



Forest for Cornwall, planning shake-up and low carbon homes in Cornwall Council's climate emergency plans

Dear resident,

Thank you for taking part in our Climate Change survey and letting us know that you would like to be kept informed about climate change and Carbon Neutral Cornwall.

Around 3,000 residents had their say in prioritising the first measures to help Cornwall cut its carbon footprint, revealed in a trailblazing Council plan to tackle the climate emergency. Proposals to be developed include planting carbon-absorbing woodlands across Cornwall, powering all new homes in Cornwall with alternative energy sources under a planning shake-up and making energy efficiency improvements to existing Council owned Cornwall Housing homes.

The ambitious proposals, outlined in a climate change report presented to Cornwall Council's Cabinet today (24 July 2019), have been unanimously approved.

You can view the report and associated documents on our website:

[View the climate change report and additional documents](#) (see item 6).

A webcast of the Cabinet meeting is available to view as an archive on our website: [View archived webcasts](#)

The report comes after the Council declared a climate emergency earlier this year and unveils its initial plans to help Cornwall strive towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030, ahead of the Government's national target of 2050.

Among the Council's first proposals are:

- A Forest for Cornwall to be planted over the next 10 years and covering around 32 square miles – about two per cent of Cornwall's land mass. It would increase canopy cover in the region substantially, absorb a critical amount of carbon and support wildlife
- A new climate change planning shake-up to strengthen existing policies in the Local Plan to promote renewable energy, environmental growth and energy-efficient homes, increasing employment opportunities and generating more of our own energy
- A whole-house retrofit pilot which would see energy efficiency improvements fitted to Cornwall Housing homes, helping reduce fuel poverty for residents on low incomes.

Cornwall Councillors have agreed to prioritise £1.7 million to be spent on the first phase of the Forest for Cornwall and retrofit pilot with the money coming from a £16 million fund already allocated for low carbon investments. The Council will also bid for £500,000 in match funding from the Government's Urban Tree Challenge Fund to reduce the cost of developing the Forest for Cornwall.

The climate change report stresses that Cornwall Council cannot tackle the climate crisis alone and says getting to carbon neutral will require significant changes for all residents in Cornwall, from how energy is used in the home, our transport choices and how food is bought.

Cornwall's carbon emissions are split among the following sectors:

- Commercial and industrial - 23%
- Road transport - 22%
- Residential - 21%
- Agriculture - 19%

- Waste - 6%
- Aviation - 1.5%
- Marine navigation - 0.75%
- Rail transport - 0.75%.

To deliver these ambitious outcomes the report says support is needed from all sectors – communities, businesses, schools, public sector partners, the voluntary sector and others.

The Council is now working towards the following aims:

- improving energy efficiency that reduces demand for energy across the economy
- helping residents to make choices that lead to lower carbon emissions
- promoting public transport, walking and cycling
- increased electrification in the key areas of transport and heating
- expansion of renewable energy generation
- carbon capture and storage to reduce emissions that enter the atmosphere
- change the way land is used and developed to tackle the climate emergency.

Our recent climate conversation involving speaking to more than 800 people at the Royal Cornwall Show, nearly 1,000 residents in 21 town centres and an online survey which was filled in by over 1,100 people helped to inform the emerging plans outlined in the report.

In hearing from people about climate change and Carbon Neutral Cornwall we learned that a great many of them are very concerned about climate change. We summarised what people told us in a climate change engagement feedback summary report that is listed as Appendix 3 to the climate change report.

[View our engagement summary report](#)

Among the top things people said the Council could do to help Cornwall become carbon neutral, all of which are reflected in the Council's aims and first proposals in development, were:

- Planting more trees, helping nature and wildlife thrive

- Making it easier to reduce single use plastics and
- Making it easier to reduce and recycle waste.

While this report is a significant milestone in tackling the climate emergency and we are acting faster than the Government and other local authorities, we know that further planning is needed to provide a robust and evidence-based plan that wins the hearts and minds of all our residents.

As a Council, we have a leading role to play in the climate emergency and Cornwall is uniquely placed to meet this challenge to reduce our impact of global warming. Exploring future technological advances will be to key to reducing our carbon footprint while ensuring a prosperous and sustainable Cornwall for everyone.

You can read more about what the Council has already done and is doing now, including continuing to explore ways to make public transport more affordable and to enable residents and businesses to switch to ultra-low emission vehicles, in our news release. [LINK](#)

More information about climate change and Carbon Neutral Cornwall is available on our website www.cornwall.gov.uk/climatechange

If you have any questions or would like further information please email the Climate Change team on climatechange@cornwall.gov.uk

Kind regards

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Get in touch

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