

Climate Strategy

Gateshead 2021/22

Draft for consultation



Contents

- 3 Foreword by the Leader of the Council
- 4 The need for change
- 5 The impact on Gateshead
- 7 Consultation
- 8 Our vision
- 10 Aims of the community, partners and the council
- 14 Strategy for Gateshead
- 23 Ward Action Plans
- 24 Get involved



Foreword

by the Leader of the Council

Gateshead Council has made significant progress in recent years in reducing the carbon emissions from its own activities. Investment in new technologies has helped us reduce reliance on fossil fuels for providing heat and power to our buildings, and improving the efficiency of street lighting and the vehicles we use has also had a significant impact. Since 2010 we have reduced the carbon emissions associated with the Council's activities by 55%. In February 2021 we published a Climate Emergency Action Plan that will deliver on the council's commitment to make its own activities carbon neutral by 2030.



However, the Council's own activities account for only around 2.5% of Gateshead's total emissions. Clearly, achieving a significant reduction in total emissions from Gateshead requires action from everybody – from our communities, from Gateshead businesses and from our partners. This Strategy aims to deliver on our commitment of making the whole of Gateshead carbon neutral by 2030. It sets out how communities, businesses and other agencies can reduce their carbon footprint, and the steps that the Council can take in enabling this. It is vital that we act collectively to deliver change, it is everyone's responsibility to take the action necessary to reduce the negative impact we have on our planet. From residents to businesses, public services to charities to government. Climate Change is happening. Countries and businesses are responding, and Gateshead needs to be part of that movement if it is to succeed in grasping the many opportunities arising from a green economy and thriving neighbourhoods.

The activities that help reduce carbon emissions also help address wider issues facing our communities, such as challenges to health and wellbeing, the need to improve air quality in some locations, reducing fuel poverty, ensuring access to good quality and affordable food, and supporting Gateshead's economic recovery from the devastating effects of Covid-19.

We look forward to hearing from Gateshead residents on how they will play their part in the vital work to deliver a zero carbon future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Gannon'.

Cllr Martin Gannon
Leader, Gateshead Council

The need for change

Earth's climate has changed throughout history but the current warming trend is of particular significance because the evidence shows it is the result of human activity since the mid-20th century and the speed of change is unprecedented over thousands of years.

The evidence for rapid climate change is compelling:

- The planet's average surface temperature has risen about 1.18 degrees celsius since the late 19th century, a change driven largely by increased carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere and other human activity.
- Most of the warming occurred in the past 40 years, with the seven most recent years being the warmest. The years 2016 and 2020 are tied for the warmest year on record.
- The Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets have shrunk. Data from NASA shows Greenland lost an average of 279 billion tons of ice per year between 1993 and 2019, while Antarctica lost about 148 billion tons of ice per year.
- Global sea level rose about 20 centimetres in the last century. The rate in the last two decades is nearly double that of the last century and accelerating year by year.



The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 countries at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. COP26 is being held this year with a goal to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

To achieve this long-term temperature goal, countries need to start reducing greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century.

The COP26 summit will bring countries together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Climate change is happening and it is everyone's responsibility to take action.



The impact on Gateshead

UK winters are projected to become warmer and wetter on average, although cold and/or dry winters will still occur sometimes. Summers are projected to become hotter and are more likely to be drier, although wetter summers are also possible. By 2050, heatwaves like that seen in 2019 are expected to happen every other year.

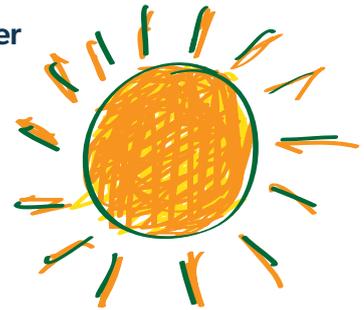
By 2070 we project:

- Winter will be between 1 and 4.5°C warmer and up to 30% wetter
- Summer will be between 1 and 6°C warmer and up to 60% drier



Heavy rainfall is also more likely.

Since 1998, the UK has seen seven of the ten wettest years on record. Winter storms like we saw in 2015 are at least 40% more likely because of climate change.



Climate Change is already impacting on Gateshead with more regular flooding incidents and poor air quality.

If the predicted temperature rise occurs, the frequency, pattern and severity of flooding are all expected to increase and become more damaging. The risk of flooding in the borough will increase given rising sea levels, an increase in extreme rainfall and storm surge events and higher ground water levels.

In November 2018 Defra released a new set of UK Climate Projections (UKCP18): for the North East, sea levels are expected to increase by up to 50cm under the low emissions scenario and up to 90cm under the high emissions scenario by 2100.

Whilst it is not possible to predict or prevent all flooding, the Council's [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) provides a range of flood risk data (river, tidal, surface water, groundwater, mine water, sewer, historic events) which can help to identify parts of the borough which may be vulnerable to flooding in the future and where steps can be taken to reduce the risk and the impact of flooding. The risk of flooding from the River Tyne, River Derwent and River Team is greatest in parts of Dunston, Teams, Team Valley Trading Estate, Lamesley, Blackhall Mill, Lintzford, Derwenthaugh, Blaydon and Swalwell. Surface water flooding also affects hilly areas of the borough such as Kibblesworth, Chopwell, Rowlands Gill, Leam Lane, Sunnyside, Clara Vale, the upper Team Valley, High Fell, Felling and Heworth.



Climate change will impact on our ability to develop areas for jobs and homes due to potential flooding.

Thunder Thursday

On Thursday 28th June 2012, 50mm of rain fell across the North East in just two hours, the amount we would normally see for the whole month of June. In addition, 40mm fell in ninety minutes on Sunday 5th August 2012.

As a result of these two storms alone, the following happened:

- Our flood risk management team **investigated over 300 reports of flooding, drainage and surface water problems.**
- **Detailed investigations were completed in 10 areas** where 10 or more properties were flooded.
- More than **250 properties had to be vacated** through flooding and storm damage.
- **Over 80 locations on Gateshead's roads were closed** due to surface water flooding.
- **75 locations were added to the council's flood register**
- **Over 50 flood risk management or drainage improvement schemes were completed** following the incidents
- While **each flooding location was different**, the level of rainfall was clearly the cause of the flooding.

The summer floods in 2012 demonstrated the risks from overland surface water to both rural and urban communities where existing drainage systems could not cope. Flooding can have a devastating impact: damage to property and critical infrastructure; costs to the economy; disruption to businesses, the transport network and community life; the health and wellbeing of residents.

Consultation

In February 2020 the Council hosted a stakeholder workshop at BALTIC, with the aim of beginning a dialogue with our communities, and creating networks between individuals, groups and organisations.

A residents' survey was also carried out between January and May 2020, to gain a better understanding of our communities' attitudes towards the climate emergency, and what action they would be willing to take.

The survey received a strong response, with 942 respondents. 86% were concerned about the impact of climate change, while a large majority (81%) supported the Council taking action on climate change.

86%
of respondents were concerned about the impact of climate change



When asked who should do more to tackle climate change, the majority (90%) of respondents identified large businesses, followed by national government (87%), and Gateshead Council (82%).

On actions to reduce their own carbon footprint, people indicated they would be willing to reduce the amount of energy they used, would plant or retain trees or shrubs, or would switch to 'green' energy tariffs. However, respondents were more resistant to the suggestion of avoiding air travel, with 35% unwilling to do this.

We are seeking views and partnership working on this Climate Emergency Strategy.

- Consultation plan
- Partnership engagement 2021
- Public engagement 2021
- Draft Strategy with partnership agreement finalised Spring 2022

Get involved – share your ideas via our interactive consultation:

[Climate change in Gateshead](#)



Our vision:

By 2030 we will have achieved our commitment to making Gateshead carbon neutral

Organisations will be working together in a combined effort to reduce carbon emissions. Opportunities in the 'green economy' will be realised, with businesses benefitting from sectors that have seen substantial growth as our economy moves away from its reliance on fossil fuels.

Our communities will have been supported through this change: healthier and more active lifestyles, improved access to nature, cleaner air, warmer homes with lower energy bills, better access to local services, and new job opportunities all of which have reduced inequalities across the borough.



Commitments

In response to the climate emergency declared in 2019, we are committed to:

- Making the council's activities carbon neutral by 2030.
- Achieving 100% clean energy across the council's full range of functions by 2030.
- Ensuring that all strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning decisions are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030.
- Ensuring that political and chief officers embed this work in all areas and take responsibility for reducing, as rapidly as possible, the carbon emissions resulting from the council's activities, ensuring that any recommendations are fully costed.
- Supporting and working with all other relevant agencies towards making the entire area carbon neutral within the same timescale.
- Working with, influencing and inspiring partners across the borough to help deliver this goal through all relevant strategies, plans and shared resources by developing a series of meetings, events and partner workshops.
- The council and its partners taking steps to proactively include young people in the process, ensuring that they have a voice in shaping the future.
- Calling on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and asking local MPs to do likewise.

Gateshead Council has made significant progress in recent years in reducing the carbon emissions associated with our own activities. Investment in new technologies has helped us reduce reliance on fossil fuels for providing heat and power to our buildings. Improving the efficiency of street lighting and the vehicles we use has also had a significant impact.

Since 2010 we have reduced the carbon emissions associated with the council's activities by 55%. In February 2021 we published a Climate Emergency Action Plan that will deliver on the council's commitment to make its own activities carbon neutral by 2030.

However, the council's own activities account for only around 2.5% of Gateshead's total emissions. Clearly, achieving a significant reduction in total emissions from Gateshead requires action within our communities, from Gateshead businesses and from our partners. This strategy aims to deliver on our commitment of making the whole of Gateshead carbon neutral by 2030. It sets out how communities, businesses and other agencies can reduce their carbon footprint, and the steps that the council can take in facilitating this.

Our Current Position

Gateshead as a borough produces around 5.3 tonnes of CO² (tCO²) per person per year, compared to the national average of 5.4 tCO² per head. (source – BEIS Local Authority Greenhouse Gas Emission datasets, to 2019). This has reduced by 36% since records began in 2005.

Emissions are generated roughly as 30% from business + public sector, 30% from people's homes and 40% from transport.

[2019 Local Authority Carbon Dioxide Emissions \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[UK local authority carbon dioxide emissions estimates 2019 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)



Aims of the community, partners and the council

Build on commitments made by businesses, residents and other stakeholders at the 2020 Climate Emergency workshop.

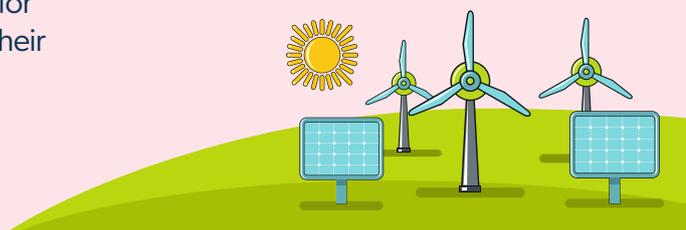
Transport – our vision

- Walking and cycling will become the natural choices for shorter journeys. We will make improvements to infrastructure to help people make these choices.
- Public transport will become a more attractive choice by making improvements to the network and working with transport providers.
- We'll support the migration to zero emission vehicles through the provision of electric charging infrastructure for vehicles in appropriate locations and will work with public transport operators to support them in making all buses zero emission.
- We'll work together to address how services and goods can be delivered with zero carbon impact. We'll make services and facilities more accessible within communities, minimising the need to travel, and the amount of distance travelled.
- Awareness amongst the community of greener, healthier transport will grow and its use will grow.
- We'll work together to address how services and goods can be delivered with zero carbon impact
- The North East Transport Plan puts climate change at its heart. The Council will implement this objective in its programme of sustainable transport schemes and work with businesses including public transport operators to make sustainable travel more affordable and accessible.



Energy

- Continue to prioritise reduction in energy use –
 - for homes, with energy efficiency grant support
 - for businesses, with services to support resource efficiency
 - for council buildings, through invest-to-save energy saving measures
- To deliver our Zero Carbon Heat Strategy, which will –
 - continue to invest in heat networks for council homes and buildings, and their surrounding communities
 - support installation of heat pumps where viable
- support the growth of clean, green hydrogen, through partners and projects like InTEGRel and HyDeploy2, as an alternative heating fuel
- Embrace national policies and infrastructure that aim to decarbonise power supplies by 80% at 2030, and totally by 2040
- For Gateshead to lead by example in the North East's low carbon heat cluster, for clean heat provision and research



Economy and consumption

- For sustainable businesses to flourish in Gateshead
- For consumerism to be mindful of carbon implications with a shift towards a greener economy
- To reduce waste
- For the re-use and re-purpose of materials and consumables to become common place (buy less, re-use, swap, buy second hand, buy local, buy ethical)
- To manage all waste appropriately within the waste hierarchy (reduce, re-use, recycle) including recycling and energy from waste
- To work towards a doughnut economy
<https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/>



Woodland and Nature

- Woodland and habitat creation to be maximised and protected
- To leave the environment in a better state than we found it
- For our communities to be able to access and enjoy the countryside and urban nature using sustainable methods of transport
- Plant 100,000 trees by 2030 and work with partners to increase woodland cover from 15% to 17% by 2050



Food

- Low carbon, sustainable food to be available to all
- Reduction in food waste
- Reduction in food miles
- Encouragement of a reduced meat diet



Building flood resilience

To adapt to climate change and build flood resilience:

- Update Gateshead's [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy](#) to a more strategic and comprehensive plan that drives long-term local action.
- Support the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to deliver a six year programme of local flood mitigation schemes, working with key stakeholders such as the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water, to manage flooding in communities that have been affected by flooding incidents or are at high risk of flooding.
- Support the Environment Agency with the delivery of Team Valley Flood Alleviation Scheme to reduce flood risk on Team Valley Trading Estate including upstream storage, natural flood management and a flood warning system.
- Ensure today's growth and infrastructure is resilient to tomorrow's climate work through spatial planning and advice for LLFA.
- Put in place sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and flood mitigation measures within major new developments such as Metrogreen and Gateshead Quays.
- Make properties in high risk areas more flood resilient by encouraging communities and businesses to incorporate property protection measures e.g. flood gates, and to prepare flood response plans.
- Work with a range of partners through the Tyne, Team, Tyne Estuary and Don river catchment partnerships and the Northumbrian Integrated Drainage Partnership.
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) incorporated within property, highways and green infrastructure e.g. water butts, rain water gardens, permeable paving, basins, swales and ponds.
- Create climate resilient places through integrated catchment management:
- Ensure landowners maintain their flood management assets (e.g. watercourses, culverts, flood defences, drains, SuDS), including Council assets.
- Prepare for flooding events - appropriate warnings, alerts, evacuation plans and information from multi-agency partners.
- Building community engagement and preparation of local flood response plans: Community Emergency Guidance.

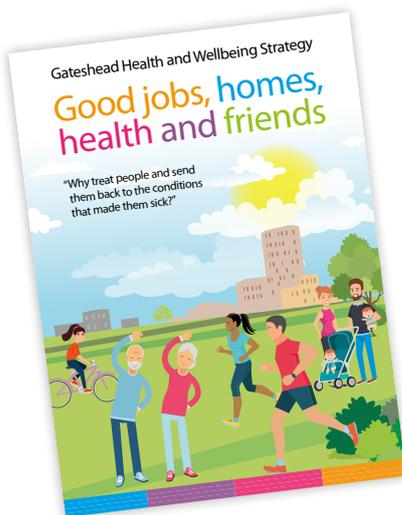


Adaptation to Climate Change

- Ensure our communities are safe from the impacts of climate change
- For our businesses to be resilient to the impacts of climate change

Our strategic approach, **'Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives'**, commits us to these pledges

- **Support our communities to support themselves and each other**
- **Invest in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough**



Our vision for health and wellbeing in Gateshead is "Good jobs, homes, health and friends". Within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy our objective is to create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.

This Climate Change Strategy will help us to deliver against both the Health and Wellbeing strategy and the Thrive pledges and make a real difference to the lives of people in Gateshead.



Strategy for Gateshead

This strategy starts to provide a framework for grass roots action to tackle climate change at the local level, with local actions, collaboration and behaviour change. This draft strategy is intended to be a 'starter for ten' allowing for a collaborative approach to set goals and actions that the whole community in Gateshead can buy into and implement.

The following sections provide case studies of actions that contribute to our environmental goals from within the Council and our partners. We want this draft strategy to spark the conversation to identify all the amazing initiatives that are happening in Gateshead relating to climate change and to provide ideas for new actions to enable us to work towards net zero together.

We know we haven't captured everything going on in Gateshead and we want you to tell us what you are doing and how we can help. We will include your feedback to update our final strategy.

Transport

Council

40% of Gateshead's carbon emissions come from transport. We need to reduce traffic on our roads and make it easy for more sustainable forms of transport to flourish. To do this we need to make sure the transport we use is reliable and cheap. We will encourage walking, cycling and public transport. We will encourage the provision of electric vehicle charging in our local centres and at places of work. We will work with business to promote green travel plans and encourage 'green fleet' uptake.



Reduced traffic in our town centres during the Covid-19 lockdown period has resulted in improved air quality and reduced carbon emissions associated with vehicle use. At the same time cycling numbers have increased significantly. We want to lock in this benefit. However traffic levels are now increasing and transport remains an area of concern over the pace of the reduction in carbon emissions. As well as improving alternatives to the car it is likely that further measures actively to restrain unnecessary car travel will be needed if targets are to be met.

The Council has continued to invest available funding in improving infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. It has secured funding from various sources, including the Government's emergency active travel fund to improve cycling and walking infrastructure and support recovery from Covid-19. Gateshead has also adopted the Love to Ride app, which provides a community for cyclists across the UK, and awards points and prizes for achievements. In addition, a programme of Dr Bike sessions have taken place at locations across the borough.

Old Sunderland Road

Old Sunderland Road is one of the main walking and cycling routes into Gateshead town centre from the south east. The previous access via a subway was removed, after securing a £2.34 million Government grant. The subway has now been replaced by a new 'at grade' crossing, which also incorporates a bus link.

New crossing - providing a better walking, cycling and bus route into Gateshead town centre

Ongoing surveys found that, even during Covid restrictions, over 1100 people and 120 cyclists were using this crossing daily. The new crossing provides an important connection in the redevelopment of the 'Exemplar Neighbourhood' area to the south of Gateshead town centre, which will provide over 1,000 new homes when complete. It will provide a better walking, cycling and bus route into Gateshead town centre and towards Newcastle city centre.

Community

Gateshead's bike donation scheme, implemented during lockdown, has been highly successful this year, redistributing more than 60 unwanted bikes to new homes with our most vulnerable residents.

The Council continues to invest in measures to encourage walking and cycling in and around local communities. As well as improved walking and cycling routes and crossings this includes measures such as 20mph zones in residential areas and close to schools.

60 unwanted bikes redistributed to new homes.



For more information visit www.gateshead.gov.uk/becool

Energy

Gateshead Council is a leading UK local authority in both energy efficiency, and heat networks. The Council recently secured a Heat Networks Investment Project grant of almost £6m to enable the Gateshead Energy Company to install 5.5km of new heating pipes to the east of the town centre, potentially supplying heat to around 1,250 new houses and other buildings. The funding will also help to install a 6MW water source heat pump, which will extract heat from the water in underground mine workings 150 metres beneath Gateshead town centre. This could form the largest mine water heating scheme in the world. In time, the project will add a mine water cooling network, so that new development can access zero carbon heat, power and cooling, to be truly zero carbon on all fronts.

On renewable power, in October 2020 Cabinet approved work to commence on two urban solar energy parks, that will be connected to the town centre energy network. These will provide 4MW of clean power to over 12 Council buildings on the network, as well as renewable power to run the minewater heat pump during the summer months. This is in addition to 2MW of solar installation across our schools and Council buildings already.

4MW
of clean power to over
12 Council buildings.

What's happening in your area to help the climate? What have we missed? [Click here](#)

Business

Gateshead is fortunate to have several leading UK businesses spearheading the new green economy, including:

Lanchester Wines

One of the UK's largest wine importers, bottlers, and distributors, Lanchester Wines, based in both Gateshead and Durham, prides itself on being a zero carbon business already, which is part of its USP. At their warehouse in Gateshead, they run two of the UKs largest mine water heat pumps currently.

Henry Colbeck Ltd

Located on Team Valley Trading Estate, one of the UK's leading suppliers to the fish and chip sector, they have expanded their waste cooking oil collection service, to develop a waste oil processing facility for onward supply of clean waste oils as a renewable blend into aviation fuels.

Hydrogen / Integrel

The Integrated Gas and Electricity Research Laboratory (InTEGRel) is by Northern Gas Networks, as a partnership project between the private sector, public sector and academia, based at a site in Low Thornley. The site provides a rare opportunity for research into decarbonising gas, water, electricity, and transport, and its potential contribution to a low-carbon future was recognised by stakeholders at our February 2020 workshop.

Research
into decarbonising gas,
water, electricity, and
transport.

Council

Minewater - The Council is working with the Coal Authority to develop and explore further mine energy projects. Detailed feasibility studies are being carried out for other potential projects (Birtley, Kibblesworth, Chopwell) with funding being sought to further explore other heat network areas, in some of Gateshead's large council housing estates. The combination of three of the UK's largest mine water energy schemes within a 3 mile radius will further provide the basis for a "Mine Heat Living Lab" in Gateshead that the Coal Authority will use to model and verify the amount of mine heat available from mine water to support growth in this sector elsewhere in the UK.



The Council is working with partners to secure funding for this important project, that could facilitate growth across the low-carbon energy sector. The project also hosts the hydrogen supply for the HyDeploy2 project, which from August 2021 commenced the first UK trial of blending 20% hydrogen into a public gas network, which served 650 council homes in the village of Winlaton. This will help revise national policy and regulation, to allow blended hydrogen to be deployed across the UK.

Food

Council

Gateshead is beginning to work in partnership with interested parties to develop a sustainable food network. This will build upon work already taking place to address food poverty and health inequality, and ensure there is cheap, local and low carbon food available to all whilst also addressing food waste.

Gateshead Community Food Network:

The Gateshead Community Food Network involves 45-50 local community organisations, charities, businesses and third sector partners to explore and deliver ways to both reduce food waste and make surplus food available to those households and families who need it. The network, currently led and facilitated by the Council, identifies opportunities across Gateshead where surplus food can be shared with other organisations to feed people and not get sent to landfill.

An area of success for the network has been the development of an interactive food map of Gateshead, which has a huge amount of data layered into it, including free school meal eligibility, FareShare recipients, pay as you feel cafes, low cost food cafes, free food cafes, foodbanks, food co-op's, and the locations of surplus fresh food collections from supermarkets and Greggs stores. It also highlights all of the community partners who offer food to local people, including address details, a named contact and what and when is available.



Cook n Eat:

The Council, as part of its Holidays, Activities and Food (HAF) programme has been providing a Cook n Eat offer, whereby 1,700 families eligible for free school meals receive a box of fresh ingredients to cook a meal for 4 people over 5 days.

These boxes were delivered fresh to the doorstep by Council fleet vehicles. Previously the delivery teams used postcode data to plan routes which was time consuming and created a lot of replicated routing. By using route planning software, made available by a local transport company, the Council was able to reduce the amount of time spent on the road, thus reducing the amount of fuel used in vehicles which contributes to a reduction in our emissions.

1,700
families eligible for free school meals receive a box of fresh ingredients to cook a meal for 4 people over 5 days.

Primula/Kavli:

At the start of the Coronavirus pandemic the Council forged a partnership with Team Valley based food manufacturer, Kavli. This relationship saw the Council take surplus food from Kavli to include in their emergency food parcels, which were circulated to households experiencing hardship or who were unable to leave home to shop due to covid related isolation. Kavli has provided tens of thousands of products which would otherwise have been sent to landfill.

What's happening in your area to help the climate? What have we missed? [Click here](#)

Business

Gateshead Council and its partners continue to work with local businesses who either manufacture or supply food to ensure that their overstock is made available to local households using Community Food Network partners. It also welcomes additional local businesses reaching out to the network (via the Council) to support them with supplying surplus foods. Current partners include major retailers such as Tesco, Marks & Spencer, Greggs and Sainsburys. We also have smaller family run businesses such as Lintz Hall Farm, who have donated fresh farm eggs to the Council for onward distribution to foodbanks, food co-op's and community organisations, all supplying food locally to families in hardship.

These types of partnerships are also of great benefit to those businesses working with us as their produce is no longer wasted or sent to landfill, instead it reaches families and individuals for consumption, often in cases where they could never afford the types of produce being offered, particularly fresh produce such as eggs, fruit and vegetables.

Community

Allotments provide a great opportunity for you to grow your own produce and get some fresh air and exercise at the same time. Over 50% of allotments are managed by allotments societies. Two of the largest are Gateshead and District Allotment Association and the Whickham Allotment Association. The Council is encouraging the formation of new allotment associations where there are currently none. Groups wishing to establish an association receive a discount in their rent for managing allotment applicants on behalf of the Council. The Council is happy to offer advice and assistance to any group wishing to start an allotment association or run a community allotment and is willing to provide assistance in setting up a community or allotment association.

Woodland and Nature

Council

We have committed to considerably increasing woodland cover within the borough. Effectively maintaining existing woodland and creating new woodland can offset some of the carbon dioxide which is contributing to climate change. Woodlands can also improve biodiversity, and help support the physical and mental health of our communities. Gateshead is particularly well served in terms of existing woodland, and currently supports in excess of 2,206ha of woodland cover, equating to 15% of the total area of the borough. In line with land-use policy recommendations from the UK Climate Change Committee, the Council is working to increase woodland cover to 17% by 2050 – adding approximately 250 hectares (600 acres) of land. As recognised at our February 2020 Climate Emergency workshop, stakeholders from across the borough support this initiative, and there have been dedicated meetings and workshops on this issue with partner organisations. There is ongoing work to identify potential planting sites, funding opportunities and to ensure sustainable management of the Council's existing woodlands.

Increase woodland cover to 17% by 2050

Business

Defra, England Community Forests and local councils across the North East area are creating a new Community Forest to bring people closer to nature.

The North East Community Forest will see six local authorities joining forces with environmental organisations to plant trees across the region. The initiative aims to plant up to 500 hectares of trees by 2025. The partnership will work with people in the community, businesses, and landowners with the aim of bringing forests and woodlands to those most in need across Newcastle, Gateshead, North and South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Durham.

500 hectares of trees by 2025

Community

Our communities and residents can provide a valuable contribution by nurturing their gardens, and local open spaces with plants and trees. Gardens and open spaces can play a valuable role in carbon sequestration and water storage and drainage and play a valuable part in our climate change aims, as well as providing opportunities to increase wellbeing.



Economy, consumption and waste

Council

The Council is consulting on its economic strategy and has ensured its approach to Climate Change is embedded within it. This will ensure we grow the green economy of the future to ensure Gateshead remains competitive.

The borough has declared a climate emergency and set an ambitious target to be Net Zero by 2030. Transitioning to a green economy presents significant growth opportunities and challenges as the race to decarbonise energy, transport, buildings and industries intensifies. The workstream will look at what support does businesses need to manage the impact of climate change and reduce carbon emissions as the borough tackles its Net Zero mission.



What's happening in your area to help the climate? What have we missed? [Click here](#)

The strategy aims to:

- Bring about a fundamental shift in the design and structure of the economic system
- Ensure our policies and the way partners work together enables change
- Boost innovation across industry to respond to challenges and, in so doing, deliver good jobs at scale and/or major reform
- Support a just transition to the future economy through large-scale training and development opportunities and widening access to employment
- Target public and private capital to build and develop new infrastructure
- Build movements for change across industry and communities to better manage resources sustainably

The Council is part of the South of Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership and is part of a joint municipal waste management which sets out the aims of the partner authorities on waste. The operation of collections and the disposal of the materials collected are set out and governed by procurement rules and national legislation.



The Council works to the national waste hierarchy to reduce waste, re-use waste and recycle before waste is disposed of.

All households can now recycle a wide range of materials from home including plastic bottles, paper, cardboard, glass, metal cans and also garden waste. In addition, we collect bulky waste items and operate free of charge Household Waste and Recycling centres for the public to dispose of recycling and waste. The partnership sends its refuse waste to an energy from waste (EfW) plant on Teesside which converts the waste into electricity which then goes back into the national grid.

In addition to collections, the partnership endeavours to work on community initiatives to try to reuse items considered to be waste. These initiatives currently include Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) and bikes.

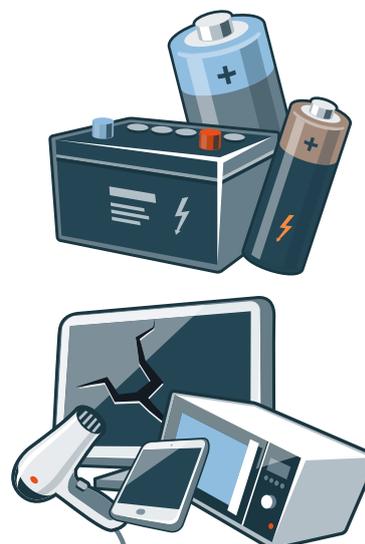
Our waste strategy can be found here:

[STWWWasteManagementStrategy202125.pdf\(sunderland.gov.uk\)](https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/stwww/waste-management-strategy-2021-25.pdf)

Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment & Batteries

The WEEE Repair and Reuse Project was externally funded for one year by Defra and the staff are based at the council’s Waste and Recycling Visitor Education Centre at Campground.

The team also promote the use and sustainable management of rechargeable batteries. Any point of sale for batteries has a legal duty to collect used batteries for separate recycling to support the end-of-life principle. We also provide free of charge battery tubes to council buildings, schools and community venues in order to support this infrastructure and drive this material out of household waste and recycling bins where batteries can become unstable and result in fires.



Waste and Recycling Visitor Education Centre (W&RVEC)

The Centre is part of a suite of council facilities that includes an Energy from Waste Facility (EfW) provided by South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership, a partnership made up of Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils whose aim is to drive material up the waste hierarchy and away from landfill.

The resources are offered free of charge and are wide ranging. They include site visits and outreach educational work, craft classes and online sessions which can be bespoke to particular needs and requirements.



Business

The Council will support business to transition to a just and green economy by providing advice and support and ensuring the skills necessary to compete. Changes to procurement and carbon accounting are on the horizon and many local businesses are doing a good job of transitioning. For example InTEGRel is exploring the use of green hydrogen both for heat and power for local homes and business are using minewater to provide green energy.



The Council will be working with the top 100 businesses in Gateshead over the coming months to harness their ideas and to encourage more initiatives to drive down their carbon footprints.

We will work with businesses directly, and through business networks including Newcastle Gateshead Initiative, the CBI and NECC to drive the net zero agenda forward.

Community

All parts of the community are starting to work together to make the necessary changes. Actions taken by the community through car clubs, clothes swaps, sustainable food and tree planting can have a massive impact on the overall carbon footprint of Gateshead.



We know this strategy can only be successful if we can build a strong partnership with all the local communities within Gateshead, where everybody takes responsibility for reducing their carbon footprint.

Local councillors are leading efforts to take the climate change message into their local communities, and enable community groups, schools, places of worship, pubs and cafes, small businesses to all play a role in Gateshead's drive towards achieving net zero by 2030.

This strategy is only the start of this journey, and we look forward to collaborating on making the change our borough needs.



Ward Action Plans

We want to work with our communities on detailed plans in their area to ensure we have a blueprint for change. We have an interactive map that we would like people to populate during the consultation to tell us what is happening now, what they would like to happen and give us an idea of what needs to change to help. It could be a better cycle lane, tidying allotments, a car share scheme. We will aim to have a series of ward plans championed by Ward Councillors to be populated in consultation with communities, this will help give us all a blueprint for change.

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/14125/Climate-change-in-Gateshead>

Examples:

- Cycle lane provision/improvement
- Tree planting and woodland
- Energy provision
- Home improvement schemes
- Allotment improvements
- Food share initiatives
- Local business initiatives – eg Lanchester Wines
- Recycling and upcycling shops, including charity shops
- Walk to school initiatives and other active travel initiatives (eg. bike maintenance workshops)



Adaptation to Climate Change

In addition to reducing our impact on climate change, we need to adapt to the changes that we are already facing and are going to face in the future, from flooding events to wildfires.

Adaptation needs to take place to ensure that our communities are kept safe and our economy is resilient but also that our environment is protected, including animals and plants.

Identifying adaptation needs in our localities is an important first step to planning for adaptation in Gateshead.

Get involved:

[Website](#)

[Email](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#) (search for Gateshead Council)