaceted risks posed by climate change in the near future. **Water scarcity, extreme heat, and flooding are the most commonly anticipated challenges**, with significant concern about the social, economic, and health impacts – especially for the most vulnerable. While many are taking action at home and in their communities, there is a strong call for more ambitious, equitable, and coordinated policy responses.

Anticipated **impacts** of climate change include:

1. Water scarcity and drought
2. Extreme weather events
3. Biodiversity and nature loss
4. Economic and social pressures
5. Community and societal change.

Total responses: 484

There were several themes emerging in relation to **adaptation**, including upgrading buildings, conserving water, growing food, and reducing energy use. There were also indications that local community initiatives were important and more public education and awareness are required to meet the challenge.

Key critiques

Policy and governance

- Frustration over perceived government inaction and prioritisation of development over the environment.
- Calls for stricter regulation, bans on new gas projects, improved planning for water/nature, and higher climate ambitions.

Equity and vulnerability

- Concerns that vulnerable groups, including the poor, elderly, and those in inadequate housing, face the greatest impacts.
- Renters and social housing residents often lack capacity to adapt.

Scepticism and dissent

A limited number (less than 5%) of respondents expressed doubt about climate change or government efficacy.

Key commonalities

Water and heat are the dominant concerns for the next five years, with nearly all respondents mentioning one or both.

Anticipation of **rising costs** (food, water, energy) and social pressures is widespread.

Adaptation is already underway for many, but barriers remain, especially for renters and vulnerable groups (1% of total responses).

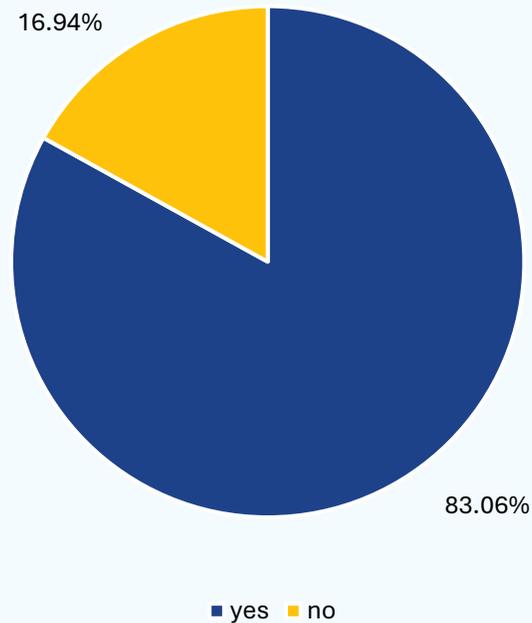
Desire for **stronger, more coordinated action (1% of total responses)** from local authorities, with a focus on equity and practical support.

Community resilience and local action are seen as both necessary and empowering, though not sufficient on their own.

Question 9: Are you currently taking action to address climate change and protect nature in Greater Cambridge (such as doing things to reduce carbon emissions or ensuring you are prepared for the impacts of climate change)?

The majority of Greater Cambridge is already taking action to address climate change and protect nature.

Action taken to address climate change and protect nature

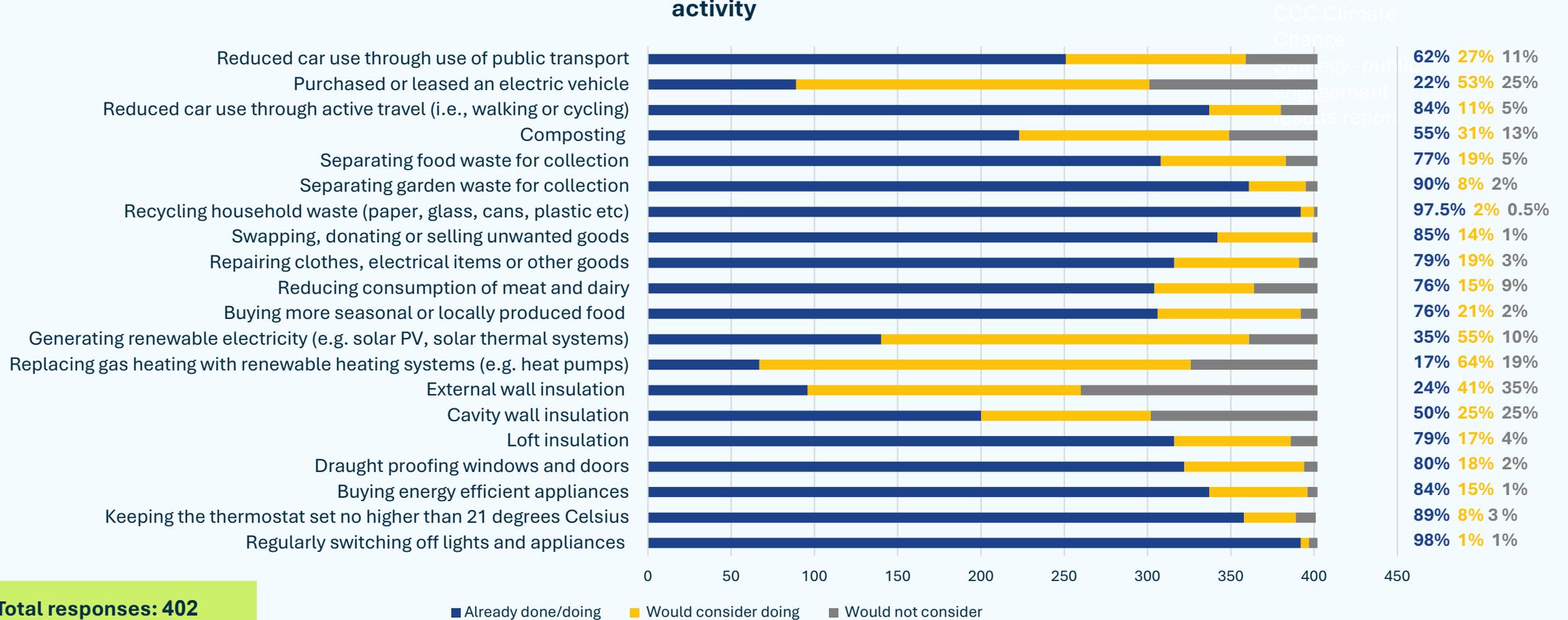


Total responses: 484

Question 10: Please select which steps you (or your landlord if you are renting your property) have already taken, and which steps you would or would not consider taking.

Note there were **81 respondents** who selected no for question 9 and, therefore, **did not respond to question 10**.

Number of respondents indicating they are doing, would consider doing or would not consider each activity



Question 11: If you are taking steps which are not mentioned above, please provide more details (optional)

Total responses: 185

1. Personal lifestyle changes

- Reduced air travel: **11% of total respondents** mentioned they **have stopped or significantly reduced flying**, especially for holidays, as a climate action.
- Dietary changes: 4% of respondents reported eating less meat and dairy, adopting vegetarian or vegan diets, or buying organic/local food.
- Ethical consumption: 4% of respondents described buying fewer new clothes, choosing second-hand items, and supporting ethical or green brands.

2. Home and energy improvements

- Energy efficiency: A minority have taken action such as switching to triple glazing external blinds, or installing internal wall insulation. **7% of respondents have considered home improvements but are not able to** as detailed in the green challenges box to the right.
- Renewable energy: 3% of respondents have installed solar panels, solar water heating, or are planning to do so.

- Water conservation: Installing water butts, using grey water for gardening, and reducing water usage were mentioned by **15% of respondents**.

3. Transport and travel

- Car use reduction: **14% of respondents** have sold their cars, switched to electric vehicles, or rely more on cycling, walking, or public transport.
- Car sharing: A minority of respondents participate in car sharing or use hire cars only when necessary.

4. Gardening and biodiversity

- Wildlife-friendly gardening: 5% of respondents described planting for pollinators, creating wildflower meadows, building ponds, and avoiding pesticides.
- Tree planting: Planting trees in gardens, public spaces, or as part of community projects was a recurring theme amongst 4% of respondents.
- Composting: 2% of respondents compost food and garden waste at home.

5. Community and activism

- Local groups and volunteering: **10% of respondents** are involved in local environmental groups, repair cafes, tree planting initiatives, or community gardening.
- Campaigning and political action: 5% of respondents participate in protests, write to councillors/MPs, or support climate-focused charities.
- Education and awareness: 4% of respondents mentioned educating children, neighbours, or the wider community about climate and nature issues.

6. Waste reduction

- Plastic reduction: 3% of respondents try to avoid single-use plastics, use refill services, and buy in bulk to reduce packaging.
- Recycling: 2% are diligent about recycling and reusing materials, and some lament the lack of options for certain types of waste (such as the lack of option for non-plastic wrapped produce).

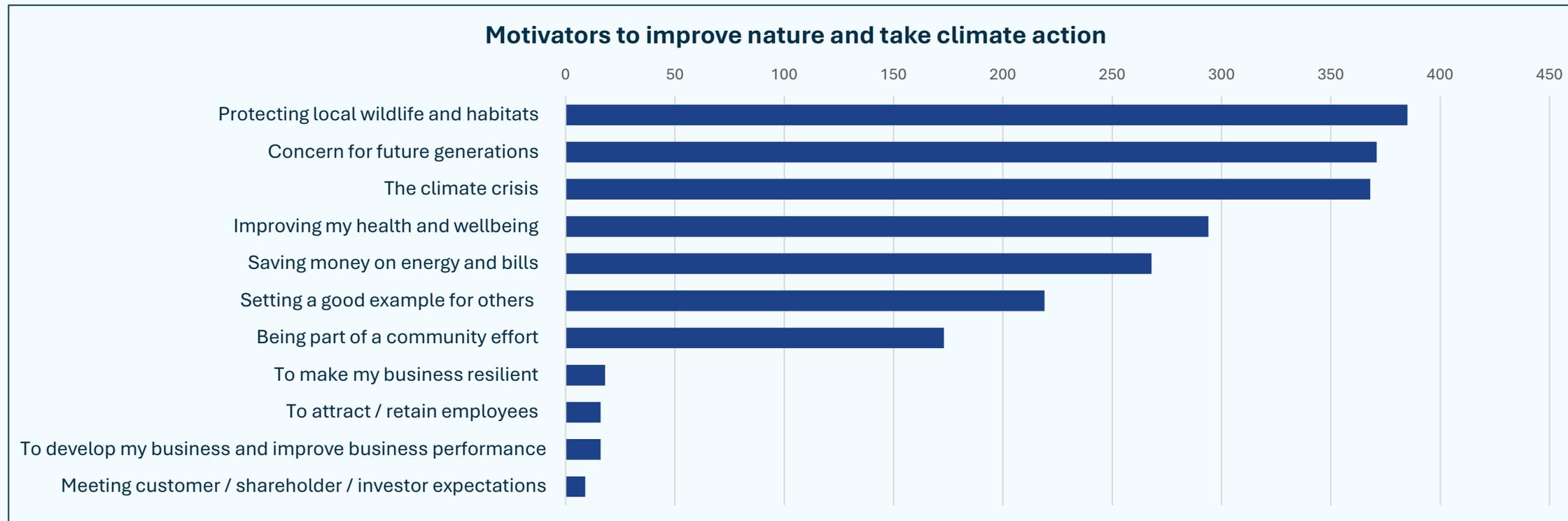
Other notable actions

- Ethical banking: A minority of respondents have switched to banks that do not invest in fossil fuels.
- Offsetting: A minority (1% of respondents) have offset carbon emissions from necessary flights.
- Reducing consumption: 4% of respondents are buying less overall, avoiding unnecessary purchases, and focusing on quality over quantity.

Challenges identified in response to question 11:

- Tenancy/lease restrictions: **Renters** and those in flats often noted they cannot make structural changes (such as insulation, solar panels).
- Cost and accessibility: Some cited the **high cost** of energy-efficient appliances or renewable installations as a barrier.
- Physical limitations: A few respondents mentioned **disability** or age as limiting their ability to take certain actions.

Question 12: What motivates you to improve nature and take action on climate change? (select all that apply)



Total responses: 484

Question 12 Continued

The most frequently selected options for the motivation to improve nature and take action on climate change by respondents were the following:

- Protecting local wildlife and habitats (385 responses)
- Concern for future generations (371 responses)
- The climate crisis (368 responses) were selected the most frequently by respondents.

Respondents were able to select all applicable answers.

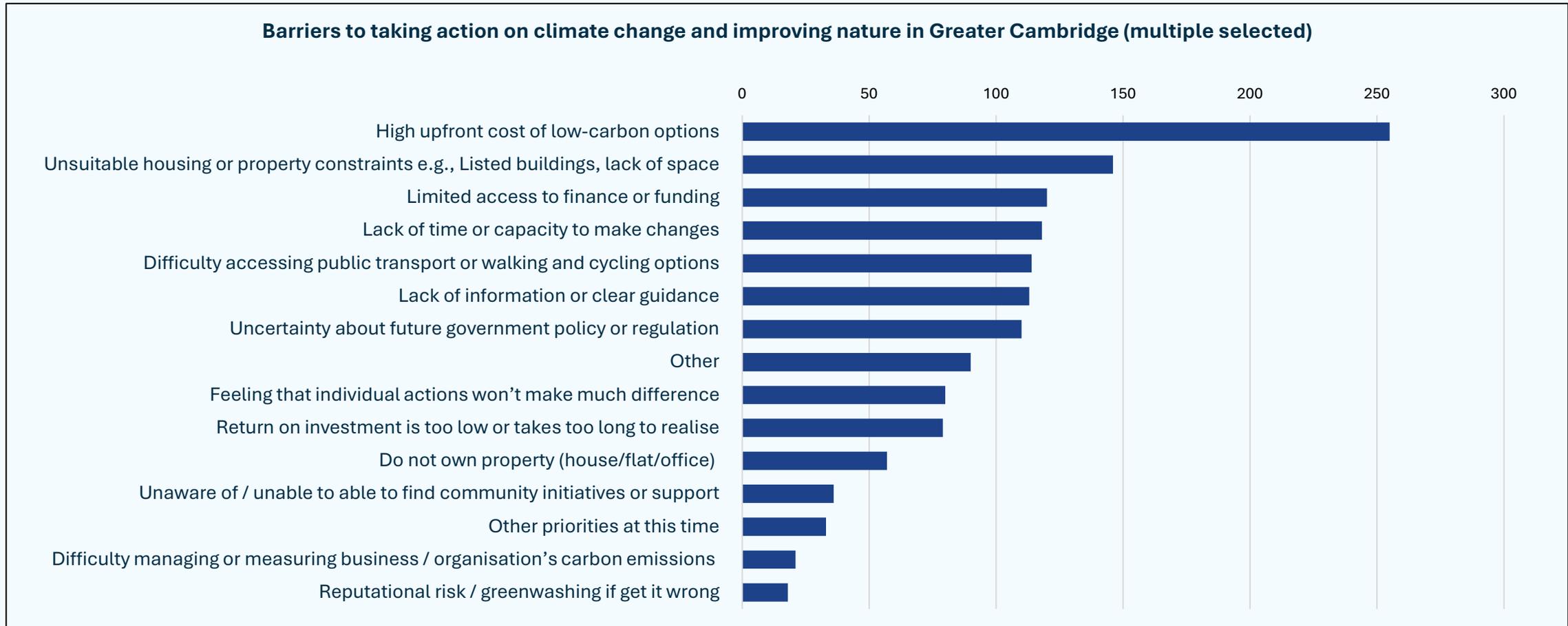
Where respondents selected other, the common themes for motivators to improve nature and take action on climate change included:

- Concern for nature, biodiversity, and wildlife
- Motivation to protect future generations
- Desire for practical, local solutions and community involvement
- Interest in restoring ecosystems and improving local environments
- Sensitivity to not 'greenwash'
- Economic challenges and cost concerns.

Other responses included scepticism or opposition to climate change action and local government involvement.

Total responses: 484

Question 13: What barriers do you face to taking action on climate change and improving nature in Greater Cambridge?



Total responses: 484

Options not selected by any respondents and not appearing on the graph:

- Uncertainty about which actions will make a difference
- Lack of low-carbon alternative choices.

Question 13 *Continued*

High upfront costs were identified by 255 respondents as a main barrier to taking action on climate change and improving nature. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses. Not all options were selected by residents, which is why some are omitted from the graph.

Where respondents selected other, the common themes were:

- Scepticism about the effectiveness of individual or local action versus the need for systemic/governmental change
- Concerns about cost, affordability, and economic barriers to climate action (such as retrofitting homes, heat pumps, public transport)
- Barriers related to infrastructure (such as poor public transport, lack of EV charging, unsafe cycling conditions)
- Community apathy, resistance, or lack of engagement
- Desire to protect nature, biodiversity, and green spaces from development
- Personal limitations (such as age, resources, housing situation)
- Some respondents state they face no barriers or have already taken action.

Total responses: 484

Question 14: What type of support would be most helpful for you as an individual, organisation, or business to aid emissions reduction and climate resilience?

Respondents were given the opportunity to select as many options as possible to indicate areas of support that would be the most helpful for them to reduce emissions and build climate resilience, summarised in the table on this page.

Where respondents selected other, the following themes were found in their additional suggestions for areas of support:

- Desire for improved public transport, cycling, and walking infrastructure and systems
- Emphasis on affordability and economic impact
- Calls for accurate information, practical support, and collective action
- Interest in protecting nature, biodiversity, and green spaces
- Some respondents support ambitious local government action/political leadership.

Further commentary of responses received (4% of the total responses) were a mix of calls for strategic use of resources, and opposition to this strategy (whether this was due to climate scepticism or uncertainty on the scope of local government).

Total responses: 484

Area of support chosen by respondents (multiple responses allowed)

Area of support	Count
Grant funding	215
Access to expert advice	214
Guidance and resources	200
Other	112
Access to finance or green finance	109
Networking opportunities	57
Training	53

Question 15: If you were looking for guidance on action to reduce emissions (including home energy efficiency measures), increase your resilience, or support nature recovery, where would you look for information or advice?

As the table on the right shows, respondents were asked which entity they would turn to for guidance. Multiple entities were allowed to be selected.

Where respondents selected other, the following themes arose in their responses:

- Preference for independent research and trusted scientific sources (such as university experts or actual scientists)
- Use of the internet and online resources
- Desire for unbiased, non-political, or non-commercial information
- Reliance on personal expertise, friends, or family.

Further commentary, though a minority, included a mix of those who expressed not knowing which sources to trust for information (1% of total respondents) and those who opposed the strategy whether it was due to scepticism on the scope of local government or on climate change (2% of total respondents).

Entity	Count
Local council	232
Non-profit organisations	232
Local environmental groups	219
Examples in my community	187
Friends/neighbours	159
A trusted contractor	117
Other (please specify)	101

Total responses: 484

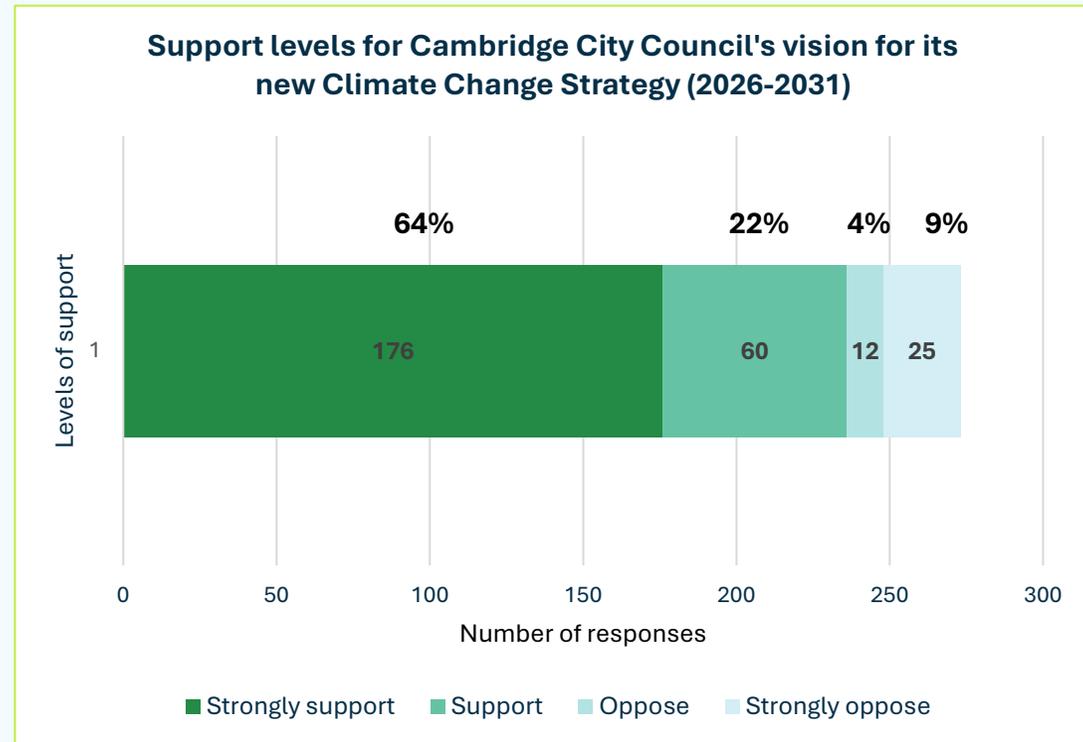
Cambridge City Council

Public Engagement Results

Note: This section of the report presents the results from Cambridge City Council's section of the survey. Responses were received from both the South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Council platform, where participants identified whether they would be responding to this portion of the survey. Qualitative and quantitative responses are represented with appropriate graphs and text. There were overall 273 people responding to this portion of the survey, but there are variances in response numbers where participants chose not to respond to a question.

Question 17: To what extent do you support Cambridge City Council's vision for its new Climate Change Strategy (2026-2031)?

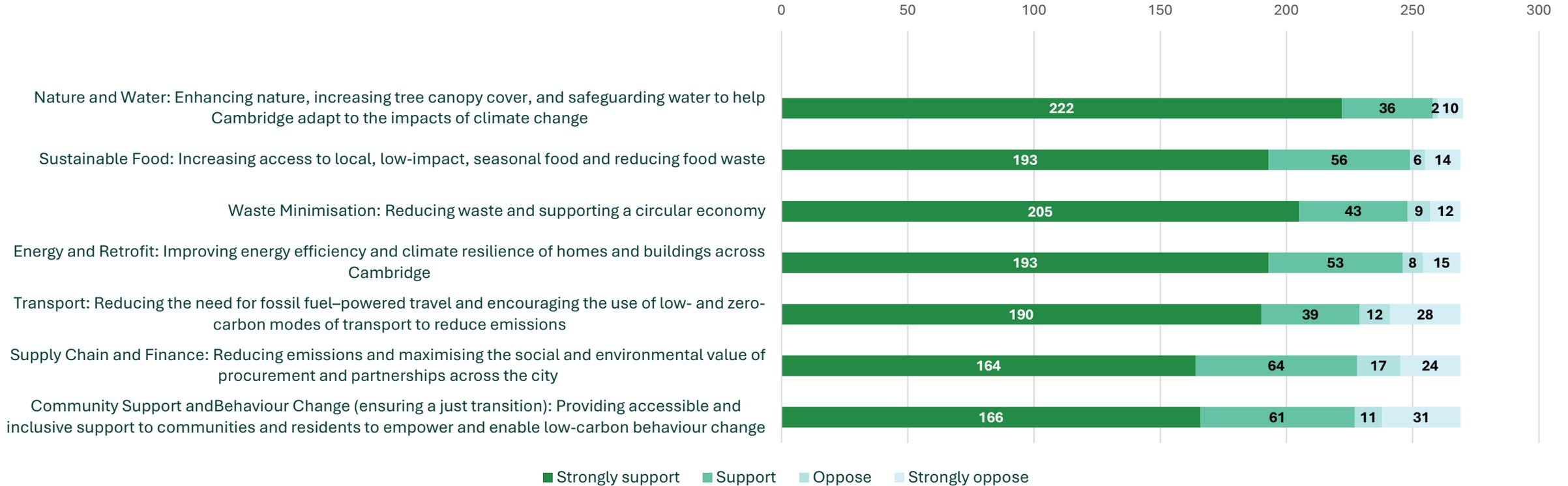
86% of respondents showed overall support for the vision for Cambridge City Council's new Climate Change Strategy (2026-2031), as shown in the graph on the right.



Total responses: 273

Question 18: Rate your level of support for each of the objectives in the Climate Change Strategy

Level of support for each objective in the Climate Change Strategy



Respondents were asked to rank their level of support per objective in the Climate Change Strategy. The bar graph shows that there is overall support for the objectives in the strategy. In particular, the nature and water objective has the highest number of strongly support responses (222).

Total responses: 269

Question 19: If you have any further comments on key objectives, please add them here (optional question)

There was an overall mix of support, challenges and suggestions in the responses to this question. Key themes from the responses to question 19 are as follows:

1. Transport

There were mixed responses for transport where there were some responses in support of decarbonisation transportation, reducing car usage and promoting active travel. However, there were some that highlighted challenges of inclusivity and lack of safe infrastructure (6% of overall respondents) for them to support active travel. This led to a call for **inclusive and alternative transportation solutions with increased connectivity**, especially for those reliant on public transport **from 5% of overall respondents**. Additionally, **5% of overall respondents underscored the complexity in switching away from car usage or to electric vehicles**. This included that car dependency can be a result of their age or health and, unfortunately, cannot switch to active transport mode. Another reason was due to there being no other alternative commute to work available. There was also a question on the practicality of transitioning to a new electric car when they own a petrol car that is still fit for purpose.

2. Social equity

There was a strong call for ensuring measures in the strategy consider maintaining affordability for residents, supporting low-income residents, and promoting inclusivity. **4% of overall respondents raised concerns about making public transportation fares more affordable and the tension surrounding the congestion and parking charges/taxes** as a means of discouraging car use. Limited voices also acknowledged the support that the council has provided within its own estate and assets to increase energy efficiency, but called for the need to extend support to private renters, owners occupiers, and leaseholders as well since the rising costs of living make it challenging for individuals to access the choice to make changes to address the climate crisis.

3. Implementation

There was a recurring theme on the need for better implementation where respondents voiced a **desire for clear plans of action, leadership, and the efficient use of resources**. This was especially the case for the ideas reflected in the Climate Change Strategy where the respondents felt the council should be leading by example, understand their areas/scope of influence and present a strategic plan of implementing the objectives in the strategy. Additionally, **10% of all respondents proposed the efficient use of public resources** to improve existing infrastructure and wider issues in Cambridge instead of on new projects, climate related action, or initiatives that are beyond the scope of the council's responsibilities.

4. Planning, development and growth pressures

The tension between development (especially housing and infrastructure) **and environmental protection was a recurring theme**. Respondents are concerned that rapid growth is increasing the urban heat island effect from all the concrete, damaging biodiversity, and undermining climate goals (6% of overall respondents). **7% of overall responses calls for more sustainable planning, higher building standards, and prioritisation of preserving nature and planting trees**. Balancing growth with protecting the natural environment is seen as a core strategic objective.

5. Guidance and support

There was a recurring theme of the **desire to receive advice on how to navigate the complexity of their individual circumstances** where some support the objectives in the strategy but are not in a position to address it themselves or do not know how. Additionally, **4% of overall responses reflected a need for further education both within the council and for the public** on the impacts of climate change and the solutions to build resilience. This was suggested as a way to empower Cambridge residents to make informed decisions.

Total responses: 111

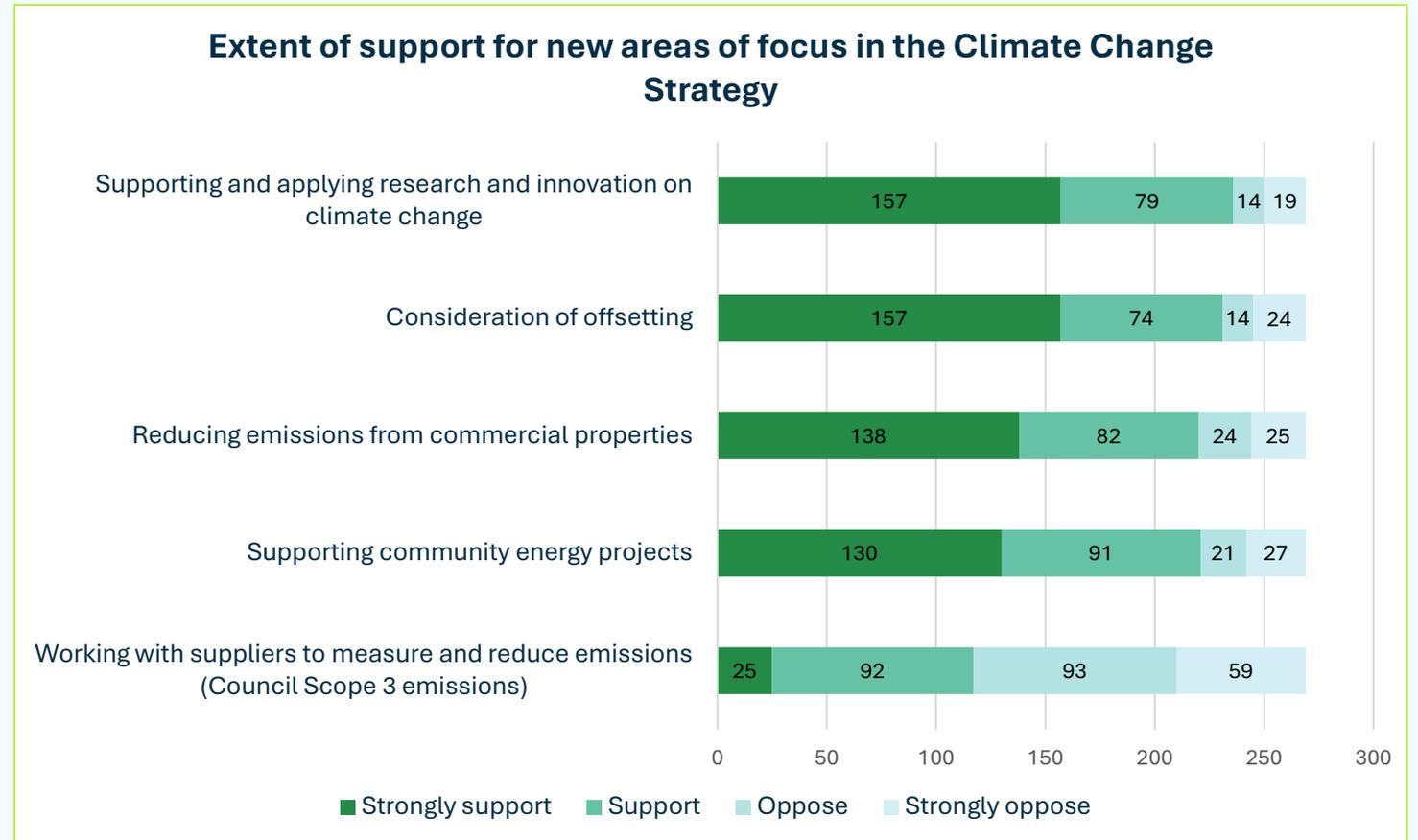
Question 20: We've introduced some new areas of focus in this Climate Change Strategy. Please tell us how supportive you are of the council taking these areas of work forward over the next five years and share any feedback you have.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for each of the new areas of focus the council will take over the next five years, as listed in the Climate Change Strategy.

The graph shows areas of focus receiving the highest level of supportive responses are:

- Supporting and applying research and innovation on climate change (157 strongly support, 79 support)
- Consideration of offsetting (157 strongly support, 74 support).

No additional feedback was provided by respondents.



Total responses: 269

Question 21: Do you think that there is anything within Cambridge City Council's control or influence, that has not been covered within objectives and action areas of the strategy but should be?

Responses were varied for this answer, where some have claimed there is nothing further to add to the strategy, while others have declined to comment due to being unsure. There were also responses where individuals disagreed with the strategy due to perceptions of the council's scope of influence and a desire to use the resources elsewhere. Where respondents provided additional commentary to add to the objectives and action areas of the strategy, it has been summarised below.

1. Planning policies and development

13% of overall responses to this question centred on the need to **utilise the planning and development process** to enforce the objectives and actions in the strategy through building design and planning decisions. Many expressed planning policies could place restrictions or requirements on developers to design new buildings to be energy efficient, protect and enhance the natural environment, and incorporate climate mitigation measures.

2. Transport

8% of overall respondents to this question stressed the need for **improved public transportation networks, accessibility and infrastructure and reduction in traffic congestion to improve air quality**. This was in addition to the support for the active travel and low-carbon/electric vehicle objectives in the strategy. However, there is a larger connectivity and congestion issue that needs to be addressed for improved mobility, transport-related emissions reductions, and air quality. It is important to note that the main authority for highways and transport is Cambridgeshire County Council. Cambridge City Council works with them on this area through the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

3. Enhancing and protecting the natural environment

14% of overall responses expressed a desire to protect the natural environment, increase green space, and support nature recovery. In particular, there was a

stress on the concern for the losses to nature to support development projects. Respondents also expressed an interest in supporting initiatives for community gardens and strategic planting to enable local food growing (2 responses).

4. Accountability and transparency

4% of overall respondents expressed a **desire for greater accountability from the council**, enquiring about what other opportunities the council has considered to reduce its own emissions and **asking for transparency**. There were also 2 responses highlighting a desire to improve the procurement process to ensure the supply chain can integrate the objectives laid out in the strategy.

5. Waste minimisation and circular economy

3% of overall responses reflected a desire to reduce waste and discourage single-use consumption products and practices. There were a few voices raising a concern about the amount of waste going into landfill.

6. Offsetting scepticism

A minority, **3% of overall responses** to this question, **stressed concern towards offsetting**, stating that offsetting is unreliable and provides an excuse to continue polluting instead of reducing emissions. Thus, expressing a desire to remove this from the strategy and focus on restoration instead. A few voices shared that if there is offsetting, it should be managed locally and be carried out cautiously.

7. Policy implementation and integration

3% of overall responses called for **stronger leadership**, a need to **integrate the objectives** in the strategy **with the wider region** and following up with **an action plan** to ensure the council can achieve its ambitions.

Additional suggestions: 157

Is there anything else that you think Cambridge City Council could do within its control or influence, to support you to take action on climate change?

Feedback for this question reveals broad support for the current strategy but also additional areas where the council could control or influence to support residents and businesses take action on climate change. While there were some voices of concern on the scope of the council's influence on climate action, there was also an emphasis on the need for practical measures to address the rising costs of living.

The following themes were identified in the responses received.

Financial support and grants

Multiple respondents highlighted the need for financial support and access to grant schemes to enable them to take action on climate change.

Suggested initiatives to be supported by grants included:

- Installation of PVs
- Home improvement funding schemes
- Community schemes - schools, allotments, nature recovery, etc.

Development, planning and infrastructure

Concerns about overdevelopment, the environmental impact of new housing, and the need for better planning controls.

Suggestions included:

- Enforce enhancement of biodiversity in planning decisions
- Requirements to instil climate mitigation in planning decisions such as greening drives
- Ensuring building design incorporates PV and/or green roofs.

Transport and traffic

Calls for improved public transport systems, reducing traffic congestion, and improving existing mobility infrastructure.

Suggestions included:

- Improved public transport systems (connectivity, options, and fares)
- Congestion charges to reduce traffic and pollution
- Transport hubs/ park and ride services
- Integrated public transport payment

system across services

- Low-emissions zones
- Alternatives to reduce reliance on cars.

Communication and guidance

Requests for guidance or a resource of information to help individuals take action on climate change.

Suggestions included:

- Council-approved list of contractors/ renewable energy providers
- Best practice case studies
- A guide on actions that can be taken, such as a home improvement guide
- Educate residents on the various climate action initiatives via campaigns and slogans
- Signage to promote sustainable practices.

If you have any further comments on, or ideas for, the Climate Change Strategy to add that you feel have not been covered within the survey, please provide them here.

Feedback for this question allowed residents, organisations, and businesses to provide any additional ideas or comments on the Climate Change Survey not already covered.

While there were some question on the scope of the council’s influence on climate action or on climate change itself, there were also many who were supportive of what the strategy covers. Additionally, there were indications of respondents experiencing engagement fatigue at the end of the survey.

Concerns on offsetting

There was a tension in the responses where respondents called for the removal of references to offsetting or expressed the need to work cautiously with options for offsetting. These concerns were raised because majority of respondents felt that the costs associated with offsetting should be used elsewhere and that it only permits further pollution.

Suggestions included:

- Removing offsetting references
- Support if the offset is done locally
- Should not be considered unless verified.

Transport and traffic

Many respondents wanted to emphasise the priority to improve transport infrastructure, especially for public transportation, and reduce congestion.

Suggestions included:

- Low-emission zones
- Affordability of buses
- Establishing light rail.

Community and social impact

There were various ideas supporting a community, collaborative approach to promote some of the objectives in the strategy.

Suggestions included:

- Annual environmental festival
- Fostering community practices
- Group purchasing schemes for renewable energy technologies
- Ensuring equitable practices
- Events that are carbon neutral.

There were also voices to take a country-wide or wider regional approach to integrate the climate strategy objectives.

Is there anything else that you think Cambridge City Council could do within its control or influence, to support you to take action on climate change?

Planning, development and infrastructure

There was a recurring theme of using the planning process to hold developers accountable and enforce building designs that incorporate climate mitigation and resilience.

Suggestions included:

- Looking at best practices
- Requiring sustainable measures (such as solar panels, water efficiency, greening) through planning application reviews.

Nature, biodiversity and agriculture

Many voiced the need to protect and enhance the natural environment, planting more trees, but also strategically connecting to the agricultural sector.

Suggestions included:

- Sustainable food production and regenerative farming
- Promoting local biodiversity
- Partnerships with existing projects and organisations to protect trees and develop a coherent strategy.

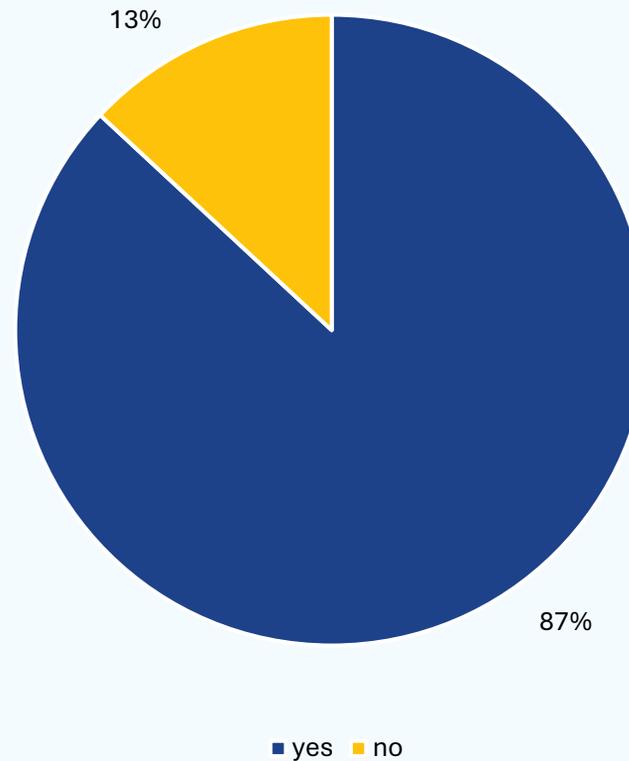
Other notable points:

Various respondents provided a range of examples of what is already being done in Cambridge, demonstrating opportunities to expand or partner with these existing projects. These examples covered topics from protecting nature to localising food production and rewilding/local nature recovery efforts.

Question 24: Would you like to answer five additional questions to help shape some other areas of the council's work, such as the development of a heat network and the Urban Forest strategy?

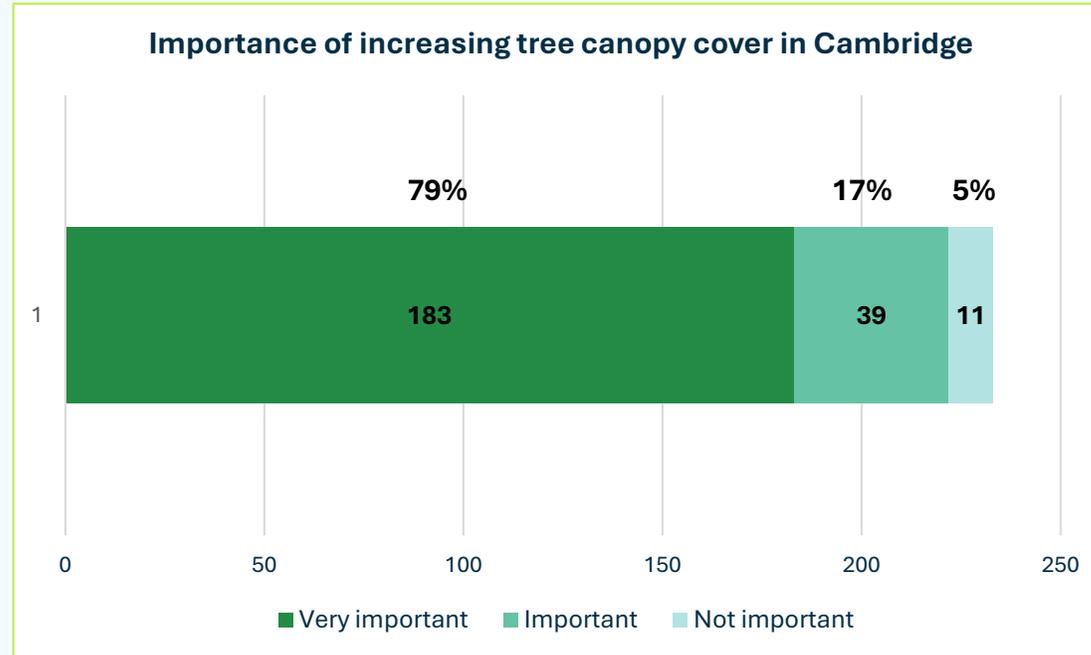
From this question onwards, those who indicated that they would like to answer further questions to shape other areas of the council's work were analysed.

Intent to answer further questions



Total responses: 268

Question 25: How important do you think it is to increase tree canopy cover in Cambridge as part of climate change adaption?



As shown in the graph on the left, **96% of participants thought tree canopy cover was important overall**, with **183 responding very important** to question 25. This indicates the importance of increasing tree canopy cover in Cambridge as part of climate change adaptation.

Total responses: 233

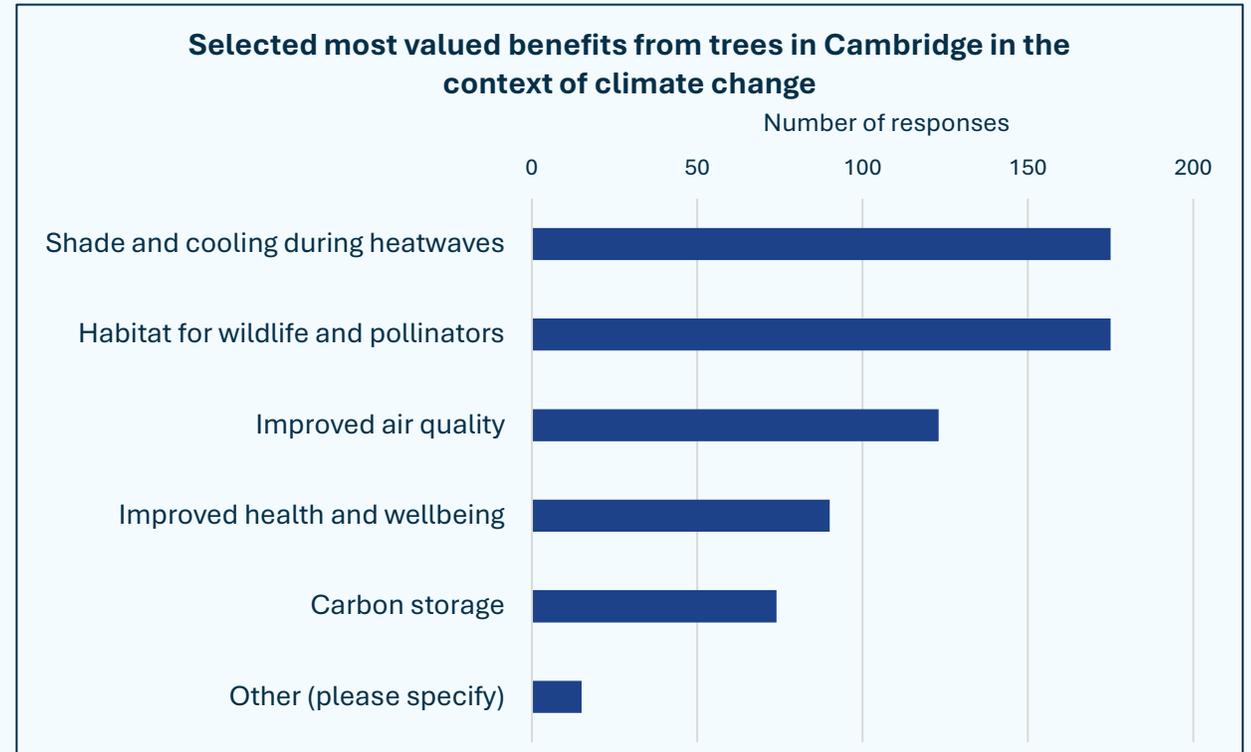
Question 26: What benefits do you most value from trees in Cambridge in the context of climate change?

Respondents were asked to choose up to three options from the list provided. As shown in the graph on the right, the two benefits that were selected as the most valued, most often (175 responses on both) were shading and cooling during heatwaves, and habitat for wildlife and pollinators.

Where respondents selected other, the following themes arose in the responses:

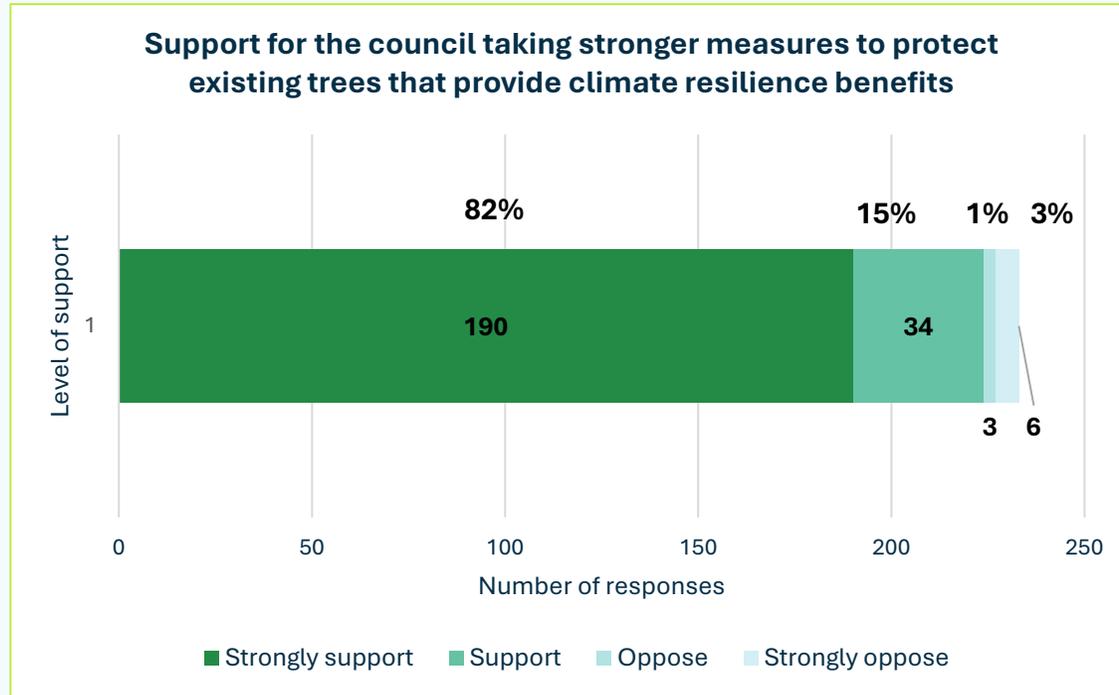
- **Context of climate change** – responses expanded on what was provided in the options, such as a means of shade and cooling during heatwaves and reducing stormwater in drains and watercourses
- **Aesthetics** – there was a strong sentiment highlighting the value of trees, regardless of climate change, valued as a beautiful part of nature
- **Placemaking** – there were also responses highlighting the importance of trees in creating a sense of place and holding the history of place, a value that is not necessarily in relation to the context of climate change
- **Miscellaneous** – while a few voices were challenging the association of the value of trees to the context of climate change, there were critical questions on the ongoing phenomenon of trees being cut down in Cambridge.

Additional suggestions: 11



Total responses: 233

Question 27: How supportive are you of the council taking stronger measures to protect existing trees that provide climate resilience benefits?



Responses to this question show **96% of participants showing overall support** for the council taking stronger measures to protect existing trees that provide climate resilience benefits, with **190 respondents strongly supporting** this idea.

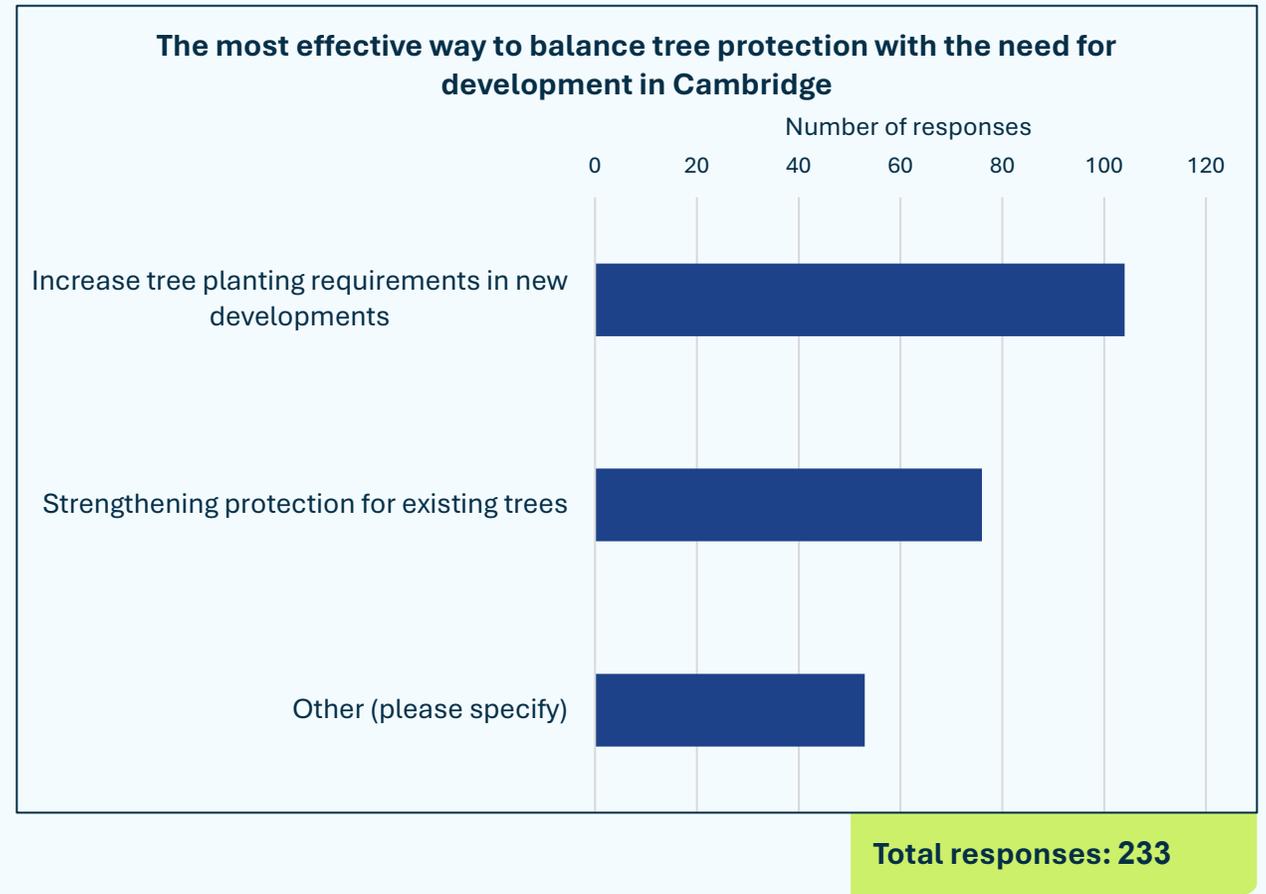
Total responses: 233

Question 28: What do you think is the most effective way to balance tree protection with the need for development in Cambridge in the context of climate change?

Respondents were asked to select one option out of the three listed. As shown in the graph on the right, the most effective way to balance tree protection with the need for development in the context of climate change for Cambridge has been identified by **104** participants as the **increase tree planting requirements in new developments**.

Where respondents selected other, the following themes arose in the responses:

- **Balancing act of both** – a common response centred on the need for both development and protecting trees based on circumstances and impact
- **Reducing the need for development** – there were a handful of responses voicing that there has been enough development or that there is no need for further development in Cambridge
- **Strategic planting** – many responses reflected a support for planting more mature trees, highlighting a need for strategic planting
- **Planning policy and restrictions** – some voices suggested ideas of restrictions through planning policy implementation and planning application review processes to increase tree planting and protect existing trees
- **Supporting new development** – there were some voices suggesting new development should be prioritised.

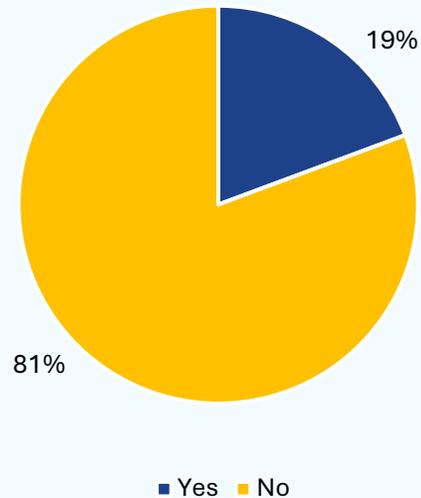


Additional suggestions: 50

Question 29: Are you aware of the Government's work on heat network zoning?

The diagram below shows that there is a larger number of respondents that are currently unaware of the Government's work on heat network zoning.

Awareness of the Government's work on heat network zoning

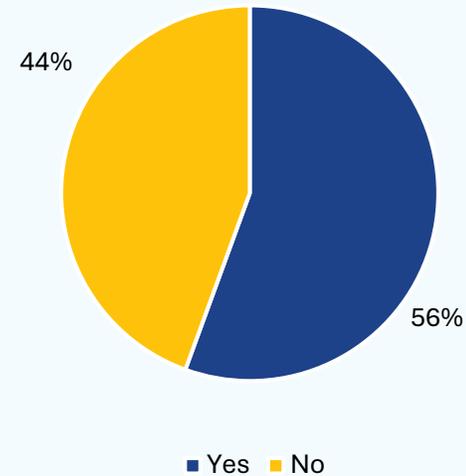


Total responses: 233

Question 30: If a heat network zone were to be implemented in Cambridge, do you feel that connecting to a heat network would enable you to decarbonise your property (home or building) more easily?

Of those who responded to question 30, there were higher responses indicating that individuals would feel they would be enabled to decarbonise their property more easily if a heat network zone were implemented in Cambridge for them to connect to.

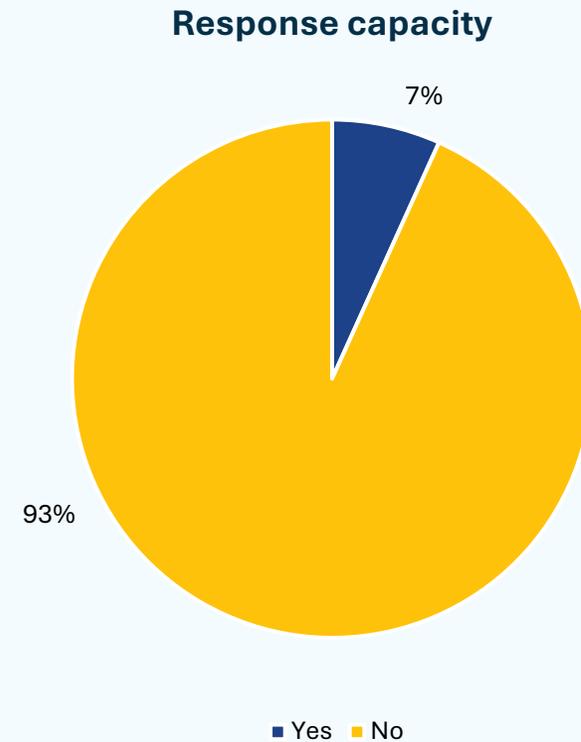
Heat network zones would enable participants to decarbonise their property



Total responses: 45

Question 31: To help route you to the relevant next part of the survey, are you responding to this survey in the capacity of a business, public sector organisation, or community organisation?

Most of the respondents completing this survey indicated that they were not responding in the capacity of a business, public sector organisation, or community organisation.



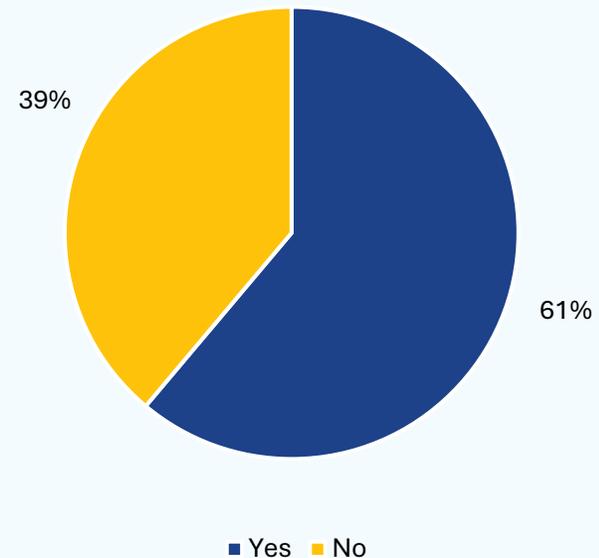
Total responses: 267

Call for information

Question 32: Would you like to be involved in developing a city-wide climate plan?

Of the 18 people who responded to question 32, 11 indicated a desire to be involved in developing a city-wide climate action plan.

Desire for involvement in developing a city-wide climate plan



Total responses: 18

Call for information

Question 33: Tell us more about what your organisation (business, public sector or community organisation) will be doing to address climate change and enhance nature in Cambridge

Analysis

Eleven respondents, made up of businesses, public sector organisations and community organisations responded to this section of questions and indicated interest in working together to develop Cambridge City Council’s climate plan. Their stated interests included community engagement, sustainable transport, biodiversity, sustainable food (production, technology/innovation, awareness raising) and carbon reduction.

Many **pathways for action** were represented in responses. Several organisations focus on practical action, such as organising community events, conducting tree surveys and holding thematic workshops to encourage sustainable behaviours. A small number of businesses responded (three self-identified), and their contributions included carbon accounting services, agricultural innovation and creating

climate networks to support other businesses.

One recurring theme was the importance of **working together**, across communities, private and public sectors, to achieve climate and nature goals.

What these organisations are already doing to address climate change and enhance nature in Cambridge

Some of the organisations that responded to this question detailed the work they already do to address climate change and enhance nature in Cambridge. Some operate in a campaigning capacity to engage with the community and promote actions that address climate change and nature around various themes including sustainable food, safe and sustainable travel, and investing in decarbonised business/investment portfolios. A few other organisations play an active role in providing support and networks,

whether its for innovation, climate resilient agricultural practices, or increasing the engagement between the wider community and local authorities to enable climate action and nature enhancement. Finally, one organisation detailed that it takes action to address issues on behalf of a wider community, such as traffic management and enhancing biodiversity.

Further considerations

The following themes, frequently found in sustainability and nature strategies, were not mentioned in survey responses. However, given the small sample size to this part of the engagement survey, this list is provided only to prompt the council’s consideration as they design their forthcoming strategy and engagement plan.

- Climate adaptation and resilience
- Water scarcity
- Just transition
- Green skills and jobs.

Organisations that responded to this portion of the survey

Name of organisation
Clay Farm Allotment Society
PEM
Mothers CAN Cambridge
North Newton Residents Association
Cambridgeshire Families for Active Travel
Viridian Seeds
Hope Against Poverty CIC
Barclay Eagle Labs
Cambridgeshire Climate Leaders
The Great Collaboration
Cambridge University Hospitals

Note: one respondent provided two organisations in their response

Business and organisational response summaries

05

Private companies

There were four responses from Cambridge participants responding to the Greater Cambridge and Cambridge City Council survey in the capacity of a private company or a private company alongside another identity (such as being a resident). Two of the respondents did not provide many qualitative responses, and therefore, most of their responses are reflected in the greater quantitative analysis. These two private companies also noted that climate change will not have a significant impact on their business.

Overall, the main concerns on the impact of climate change were the effects of **extreme heat and weather events impacting plant growth and unpredictable seasons**. One company is already taking action by sowing wildflower seeds in the garden.

In the qualitative questions (numbers 21-23), all four private companies responded. This section provided participants an opportunity to provide further feedback on what additional considerations the Council could make for the strategy. The responses diverged, but the following suggestions were made:

- Visual communication, such as billboards, to encourage residents to take climate action
- Provide nature and environment education to the public, specifically, young people, to promote sustainable living
- Congestion charges
- Taxing tourists
- Making the planning department more responsive to public feedback
- Improving public transportation
- Addressing a concern of recycling ending up in a landfill

There was one comment reflecting the challenge of being restricted from taking action on the buildings they operate in, as they are owned by a separate entity.

Finally, two private companies provided further feedback on the Cambridge City Council survey regarding trees. Both emphasised the need for stronger protection of trees and requirements for tree planting in new developments as the most effective way to balance tree protection and the need for development growth.

Organisations

There were ten responses from Cambridge participants that identified they were responding to the Greater Cambridge and Cambridge City Council surveys in the capacity of an organisation or an organisation alongside another identity (such as being a resident). Note that in this case, an organisation included any public sector organisation, community/voluntary organisation, and a representative group. The response rates for qualitative questions or questions where the participant selected other (and were given the option to specify) were inconsistent, where some questions received only one response from these entities, while others received responses from all organisations.

Main concerns on the impact of climate change

Six out of ten participants emphasised the impacts of extreme heat and weather events on comfort, plant and agricultural crop survival, rising food costs, and infrastructure/building damage. Five out of ten participants also stressed the impacts of water insecurity as an added element to the risks of continued crop failure and rising food prices. Four out of ten participants highlighted the loss of biodiversity as an added impact from climate change, with some concerned over the reduction in bird sightings over the years and biodiversity lost to travel infrastructure development.

Actions already being taken

Eight of the ten organisations provided a response on actions they already take:

- Two organisations are reducing travel emissions either by reducing the need for deliveries or reducing air travel for holidays.
- Two organisations are investing in decarbonised supply chains by monitoring their procurement process or switching to green banks.
- Two organisations are engaging with schools and communities through events.
- Two organisations are increasing biodiversity through gardening.

There was one organisation that noted they were unable to respond since they were representing a larger group.

Motivation for action

Fewer organisations responded to this question, but the greatest motivator for climate action was considerations for the current and future of Cambridge, human and natural life. To achieve this, two organisations emphasised the need for stronger political leadership to support the challenges of financial and human resources to take action. One organisation also emphasised the need for flexibility to build partnerships.

Where else participants would look for guidance to take action

Two organisations identified technical/academic sources for further guidance: Cambridge University and technical specialists. One organisation highlighted best practices from local and national organisations as a resource.

Organisations

Continued

Feedback for further consideration for the Cambridge City Council's Climate Change Strategy

Five organisations did not provide further feedback either because they had nothing further to add, referenced a previous question, or chose not to respond.

Common suggestions from the respondents who did answer included:

- Improved transport systems with greater connectivity and frequency (2 responses)
- Planning as a key objective (2 responses)
- Opposing offsetting if it means purchasing carbon credits or would like further discussions on the topic (2 responses)
- Reduce car usage and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. (2 responses)

Other suggestions included:

- Including renewable energy development as an objective
- Supply chain and finance approach
- Permission for residents to grow wildflowers on public land
- Lifting listed building restrictions
- Supporting the community and engaging with local businesses such as methods to reduce water consumption.

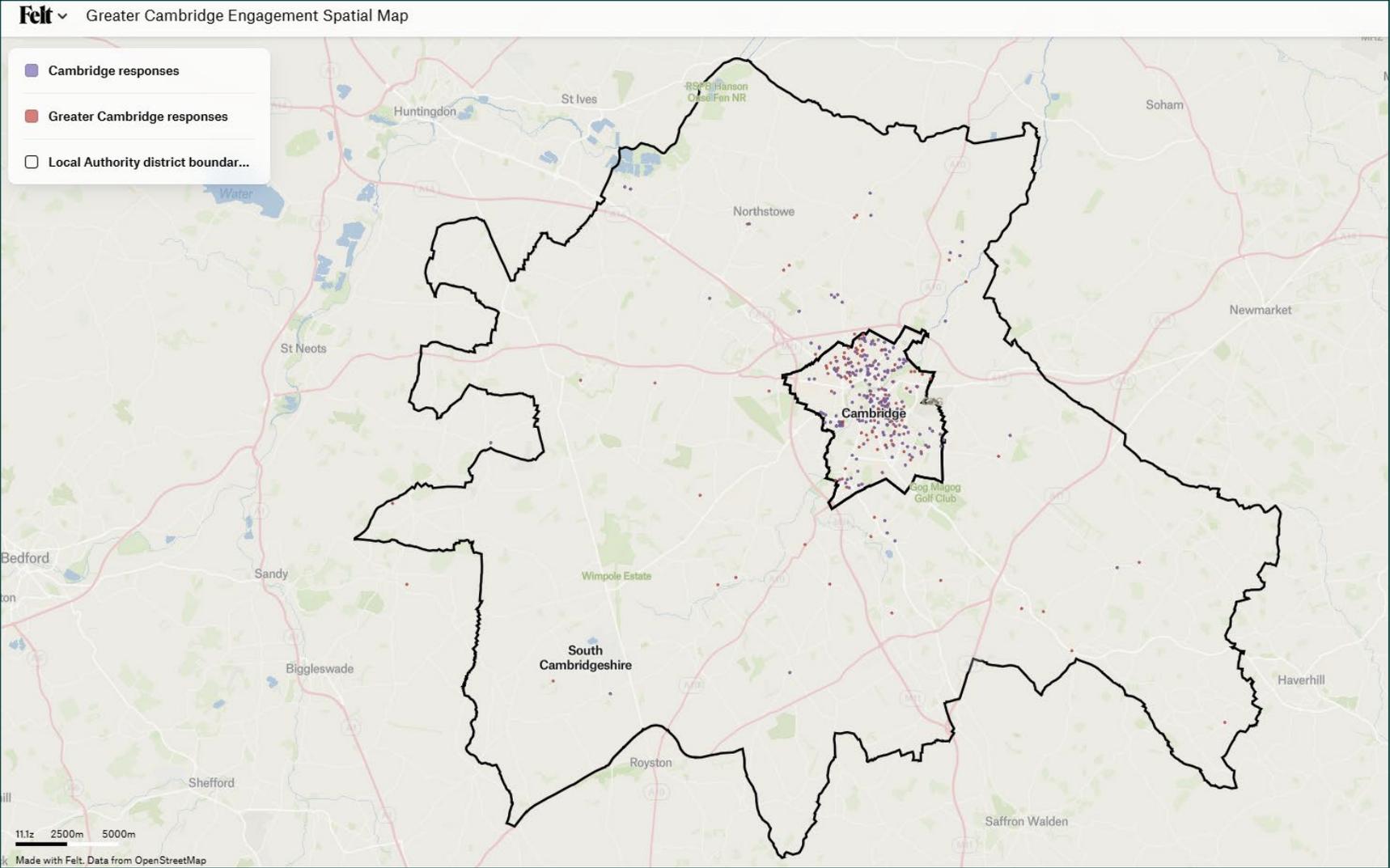
Feedback on the additional questions on trees

Only two organisations responded to further questions on the Cambridge City Council survey regarding trees. The organisations emphasised a need to improve the management regime for new trees and coordinate with local nature recovery on where trees are planted and protected.

06

Postcode analysis

Postcode analysis map



Map of all respondents to the Greater Cambridge Engagement Survey

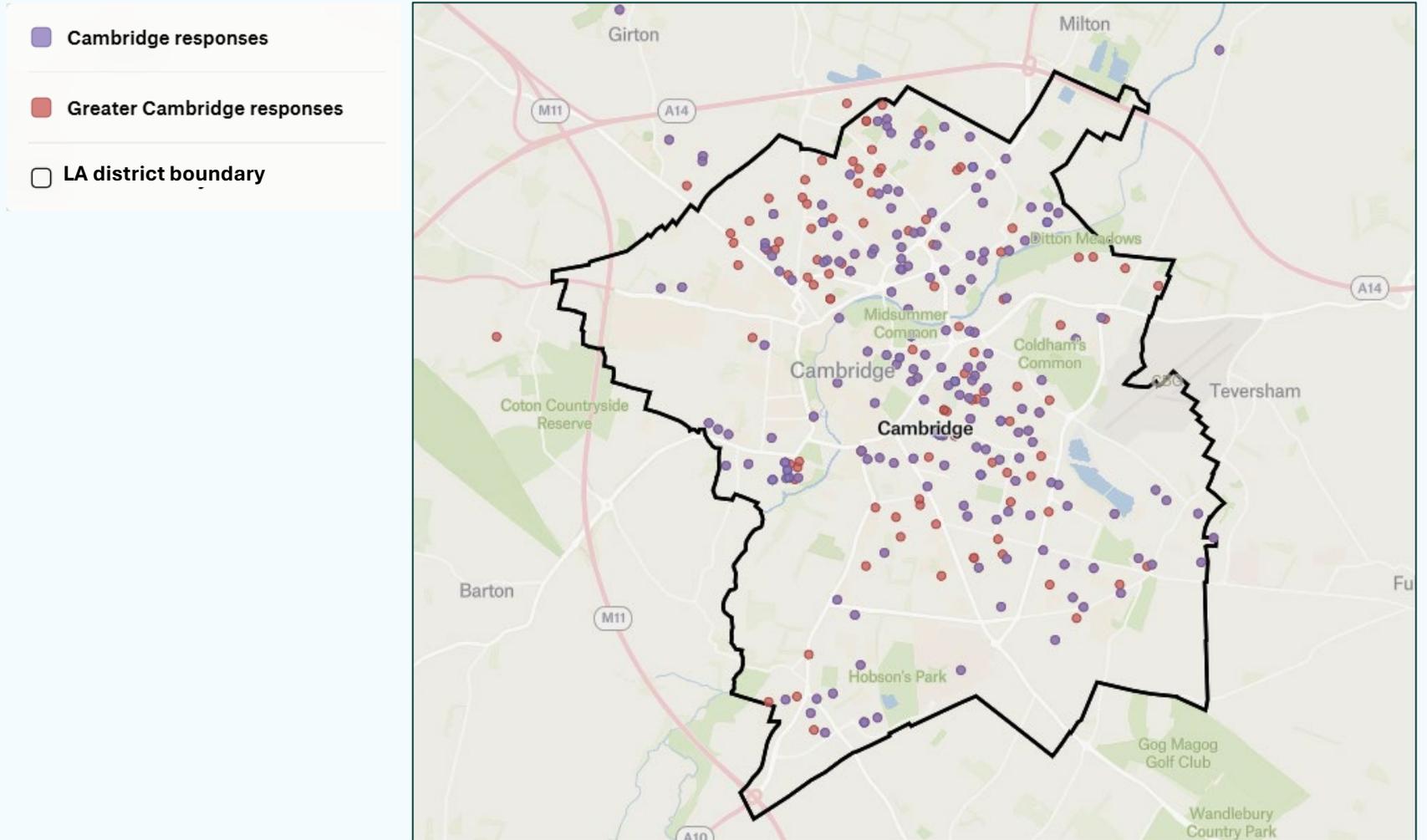
There were **374 people** responding to the survey that provided valid post codes that could be mapped. Note that for data protection purposes, postcodes from South Cambridgeshire District Council's data platform are not included. Additionally, those who provided erroneous or incomplete postcodes are also not included in this map.

To ensure respondents' data privacy, postcode data was expanded to a wider radius to prevent individual households from being identified.

The purple points indicate those who responded to the Cambridge City Council survey, and the red points indicate those who responded to the overall survey. There were **222 responses** to the Cambridge City Council survey.

Postcode analysis map

The map to the right is a zoomed in image focusing on the participants responding that lived within Cambridge that responded to the general survey. The purple data points show those who responded to Cambridge City Council's survey and the red shows those who only responded to the Greater Cambridge Survey.

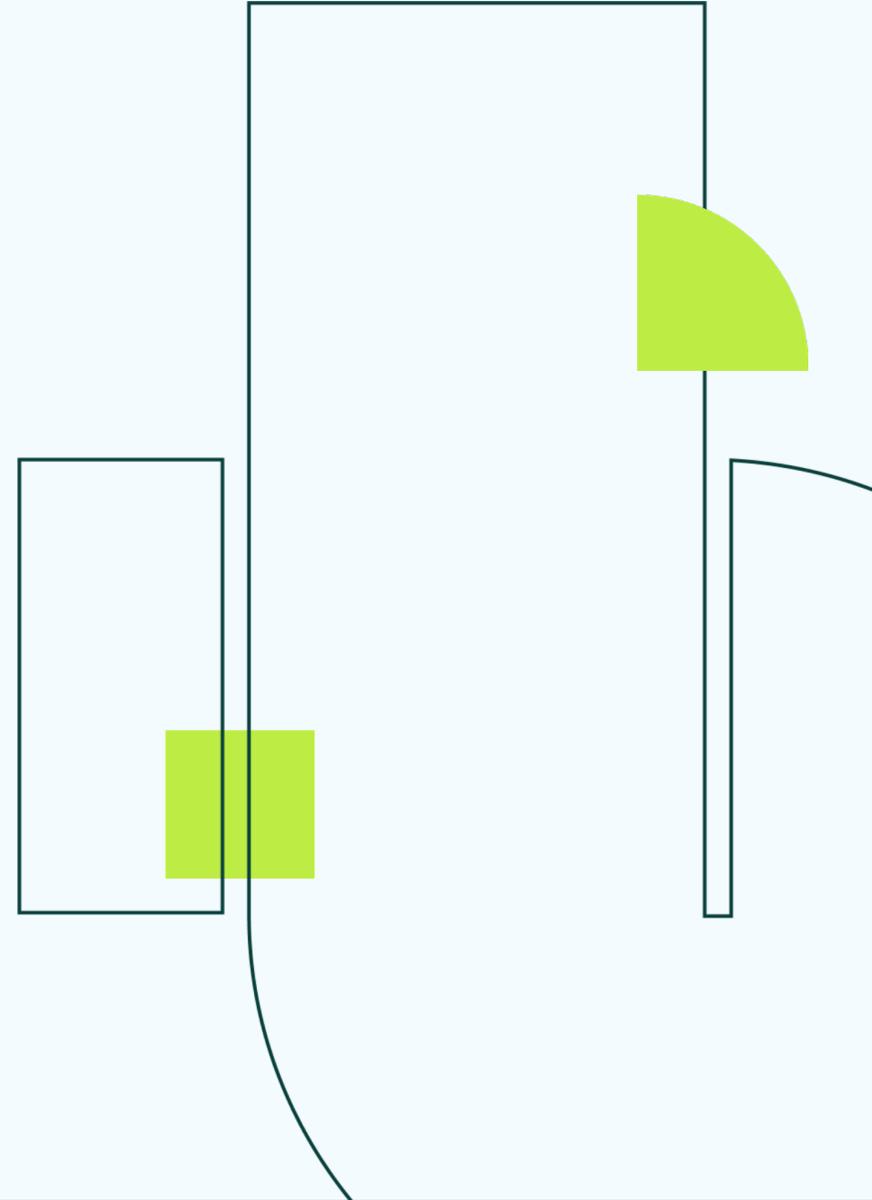


Next steps

07

Next steps

The feedback from this public engagement will be considered and incorporated into the development of the new Cambridge City Council Climate Change Strategy 2026-2031, ensuring the council captures the priorities of local people, businesses and community groups.



Appendix 1:

Engagement survey questions

08

Appendix 2:

Draft Outline Climate Change Strategy 2026-2031

08

Authors:

Julia Evans Asano, Net Zero Policy Analyst
Jess Daly, Principal Consultant

Reviewer:

Jo Mortensen, Associate Director





Climate and nature strategies - Consultation open

Instructions

- Write as **clearly** as you can— these forms might be scanned
- Write your answers in the same language as this form

About you

1. What is your postcode of residence?

2. In which capacity are you responding to this survey?

Please select all relevant options.

If you are answering in a specific capacity but also fall under another category which is not listed, please select 'Other' and specify.

Additionally, if you are responding as an elected member or behalf of a parish/town council, or if you are responding on behalf of an organisation or interest group, please select 'Other' and specify the name of your organisation, group, or parish/town council.

Please note, Greater Cambridge includes both the city of Cambridge and the surrounding district of South Cambridgeshire.

**Choose as many as you like*

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resident | <input type="checkbox"/> A member of the public who visits Greater Cambridge for work, study or leisure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An elected representative | <input type="checkbox"/> On behalf of a parish council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private company (less than 10 employees) | <input type="checkbox"/> Private company (more than 10, but less than 250, employees) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private company (250 or more employees) | <input type="checkbox"/> Public sector organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community or voluntary organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> Education or research organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A representative group representing multiple members | <input type="checkbox"/> An individual from outside Greater Cambridge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An organisation based outside of Greater Cambridge | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

If 'Other', please specify

3. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of it? (optional)

Part 1a: General awareness and understanding

4. How concerned are you about the impacts of climate change in Greater Cambridge?

**Only choose one option.*

- Very concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Not concerned

5. What do you see as the most urgent climate-related and nature-related challenges in Greater Cambridge?

**Choose between 1 and 3 options*

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity loss / loss of nature | <input type="checkbox"/> Water quality issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water scarcity | <input type="checkbox"/> Sea level rise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing inequalities | <input type="checkbox"/> Disruption to travel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Damage to infrastructure (e.g. roads, railways, power lines) | <input type="checkbox"/> Disruption to business / economy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disruption to supply chains and logistics | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial impacts (e.g., increased energy demand for cooling, unpredictable prices for goods) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impact to health | <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme weather events (please specify) |

If 'Extreme weather events (please specify)', please specify

6. Have you, your community, or your business already experienced impacts as a result of climate change?

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
- No

Part 1a: General awareness and understanding

7. Please specify what the impact was and if you have taken any action as a result of this.

Part 1a: General awareness and understanding

8. How do you think climate change will affect you, your community or your business in the next five years?

Part 1b: Support and engagement

9. Are you currently taking action to address climate change and protect nature in Greater Cambridge (e.g., doing things to reduce carbon emissions or ensuring you are prepared for the impacts of climate change)?

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
- No

Part 1b: Support and engagement

10. Please select which steps you have already taken, and which steps you would or would not consider taking?

For each row, mark one circle with a cross to indicate your preference.

	Already done/doing	Would consider doing	Would not consider
Regularly switching off lights and appliances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Keeping the thermostat set no higher than 21 degrees Celsius	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Buying energy efficient appliances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Draught proofing windows and doors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loft insulation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cavity wall insulation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
External wall insulation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Replacing gas heating with renewable heating systems (e.g. heat pumps)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Generating renewable electricity (e.g. solar PV, solar thermal systems)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Buying more seasonal or locally produced food	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reducing consumption of meat and dairy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Repairing clothes, electrical items or other goods	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Swapping, donating or selling unwanted goods	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recycling household waste (paper, glass, cans, plastic etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Separating garden waste for collection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Separating food waste for collection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Composting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduced car use through active travel (i.e., walking or cycling)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchased or leased an electric vehicle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduced car use through use of public transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. If you are taking steps which are not mentioned above, please provide more details.
(optional)

Part 1b: Support and engagement

12. What motivates you to improve nature and take action on climate change?

Select all that apply.

**Choose as many as you like*

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The climate crisis | <input type="checkbox"/> Protecting local wildlife and habitats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saving money on energy and bills | <input type="checkbox"/> Improving my health and wellbeing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being part of a community effort | <input type="checkbox"/> Concern for future generations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Setting a good example for others | <input type="checkbox"/> To develop my business and improve business performance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To make my business resilient | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting customer/shareholder/investor expectations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To attract/retain employees | <input type="checkbox"/> To access green finance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

If 'Other (please specify)', please specify

13. What barriers do you face to taking action on climate change and improving nature in Greater Cambridge?

Select all that apply.

**Choose as many as you like*

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> High upfront cost of low-carbon options | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited access to finance or funding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of time or capacity to make changes | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of information or clear guidance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty managing or measuring business/organisation's carbon emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Return on investment is too low or takes too long to realise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsuitable housing or property constraints e.g., listed buildings, lack of space | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not own property (house/flat/office) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty accessing public transport or walking and cycling options | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaware of / unable to find community initiatives or support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling that individual actions wont make much of a difference | <input type="checkbox"/> Other priorities at this time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reputational risk / greenwashing if get it wrong | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty about future government policy or regulation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

If 'Other (please specify)', please specify

14. What type of support would be most helpful for you as an individual, organisation, or business to aid emissions reduction and climate resilience?

Select all that apply.

**Choose as many as you like*

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Finance / Green Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Networking opportunities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance and resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to expert advice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

If 'Other (please specify)', please specify

15. If you were looking for guidance on action to reduce emissions (including home energy efficiency measures), increase your resilience, or support nature recovery, where would you look for information or advice?

**Choose as many as you like*

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends/neighbours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Examples in my community | <input type="checkbox"/> A trusted contractor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local environmental groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit organisations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

If 'Other (please specify)', please specify

Section 2: Strategy feedback

Thank you for completing the survey so far.

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have aligned on objectives and themes of their respective strategies. However, due to the difference in geographies and contexts that the local authorities operate in, each organisation has different priorities and actions which sit under each objective. You will have the opportunity to feedback on both strategies.

16. Do you wish to provide further feedback on Cambridge City Council's strategy?

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
 No

Section 2: Support for the strategy

Cambridge City Council is developing a new Climate Change Strategy for Cambridge which builds on the council's current strategy and achievements to date and shows our continued commitment to working towards net zero carbon emissions for both the council and the city as a whole.

The Draft Strategy Outline sets out how we plan to reduce emissions, prepare for the impacts of climate change, and enhance nature, while making sure the transition is fair and benefits everyone. It is shaped around seven key objectives and will look to achieve these objectives through a range of actions and projects.

Taking action on climate change will not only cut carbon but also bring many wider benefits — from lower energy bills and cleaner air to more comfortable homes and buildings, greener neighbourhoods, and stronger local economies.

Contact

Cambridge City Council Climate Change Officers: sustainablecity@cambridge.gov.uk

17. To what extent do you support Cambridge City Council's vision for its new Climate Change Strategy (2026-2031)?

Our vision is for a city where people and nature enjoy a clean river and clean air in species-rich and connected green spaces. We also want to play our part in slowing/preventing/minimising climate change, and supporting our communities to adapt to the changing climate.

**Only choose one option.*

- Strongly support
- Support
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Section 2: Strategic objectives

Cambridge City Council's new Climate Change Strategy will be based around seven objectives which the council will be working towards through the implementation of the strategy.

18. Rate your level of support for each of the objectives in the Climate Change Strategy.

For each row, mark one circle with a cross to indicate your preference.

	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose
Transport: Reducing the need for fossil fuel-powered travel and encouraging the use of low- and zero-carbon modes of transport to reduce emissions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy & Retrofit: Improving energy efficiency and climate resilience of homes and buildings across Cambridge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature & Water: Enhancing nature, increasing tree canopy cover, and safeguarding water to help Cambridge adapt to the impacts of climate change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainable Food: Increasing access to local, low-impact, seasonal food and reducing food waste	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste Minimisation: Reducing waste and supporting a circular economy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supply Chain & Finance: Reducing emissions and maximising the social and environmental value of procurement and partnerships across the city	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Support & Behaviour Change (ensuring a just transition): Providing accessible and inclusive support to communities and residents to empower and	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

enable low-carbon behaviour
change

19. If you have any further comments on key objectives, please add them here. (optional)

Section 2: Strategic objectives

20. We've introduced some new areas of focus in this Climate Change Strategy. Please tell us how supportive you are of the council taking these areas of work forward over the next five years and share any feedback you may have.

Please see page 5 of the Draft Strategy Outline for more information on areas of focus.

For each row, mark one circle with a cross to indicate your preference.

	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose
Developing a collaborative city-wide plan for climate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consideration of offsetting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with suppliers to measure and reduce emissions (Council Scope 3 emissions)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting community energy projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting and applying research and innovation on climate change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reducing emissions from Commercial Properties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. Do you think that there is anything within Cambridge City Council's control or influence, that has not been covered within objectives and action areas of the strategy but should be?

22. Is there anything else that you think Cambridge City Council could do within its control or influence, to support you to take action on climate change?

23. If you have any further comments on, or ideas for, the Climate Change Strategy to add that you feel have not been covered within the survey, please provide them here. (optional)

Section 2: Strategy feedback

24. Would you like to answer five additional questions to help shape some other areas of the council's work, such as the development of a heat network and the Urban Forest strategy?

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
- No

Section 2: Urban Forest Strategy

To help shape the council's next Urban Forest Strategy, we are seeking your feedback on the council's work with trees across the city, so we can ensure they continue to play a vital role in helping Cambridge adapt to climate change.

25. How important do you think it is to increase tree canopy cover in Cambridge as part of climate change adaption?

For example, providing shade, cooling, flood mitigation?

**Only choose one option.*

- Very important
- Important
- Not important

26. What benefits do you most value from trees in Cambridge in the context of climate change?

**Choose between 1 and 3 options*

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shade and cooling during heatwaves | <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon storage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved air quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat for wildlife and pollinators |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved health and wellbeing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

If 'Other (please specify)', please specify

27. How supportive are you of the council taking stronger measures to protect existing trees that provide climate resilience benefits?

For example, providing shade, carbon storage, biodiversity.

**Only choose one option.*

- Strongly support
- Support
- Oppose
- Strongly Oppose

28. What do you think is the most effective way to balance tree protection with the need for development in Cambridge in the context of climate change?

**Only choose one option.*

- Strengthening protection for existing trees
- Increase tree planting requirements in new developments
- Other (please specify)

If 'Other (please specify)', please specify

Section 2: Heat networks

To help shape the council's work on the development of a district heat network, please answer the following questions.

29. Are you aware of the Government's work on heat network zoning?

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
- No

Section 2: Heat networks

30. If a heat network zone were to be implemented in Cambridge, do you feel that connecting to a heat network would enable you to decarbonise your property (home or building) more easily?

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
- No

Section 2: Call for information

31. To help route you to the relevant next part of the survey, are you responding to this survey in the capacity of a business, public sector organisation, or community organisation?

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
- No

Section 2: Call for information

We are developing a city-wide plan which will to help build a more united approach to addressing climate change in Cambridge, reflect the depth and breadth of climate and nature action taking place across the city and provide a shared framework for scaling impact.

To help us build this we would like to understand more about what businesses, public sector and community organisations are planning to do to tackle climate change and enhance nature in Cambridge, and the commitments that have been made to this.

If you are an organisation or business, we would be very grateful if you could complete the next stage of the survey. If you are completing this survey as an individual, please do not complete this section.

32. Would you like to be involved in developing a city-wide climate plan?

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
- No

Section 2: Call for information

33. Please tell us more about what your organisation (business, public sector or community organisation) will be doing to address climate change and enhance nature in Cambridge.

Please describe your future projects or initiatives, to help us to build a broader picture of action on climate change across the city. Please also describe what outcomes or changes your organisation is hoping to achieve or deliver through these initiatives.

- 34. Please upload any relevant documentation or links here which would provide information on your plans and commitments for addressing climate change and/or enhancing nature, such as a Climate Change or Sustainability Strategy. (optional)**

This field cannot be completed on paper. Please use the online version of this form instead.

- 35. Please provide the most appropriate email address to contact you or your organisation to ensure you are included in future communications and events about the city-wide plan.**

If you'd prefer to discuss the city-wide plan further before sharing any documentation or commitments, please state here and someone from the team will be in touch to follow up with you.

Section 3: Strategy feedback

- 36. Do you wish to provide further feedback on South Cambridgeshire District Council's strategy?**

**Only choose one option.*

- Yes
 No

Section 3: Strategic priorities

The new South Cambridgeshire District Council **Climate and Nature Strategy 2026-2030** will replace the pre-existing Zero Carbon and Doubling Nature Strategies, recognising the link between our natural environment and our climate. It will look at how we can both mitigate and adapt to climate change. This strategy sets out the approach and key areas of priority for South Cambridgeshire as we work towards an environmentally thriving, net zero district, resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Contact

South Cambridgeshire District Council Climate & Environment Team:
climateandenvironment@scambs.gov.uk

37. Please rank the following key strategic themes selected as the focus for the Climate and Nature strategy in order of importance.

1 being the most important and 7 being the least important.

Please write a number from 1 (most preferred) and 7 (least preferred) in each box. Use each number exactly once.

- Transport
- Energy & Retrofit
- Nature & Water
- Sustainable Food
- Waste Minimisation
- Community Support & Behaviour
- Business, Supply Chain, & Finance

38. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the key strategic challenges facing South Cambridgeshire have been fairly represented in the strategy?

**Only choose one option.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

39. If you have further comments on the key strategic challenges, or you would like to suggest other challenges not listed above, please add them here. (optional)

40. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the key strategic opportunities have been fairly represented in the strategy?

**Only choose one option.*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

41. If you have further comments on the key strategic opportunities, or you would like to suggest other opportunities not listed above, please add them here. (optional)

42. The strategy is framed around the internationally recognised United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to ensure that actions taken on climate and nature recovery maximise co-benefits for communities. Co-benefits are positive outcomes that result from another action. Please rank the goals in as you would like to be prioritised as co-benefits for South Cambridgeshire or believe they are important in South Cambridgeshire. (optional)

Please write a number from 1 (most preferred) and 17 (least preferred) in each box. Use each number exactly once.

- No Poverty
- Zero Hunger
- Good Health and Well-being
- Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- Clean Water and Sanitation
- Affordable and Clean Energy
- Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
- Reduced Inequalities
- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Responsible Consumption and Production
- Climate Action
- Life Below Water
- Life On Land
- Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
- Partnerships for the Goals

43. Please provide any further comments you wish to make on the Sustainable Development Goals or co-benefits of action on climate and nature. (optional)

Section 3: Support and engagement

44. Do you think that there is anything within South Cambridgeshire's control or influence, that has not been covered within the objectives and action areas of the strategy but should be?

45. Is there anything else that you think that South Cambridgeshire's District Council could do within its control or influence to support you to take action on climate change?

46. The successful implementation of the Climate and Nature Strategy will require involvement from communities, residents and businesses from across the district. Please provide any further comments on how you think the strategy can be successfully implemented.

47. If you have any further comments on, or ideas for, the Climate and Nature Strategy that you feel have not been covered within the survey, please provide them here.

Help shape our climate and nature work

Share your views

Understanding how you are thinking about climate and nature is more important than ever. Cambridge City Council would like you to help shape our climate change strategy for the coming years.



We have a target to achieve net zero carbon emissions for our buildings and fleet by 2030 and a net zero vision for the city. Our existing strategy focused on actions up to 2026 and we are now developing our strategy for 2026 onwards.

We stand firmly by our climate goals for Cambridge

Together, we're making progress. Every action makes a difference for the future and changes lives for the better today. Our vision is for a city where people and nature enjoy a clean river and clean air in species-rich and connected green spaces. We also want to play our part in reducing climate change and supporting our communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Our climate change strategy for 2026 and beyond

There are five areas of focus for our new strategy:

-  Working to reduce the council's own emissions and increase climate resilience
-  Supporting the city in reducing emissions and increasing climate resilience
-  Protecting and increasing our nature and biodiversity including increasing tree canopy cover from 17% to 20%
-  Improving people's daily lives - lower bills, cleaner air, more comfortable homes, greener neighbourhoods, new green jobs and stronger local economies
-  Ensuring climate action is fair and inclusive, so that those most affected by climate change are not left behind and the benefits of addressing climate change are felt by all

Climate action = changing lives for the better

-  **Reducing emissions** = lower bills for households and businesses
-  **Tree planting** = shade on hot days, reducing flood risk, carbon storage
-  **Biodiversity and nature based solutions** = green spaces for people and animals, and climate resilience
-  **Supporting new technologies** = creates jobs and supports the local economy



Help shape our climate and nature work – share your views now!

✉ sustainablecity@cambridge.gov.uk

👉 cambridge.gov.uk/climate-change-strategy

Past progress and achievements

The council has been actively tackling climate change since 2007, declaring a climate emergency in 2019 to align with the 1.5°C global warming limit. Significant progress has been made, with the council's emissions more than halving (51.9% lower than the 2014/15 baseline). Cambridge was recognised as an 'A' list city in the Carbon Disclosure Project's global rankings in 2023 and 2024 and a top-performing council in Climate Emergency UK's scorecards. Some of the things we've done so far to reduce the council's emissions and support residents and organisations to reduce theirs are shown below:

2007

- Council launched original **Cambridge Climate Change Charter**

2008

- Council approved its first **Climate Change Strategy**
- **Climate Change Fund launched**, to finance carbon reduction projects within the council

2009

- Trial of first two **electric council vehicles**
- Cambridge Carbon Footprint ran its first **Open Eco Homes event**

2010

- **Electric car charging points** installed in two city centre car parks

2011

- **£94,000 LED lighting installed** at Grand Arcade Annex car park
- **Solar thermal panels** installed to heat water at Abbey swimming pool
- **Energy efficiency measures installed** in council homes through the Decent Homes programme

2012

- **Energy efficiency improvements** implemented at Abbey, Parkside, Jesus Green and King's Hedges swimming pools
- Supported **insulation measures in over 500 homes city wide** through The Cambridge Home Insulation grant
- **Waste service increased** the range of materials that households can recycle, adding plastic pots, tubs and trays

2013

- **LED lighting and controls** installed at Grafton West car park
 - £500,000 programme delivered in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, **improving highways for cyclists**
- ### 2014
- **Heat pumps** installed at King's Hedges swimming pool
 - **Solar panels** installed at Cherry Hinton Village Leisure Centre
 - **Greening Your Home Guide** published
 - New cycle racks installed in the city centre in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council creating **600 more bike parking spaces**
- ### 2015
- **Solar panels** installed at Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre
 - 20 council vehicles replaced with **alternative stop-start technology**
 - **LED lighting** installed at the Crematorium
- ### 2016
- Began purchasing electricity from **100% renewable sources** for council buildings
 - Seven council diesel vehicles replaced with **electric vans**
 - **£320,000 LED lighting** installed at Grand Arcade car park and Grafton East car park, reducing electricity usage by 50%
 - Action on Energy partnership retrofitted over 400 homes in Cambridge with **insulation measures** through the Green Deal for Communities funding
 - **Bronze Sustainable Food City status achieved** by Cambridge Sustainable Food Partnership

2017

- **Solar thermal system** upgraded at Abbey swimming pool
- **City Leaders Climate Change Group established** to bring together business, universities and the public sector to explore how emissions in the city can be reduced
- Sustainable City Grant helped to fund the **World's Biggest Repair Café** organised by Cambridge Carbon Footprint

2018

- Local Plan adopted including requirement for new developments to achieve a **19% reduction in carbon emissions**
- Council adopted a new **Sustainable Food Policy**
- Became the first council to require all new licensed taxis to be **low emission vehicles**
- Supported over 200 low-income residents to install **energy or water saving measures** in their homes

2019

- **Council declared a Climate Emergency and a Biodiversity Emergency**
- £285,000 project to **install solar panels** across eight council sites, including the Guildhall, Mandela House and Abbey and Parkside pools
- £350,000 project to **install measures to reduce carbon emissions** at the Guildhall
- Cambridge Canopy Project launched to **increase the tree canopy** in Cambridge
- **Planted 500 trees**

2022

- £1.7 million major **carbon reduction scheme** completed at Parkside and Abbey swimming pools, including air-source heat pumps
- Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service's **second electric refuse collection vehicle** in operation
- 18 charging points installed for electric taxis and 38 **on-street residential charging points** piloted for electric vehicles
- **Cambridge Retrofit Guide** published
- **Cambridge Climate Map** created by Cambridge Carbon Footprint
- Cambridge Carbon Footprint launches **climate change training course for residents**, funded by the Council
- Adopted a **plant-based food** motion, to transition to 100% plant-based food at civic events by 2026
- Supported Cambridge schools working to meet the accredited **Eco-School Green Flag Award**.

2021

- Separate **food waste collection** trial conducted
- **Sustainable Food Places Silver Award** received by Cambridge Sustainable Food Partnership
- Preferred Options report of new Local Plan published, including vision for development that **minimises carbon emissions**
- External **insulation and solar panels** installed in private homes and 150 council homes
- **Green Business Grants** launched, awarding £150,000 grants to help Cambridge organisations reduce carbon emissions

2020

- Committed to replacing existing council vehicles with **Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles** when they are due for replacement
- Cambridgeshire's first **electric refuse collection vehicle** commissioned by Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service
- **New Climate Change Charter** developed and launched with Cambridge Carbon Footprint

2023

- Partnered with local authorities to launch the Green Business Programme, **helping businesses reduce their carbon footprint** by developing net zero roadmaps and offering grants of up to £5k.
- Funding awarded from the Heat Network Delivery Unit to progress a **District Heating Scheme** to the next phase.
- Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service's **third electric refuse collection vehicle** in operation
- Funding secured for the development of a £6.1m **Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network** solar project, led by Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service
- Switched to **reusable cups** at Corn Exchange and Guildhall events
- First 15 **electric charging points installed**, at Adam and Eve car park, in partnership with Connected Kerb
- DiversiTREE project launches taking a **community-based approach to managing veteran trees along the riverbank**
- **Conservation grazing reintroduced** at East Barnwell Nature Reserve to improve biodiversity

2024

- Continuing to **retrofit council housing stock** while working collaboratively as part of Action on Energy Cambridgeshire, to retrofit privately owned properties
- Continued building new homes to **Passivhaus standards**
- **Sustainable Food Places Gold Award** received by Cambridge Sustainable Food Partnership, recognising Cambridge as leading the way in transforming local food systems
- **Fourth electric refuse collection vehicle** commissioned by Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service
- **Cambridge Folk Festival achieves the Greener Festival 'Outstanding' Certification** again, recognising the significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, transport links and food and waste management
- **New Air Quality Strategy** adopted to improve air quality in Greater Cambridge
- New **herbicide free** approach
- £150,000 secured to support **Biodiversity Net Gain** in planning applications

Key

- Reducing Cambridge City Council's carbon emissions
- Helping Cambridge reduce carbon emissions



The need for action to tackle climate change and increase climate resilience

Scientific evidence unequivocally demonstrates that our climate is changing, with global average temperatures already reaching approximately 1°C above pre-industrial levels. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and global agreements like the UN Paris Climate Agreement have established a critical threshold: limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels is essential to avert the most severe and catastrophic impacts of climate change. The UK government committed to reaching net zero by 2050 and a 68% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (from 1990 levels).

Cambridge is feeling the effects of climate change

Overheating

Cambridge recorded 38.7°C in 2019 and the UK recorded over 40°C for the first time in 2022. The summer of 2025, the UK's hottest, saw an unusually high number of heatwaves declared. Urban areas such as Cambridge are particularly vulnerable to changes in heat. An additional factor facing city residents is the urban heat island effect. Buildings absorb rather than reflect the sun's heat, and waste heat from air conditioners and vehicles can add warmth to the surroundings, increasing temperatures.

Water scarcity and flooding

Cambridge is already seeing warmer, wetter winters which increase flood risk. It's projected winters will be 1.3°C warmer and 7% wetter by 2050. Summers are also becoming hotter and drier raising the risk of drought, despite increased intensity of rainfall when it occurs. Summers are projected to be 2.2°C warmer and 3% drier by 2050.

But together we are making progress

Since 2014/15, the council's emissions have reduced by

↓ 51.9%

Since 2005, the city's emissions have reduced by

↓ 47.3%

Strategy and objectives from 2026

The new draft strategy for 2026 and beyond focuses on the council's direct actions while driving city-wide change through partnerships. It builds on the previous strategy (2021-2026) integrating climate adaptation actions throughout and introduces some new objectives.

It sets our continued direction of travel towards net zero, while allowing for flexibility guided by emerging opportunities, evolving priorities and the resources that enable their success.

Objectives

Transport

Reduce fossil fuel-powered travel, encourage low/zero carbon transport.

Energy and retrofit

Improve energy efficiency and climate resilience of homes and buildings, support low-carbon heating.

Nature and water

Enhance nature, increase tree canopy cover, safeguard water and adapt to climate impacts.

Sustainable food

Increase access to local, low-impact, seasonal food, reduce food waste.

Waste minimisation

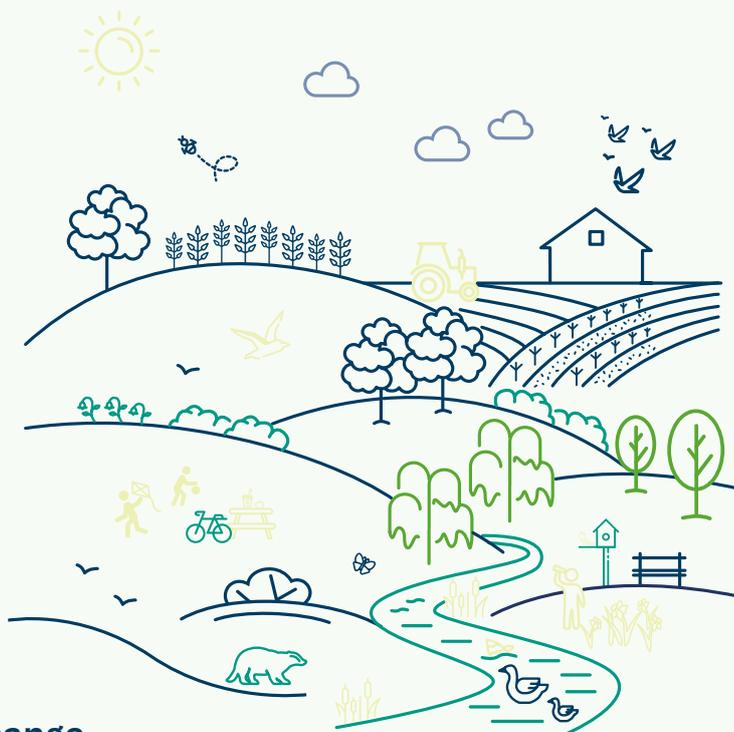
Reduce waste, support a circular economy.

Supply chain and finance

Reduce emissions and maximise social/environmental value of procurement and partnerships.

Community support and behaviour change

Provide accessible/inclusive support to empower low-carbon behaviour change, ensuring benefits are shared widely.



New areas of focus from 2026

A collaboratively created city-wide climate plan

We're calling for input from organisations to help shape a collaborative, city-wide climate plan for Cambridge that builds a picture of what is happening across the city including how others are decarbonising their operations. Building on our partnership with Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, Anglia Ruskin University's Global Sustainability Institute, and the Cambridge City Leaders Climate Change Group, we aim to co-develop a shared plan with businesses, public sector bodies, anchor institutions and community organisations that reflects the breadth of climate action across the city, highlights the shared responsibility for addressing climate change and paves the way for more collaborative action, accelerating decarbonisation and adaptation – locally and collectively.

Residual emissions

Exploring how councils might compensate for unavoidable residual emissions to meet net zero targets. This is often referred to as 'offsetting'.

Measuring council scope three emissions

Working with our suppliers to encourage and support them to reduce their emissions.

Supporting community-led renewable energy projects

Exploring opportunities for community-led renewable energy generation and shared ownership models, providing advice and support to unlock funding.

Reducing emissions from commercial properties

Reviewing the Asset Management and Decarbonisation Plan to identify priority sites and funding for improvements to meet net zero targets and energy efficiency standards.

Areas of action

The strategy will have a detailed action plan alongside it. This is currently being developed, and your feedback will help inform this. However, there are some existing strategic projects that are already in development and are being considered as part of the plan to address emissions, subject to funding being secured.

Reducing the council's direct emissions and increasing the council's climate resilience

Key projects

Transport

Fleet decarbonisation: Purchasing Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) when replacing vans and trucks.

Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network:

The network will charge and power up to 18 electric refuse collection vehicles using renewable energy generated by solar panels at the depot (targeting 2026/27 for completion).

Energy and retrofit

Civic Quarter redevelopment: Retrofitting the Guildhall to ENERPHIT (a certification standard designed for energy-efficient renovations of existing buildings) and emerging net zero carbon standards by 2029 and the Corn Exchange targeting a 65% reduction in carbon emissions.

Cambridge City Centre District Heat Network: Supplying low carbon, renewable heat to buildings in the city centre. If viable, targeting 2030 for first buildings to connect to it, aiming to phase out gas boilers.

Strategic asset management plan: To identify pathways to reduce emissions from council buildings to net zero and identify funding opportunities.

Nature and water

Delivering biodiversity net gain on the council's estate, climate-resilient management of parks (drought-tolerant planting, no-mow zones, herbicide-free), exploring rainwater harvesting.

Waste minimisation

Eliminating single-use plastics at council events and banning them at events held on council open spaces.

Community support and behaviour change (just transition)

Continuing to provide carbon literacy training to staff, councillors and residents.

Reducing Cambridge's emissions and increasing the city's climate resilience

Key projects

Transport

Installing EV charging infrastructure across the city (600 charging points with Connected Kerb, 264 installed to date), and in new council homes whilst also encouraging all new developments to install EV chargers too. Promoting walking, cycling and public transport through planning policies and as part of the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

Energy & retrofit

Through the new Local Plan new development must be designed to take into account a changing climate (e.g. overheating), and embed the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation, achieve net zero operational emissions, be energy and water efficient and use renewable energy to meet their remaining energy needs.

City-wide emissions (homes - 25% of city emissions)

Council homes: Developing a delivery and funding plan which will take a strategic approach to decarbonisation of existing council homes and will include creating an overheating mitigation strategy and a policy for heat pump installation. We have already retrofitted 225 council homes to EPC C, retrofitted a further 48 homes on Ross Street to net zero carbon and have secured funding for 370 more.

Private homes: Providing grant funding for energy upgrades and low-carbon heating to low-income households by working in partnership with Cambridge Energy and Retrofit Partnership (CERP).



Partnerships: Creating a cohesive retrofit strategy for all housing tenures to scale up retrofit through measures such as area-based plans, continuing to provide energy efficiency advice for residents and communities to support residents to retrofit through Action on Energy partnership, progressing the Cambridgeshire Local Area Energy Plan (sets out what energy infrastructure Cambridgeshire needs to reach net zero and support sustainable growth), and leading the City Centre District Heat Network (reducing carbon emissions by 98% if viable).

Nature and water

Water safeguarding: Planning water retrofit measures in existing council homes, exploring rain gardens in housing estates. Participating in Water Scarcity Funding to retrofit households for water savings and establish a Water Credits Scheme. Implementing pool water recovery systems at three swimming pools.

Planning system: Using the new Local Plan to protect from flooding and not increase flood risk, managing water in as natural way as possible by using Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and to be highly water efficient. New homes to meet water efficiency standards (110 litres/person/day). which goes beyond the national standard - reflecting the water issues facing the Cambridge area.

Enhancing nature: Increasing Cambridge's tree canopy cover from 17% to 20% by 2050 through the Urban Forest Strategy. Ceasing herbicides on grass verges, trialling new grass-cutting methods for wildflowers. Improving rare chalk stream habitats (Cherry

Hinton Brook, Vicars Brook, Coldham's Brook). Using the new Local Plan to protect peat soils and promote the protection of soils in construction, encouraging green infrastructure to support natural carbon storage rather than greenhouse gas release.

Sustainable food

Promoting sustainable food in the city: Requiring allotment space in new developments, making council allotment plots more accessible, supporting community orchards and wildlife gardens, encouraging food-growing opportunities in developments.

Partnerships: Member of Cambridge Sustainable Food Network (supporting Gold Award status), providing grants for projects that promote sustainable food (e.g. foraging), partnering with Cambridge Sustainable Food to run a predominantly plant-based café at Meadows Community Centre.

Waste minimisation

City-wide waste: Rolling out food waste collections from 2026 (phased approach), aiming to send food waste to anaerobic digestion facilities. Working with RECAP on a new Joint Municipal Waste Strategy. Using the new Local Plan to promote reuse of materials and recycling in building projects and when buildings are in use.

Partnerships: Communications campaigns to raise awareness and encourage recycling/waste reduction, supporting businesses to adopt circular economy practices, providing grant funding to community organisations to support residents to reuse and recycle, for example running repair cafes.

Supply chain and finance

Partnerships: Convening the City Leaders Climate Change Group (with Cambridge Institute of Sustainability Leadership (CISL) and Cambridge Zero) to drive cross-sector initiatives. Co-developing the city-wide climate plan with this group. Supporting the growth of a “climate cluster” in Greater Cambridge (Innovate Cambridge, Cambridge Clean Tech, Cambridge Zero, CISL) and partnering with CISL to share learning and find testbed opportunities for climate solutions.

Community support and behaviour change (just transition)

Co-developing Ward Climate Action Plans reflecting local priorities. Designing a creative behavioural change campaign for Council venues. Providing retrofit apprenticeship opportunities and supporting green job access through the Region of Learning programme.

Partnerships: Supporting community groups with Sustainable City Grant funding to deliver activities which help achieve the Climate Change Strategy objectives (e.g., for energy reduction, repair cafes, sustainable food). Convening the Local Climate Change Forum to facilitate collaboration, public engagement and best practice sharing with community groups including Cambridge Carbon Footprint. Exploring and supporting community energy projects.

Offsetting residual emissions

We have prioritised, and will continue to prioritise, reducing emissions as far as is reasonably possible.

We are now starting to explore how councils might compensate for unavoidable residual emissions to meet net zero targets, often referred to as “offsetting”.

We would like to understand what you think.

General principles for offsetting:

- Local – offsets should be generated locally within the UK (not overseas).
- Additional – contribute to projects that wouldn’t happen otherwise.
- Credible, permanent and verified to comply with independent, recognised standards and avoid double counting.
- Prioritise carbon removal over avoidance offsets.

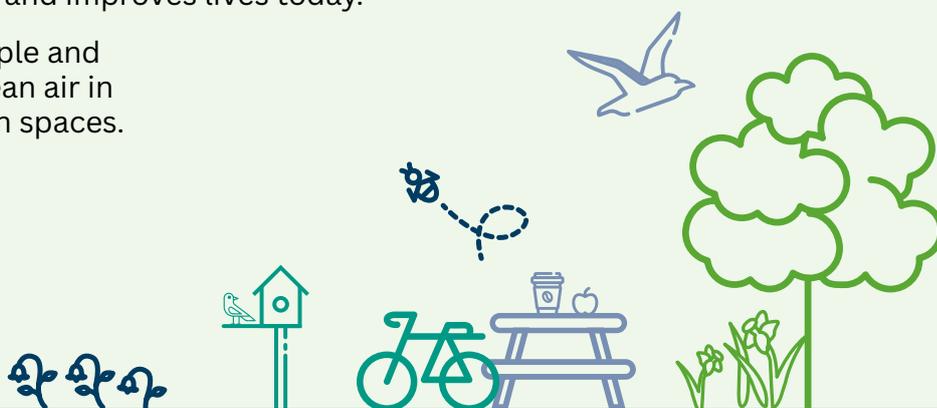
Beyond this we anticipate the development of national guidance, and will prepare the necessary evidence and data to inform future decisions that may be needed by the council or a newly formed unitary council.

We stand firmly by our climate goals for Cambridge.

Together, we’re making progress and we can’t stop now. Every action makes a difference for the future and improves lives today.

Our vision is for a city where people and nature enjoy a clean river and clean air in species-rich and connected green spaces.

We also want to play our part in reducing climate change - supporting our communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change.



Help shape our climate and nature work – share your views now!

✉ sustainablecity@cambridge.gov.uk

➡ cambridge.gov.uk/climate-change-strategy