



**Leicestershire County Council
Net Zero Consultation Summary**

12 September 2022

Acknowledgements:

Frith Resource Management would like to thank the essential contributions from Leicestershire County Council throughout this project.

Disclaimer:

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to describe activity that was undertaken during the consultation on Leicestershire County Council's (LCC or the council) draft Net Zero 2045 Strategy and Action Plan (the Strategy) and the results of this engagement.

LCC declared a climate emergency in 2019, and from this arose two key ambitions:

- To achieve net zero carbon for our own operations by 2030, having already reduced emissions by 74% since 2008-09
- To work with others to achieve net zero carbon in Leicestershire by 2045 (in line with UK 100's campaign for Local Authorities to target net zero 5 years ahead of national policy)

To facilitate this, the council commissioned research into Leicestershire's carbon emissions baseline and pathways to net zero and used this research to develop the Strategy.

2 Method

2.1 Overview

To obtain feedback on the Strategy, LCC developed a Net Zero 'Have Your Say' consultation program and undertook stakeholder mapping to ensure that the consultation had a wide reach and engaged relevant stakeholders. Both internal and external stakeholders were identified and how to engage with them during the consultation. The consultation program consisted of three streams of activity:

- A 'Have Your Say' consultation survey
- Events and activities, including meetings, roadshows, and workshops
- Youth engagement undertaken by independent specialists, Participation People

A 12-week consultation, open from 4th May to 26th July 2022, was held with the aim of providing residents and stakeholders with the opportunity to provide feedback – "have their say" – on the Strategy and action plan. The consultation had the following objectives:

- a. Inform residents and stakeholders about climate change and the need to reduce carbon emissions urgently.
- b. Provide an overview of the draft countywide Strategy for achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions in the county by 2045.
- c. Invite feedback on the draft countywide Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan and support to define and shape existing/additional asks and actions.
- d. Test agreement between the priority objectives and the important issues for organisational stakeholders.

- e. Open discussions on working together to deliver the net zero target, build productive relationships and invite others to pledge support.
- f. Hear diverse views on carbon reduction actions and lived experience of interventions.

Because of the wide reach of net zero actions and the need for everyone in Leicestershire to do their bit to support the agenda, the target audience for the consultation was broad and comprised of:

- The public including youth and children
- Community and voluntary groups, social enterprises and charities
- Businesses
- Public sector organisations including district councils, health etc.
- Schools, Further Education and Universities
- LCC employees and Members

A Net Zero specific inbox (netzero@leics.gov.uk) was set up for individuals/groups to get in touch with any questions/issues they had with regards to Net Zero Leicestershire.

A range of partners, groups and networks were invited to participate in the consultation and share the consultation with their networks via a direct e-mail campaign that announced the launch of the council's consultation on the Strategy.

2.2 'Have Your Say' survey

A key element of the 12-week consultation period for the Strategy was a 'Have Your Say' questionnaire survey, which comprised 53 questions and was available online, on LCC's 'Have Your Say' page for the residents, businesses, community groups and other organisations of Leicestershire. The survey consisted of both tick-box questions and the opportunity for open comment responses. This was largely an online activity, although paper copies were available upon request. Respondents had access to the draft Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan, as well as a consultation summary document.

The completed questionnaires have been electronically processed by LCC. The qualitative open comment responses have been analysed by Frith Resource Management (FRM) and individually coded using bespoke categories developed for this project.

Section 3 presents the results of the 'Have Your Say' survey in the order in which they appear in the questionnaire. For the purposes of reporting, responses 'strongly agree' and 'tend to agree' are combined and shown as in agreement with the proposal or topic. Similarly, responses stating, 'strongly disagree' and 'tend to disagree' are also combined to represent respondents in disagreement with the proposal or topic.

2.3 Consultation events and activities

A range of events and activities, including meetings and events, net zero roadshows, and workshops, were held by LCC during the 12-week consultation period.

The council organised a roadshow with a pop-up stand, visiting several libraries and country parks in the region between 10th and 21st July 2022. At each location, a Net Zero Leicestershire representative was available to speak to residents, promote the consultation and answer any questions. To encourage participation, there was also the opportunity for residents to make a climate pledge, vote for their most important net zero theme from the action plan and take part in the consultation.

A series of workshops were also organised by the council to explore the Strategy and actions identified in the plan in more detail, as well as identify how to continue to work collaboratively to deliver Net Zero for Leicestershire. Participation People

Participation People were contracted to engage with young people in Leicestershire. This was to ensure that the voices of young people who will grow up to live with the consequences of climate change were well represented in the consultation, with the recognition that the 'Have Your Say' page may not have been as accessible or appealing to a younger age range.

Participation People's Young Researchers Team involves four young people who live, work or study across the UK, who have been involved in previous youth led research projects. They are aged between 14-21 from all walks of life. The Young Researchers Team engaged with young people in Leicestershire to help advise LCC on the following:

- Young peoples' priorities to help Leicestershire become Net Zero.
- How young people want to be involved in helping reduce their impact on climate change.
- Young peoples' views of how to hold senior leaders to account for their promises to help Leicestershire be more climate friendly.

To do that, they designed a short survey, a focus group session plan and a creative competition to help young people form and express their opinion in a way that worked for them.

3 Results – ‘Have Your Say’ survey

A total of 593 responses were received to the ‘Have Your Say’ survey (the survey) during the 12-week consultation period, which included fourteen hard copy paper versions which were digitised for analysis.

LCC has compared the demographic profile of the respondents to the survey with the population figures from the 2011 Census and 2020 mid-year estimates. This shows that the profile of respondents is broadly comparable to the Leicestershire population, although females (38.9%) and those aged under 15 (0.4%) and 15-24 (5.3%) are underrepresented, whilst those aged 45-64 (44.4%) and 65-84 (25.1%) are overrepresented.

The following results of the survey includes both closed (tick box) questions and open comments, where applicable, and are presented in the order in which they appear in the survey.

3.1 Awareness of climate change and net zero

The survey asked respondents how much they knew about the concept of net zero, almost all were already knowledgeable (98% of respondents)¹. Two fifths of respondents (41%) had a lot of knowledge, and two fifths had a fair amount (44%), with the majority of remaining respondents (13%) knowing a little (Q4 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

Respondents were then asked how informed they felt regarding several factors relating to climate change (Q5 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

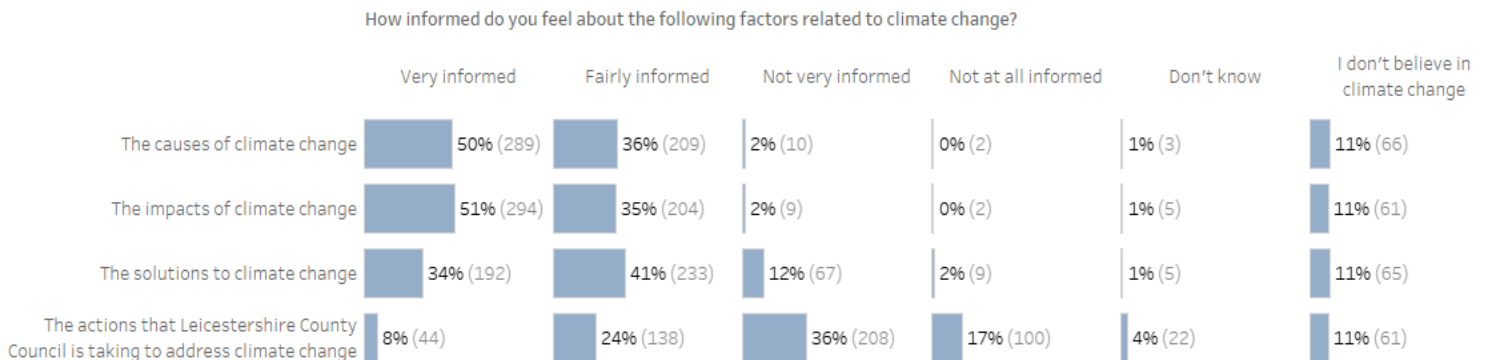


Figure 1: How informed respondents felt about different factors related to climate change

As shown above in Figure 1, most of the respondents felt informed on the causes (86%) and the impacts (86%) of climate change, whilst 75% felt informed on the solutions to climate change. Regarding LCC actions to address climate change, only 8% of respondents felt very informed and a quarter (24%) felt fairly informed, but over half of respondents (53%) didn't feel informed. 11% of respondents in all four questions didn't believe in climate change.

¹ Figures based on 581 responses.

When asked to what extent respondents were concerned about climate change, three fifths (60%) were concerned², whilst just over a third (36%) were not³⁴ (Q6 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

3.2 Strategy vision and goals

The Strategy’s vision is that:

By 2045 Leicestershire will have ended its contribution to global heating and adapted to climate change. The just transition to net zero carbon emissions will have improved the local environment for people and nature, increased prosperity and supported resilient communities.

Just over half (51%) of respondents agreed with the vision, while 41% disagreed⁵. 7% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (Q7 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

Respondents were also asked the extent to which they agreed with the key goals which outline the primary ambitions of the Strategy (Q8 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

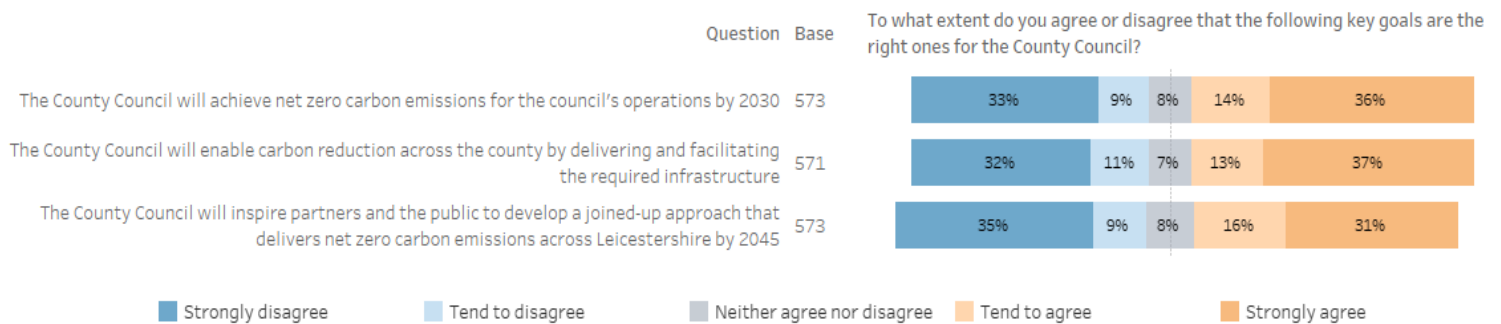


Figure 2: The extent to which respondents believed that the key goals were correct

As shown in Figure 2, half of respondents (50%) agreed with both of the first two goals. Opinions on the third goal were much more divided, with 47% agreeing and 44% disagreeing.

These polarised views regarding the goals were reflected in the 252 open comment responses, where some called for more ambition (20%) while others stated that climate change is a natural phenomenon (8%) and that it is not an issue (7%).

² This refers to respondents who were ‘very concerned’ or ‘fairly concerned’.

³ This refers to respondents who were ‘not at all concerned’ or ‘not very concerned’.

⁴ Figures based on 582 responses.

⁵ Figures based on 580 responses.

3.3 Targets and scope

Two key targets were proposed in the Strategy, and respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with them (Q10 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).



Figure 3: The extent to which respondents believed that the targets were correct

Just under half (49%) of respondents agreed with the first target and 41% disagreed, as shown in Figure 3. There was less support for the second target (46%), as well as more respondents who disagreed (44%).

These contrasting views were echoed in the 276 open comment responses, where one third (30%) believed the targets needed more ambition, while 13% stated that climate change is not an issue and 11% stated that the targets were unachievable. Some respondents (11%) also raised concern regarding the cost implications that these targets may have for residents.

3.4 Approach to delivering net zero

LCC proposed five key principles which will guide the approach to deliver net zero, these are as follows: education and information, fairness, freedom and choice, co-benefits, and nature.

Over half of respondents (55%) agreed that these were the right principles, while 33% disagreed⁶. 11% held a neutral view and neither agreed nor disagreed (Q12 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

Within the 249 open comments regarding this, there was support for all five principles including education (6%), fairness (13%), co-benefits (4%) and nature (6%). 4% also supported freedom of choice, however 19% recognised that choice may have to be limited to some degree, to achieve the Strategy.

The Strategy also includes a preferred order in which to address carbon emissions (approach to prioritisation), this is as follows: ‘eliminate’ (stopping emissions being produced by doing things differently), ‘reduce’ (using energy more efficiently), ‘substitute’ (using renewable energy and low carbon replacements), ‘compensate and neutralise’ (support carbon reduction elsewhere and permanently remove carbon from the atmosphere).

⁶ Figures based on 576 responses.

Many respondents (59%) agreed with the approach to prioritisation, while 35% disagreed⁷. 7% neither agreed nor disagreed (Q14 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

This was reflected in the 200 open comments where 7% reemphasised support, while 8% believed all four areas were of equal importance and that the priority order should be removed. For ‘eliminate’, 15% sought further clarity around the elimination of carbon emissions, and in terms of ‘reduction’, 6% were concerned about affordability and 6% wanted more focus on reducing consumption of all resources. Within ‘substitution’, 13% referenced the importance of renewable energy generation and in regard to ‘compensation’, 7% expressed a lack of support as it was viewed as being a short-term solution.

Within the Strategy, LCC acknowledged that targets cannot be delivered alone, and therefore included actions where the council can ‘lead’ (where LCC has control or major influence), ‘ask’ (to work in partnership / have asks for key stakeholders) and ‘influence’ (to bear with national government / seek buy in from residents), which respondents were asked to comment on.

Of the 297 open comments, 10% of responses reiterated the importance of LCC being a leader through demanding change at a national level and being ambitious. Regarding ‘ask’, 6% would like to see LCC work closer with businesses and a further 6% would like to see more collaboration with community partnerships / groups, district and borough councils. In terms of ‘influence’, 6% of comments referred to the importance of resident buy in.

3.5 Cross cutting actions

The Strategy proposes five cross cutting key themes which are as follows: leadership, collaboration, research and innovation, informing, engaging and evolving, and finance.

Over half (54%) of respondents agreed with the cross-cutting themes, while 32% disagreed⁸. 13% had a neutral view and neither agreed nor disagreed (Q17 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

Of 194 respondents who left an open comment, support was expressed for leadership (2%), collaboration (4%), innovation (2%) and research (1%). In terms of informing, engaging and involving, 7% of comments gave support for increased engagement with the community. Regarding finance, 10% believed that the Strategy is a waste of money, and 8% raised concerns around the cost of implementation for residents. General comments referenced a need for more detail around how the Strategy will be achieved (15%).

3.6 Carbon Reduction Themes and Actions

Within the Strategy, action for carbon reduction is addressed in five strategic themes:

- Decarbonising Transport
- Net Zero Buildings and Infrastructure
- Green Economy

⁷ Figures based on 573 responses.

⁸ Percentages based on 571 responses.

- Climate Friendly Communities
- Nature and Land Use as Carbon Stores

When asked if these were the correct strategic themes, 58% of respondents agreed and 33% disagreed⁹. 9% neither agreed nor disagreed (Q19 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

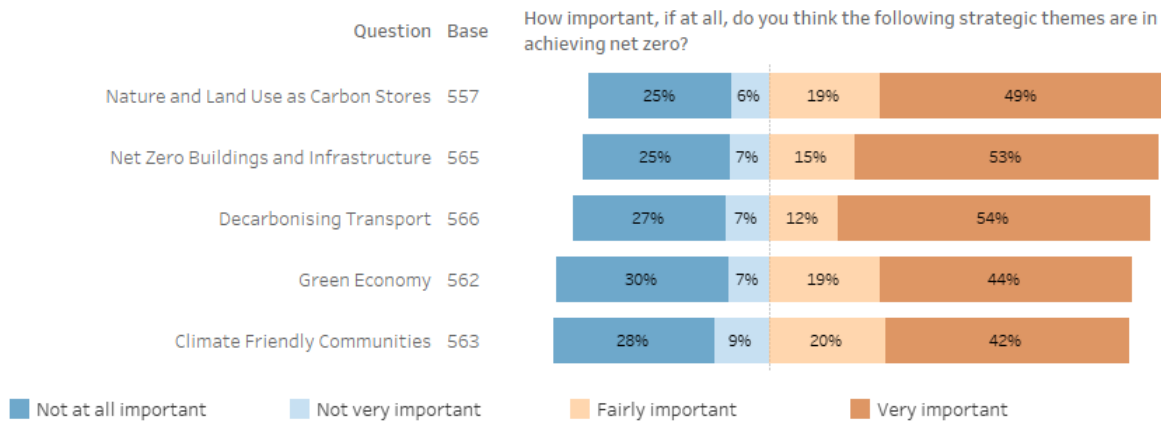


Figure 4: The extent to which respondents believed the five strategic themes were important in achieving net zero

As demonstrated above, respondents identified ‘nature and land use as carbon stores’ and ‘net zero buildings and infrastructure’ as the equally most important strategic themes (68%). The ‘green economy’ and ‘climate friendly communities’ were identified as being not at all or not very important (37% combined) (Q20 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

⁹ Percentages based on 578 responses.

3.7 Decarbonising Transport

The aim of this theme is to deliver sustainable, affordable transport choices for all that minimise carbon emissions. The majority (82%) of respondents agreed with the aim of the theme, while 16% disagreed and 3% neither agreed nor disagreed¹⁰ (Q22 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

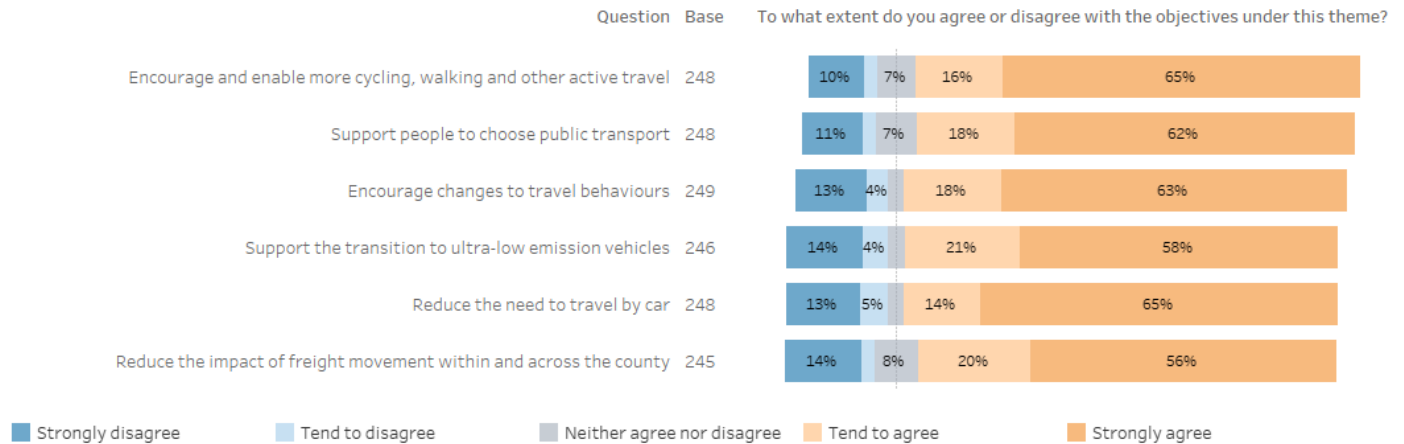


Figure 5: The extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with the objectives of 'decarbonising transport'

As shown above in Figure 5, there was at least 76% of agreement for all six objectives listed under this theme. Encouraging and enabling more cycling, walking and other active travel, and change to travel behaviours both had the highest levels of support (81%), while reducing the need to travel by car and supporting the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles both had the highest levels of disagreement (18%) (Q23 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

The key issues and priorities raised in the open comment responses for decarbonising transport are:

- Improve public transport
- Increase electric vehicle infrastructure
- Improve cycling and walking infrastructure
- Encourage active transport, such as walking and cycling
- Encourage a reduction in car usage
- Ensure affordability of public transport
- Reduce freight related emissions

¹⁰ Percentages based on 248 responses.

3.8 Net Zero Buildings and Infrastructure

The aim of this theme is to reduce demand for energy, support the switch to low carbon energy and heat, increase renewable energy generation and the sustainable use of natural resources. 85% of respondents agreed with the aim of the theme and 11% disagreed¹¹. 4% had a neutral view and neither agreed nor disagreed (Q27 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

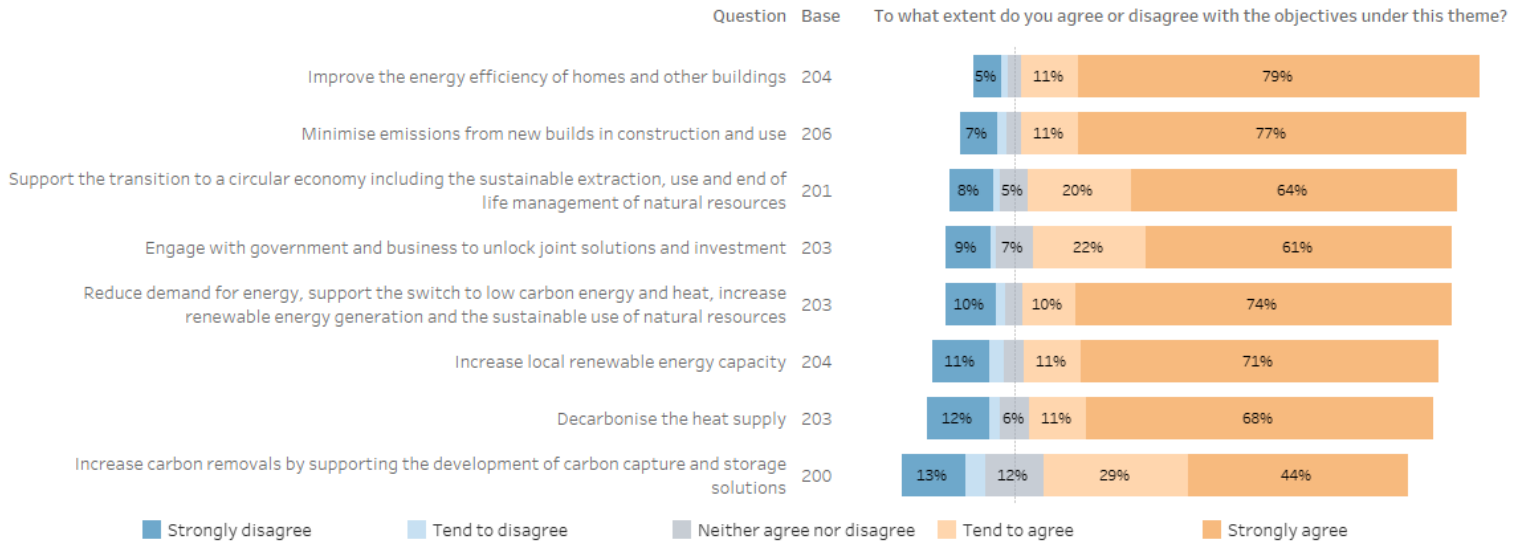


Figure 6: The extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with the objectives of 'net zero buildings and infrastructure'

As shown above in Figure 6, there was at least 73% of agreement for all eight objectives listed under this theme. Improving the energy efficiency of homes and other buildings had most support (90%), while increasing carbon removal by supporting the development of carbon capture and storage solutions had the highest level of disagreement (15%) (Q28 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

The priorities raised in the open comment responses for net zero buildings and infrastructure are:

- Improve energy efficiency of all new buildings
- Retrofit existing buildings
- Improve insulation in homes
- Introduce stricter planning policies
- Availability of funding
- Want to see more action

¹¹ Percentages based on 207 responses.

3.9 Green Economy

The aim of this theme is to grow the county's low carbon economy and increase demand for low carbon goods and services. Three quarters (76%) of respondents agreed with this aim, while 18% disagreed and 5% neither agreed nor disagreed¹² (Q32 – 'Have Your Say' Survey).

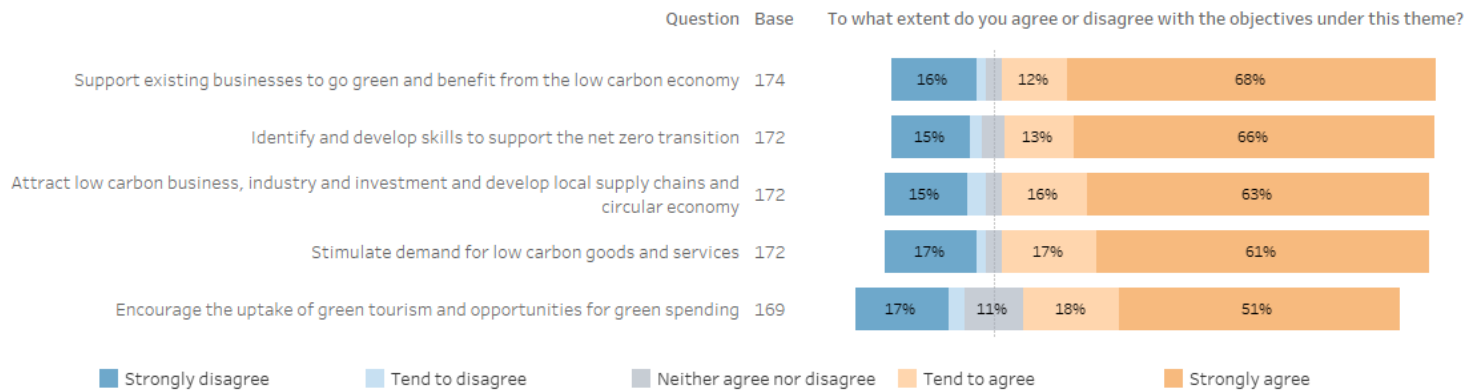


Figure 7: The extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with the objectives of 'green economy'

As shown above in Figure 7, there was at least 69% of agreement for all five objectives listed under this theme. Supporting existing businesses to go green and benefit from the low carbon economy had most support (80%), while encouraging the uptake of green tourism and opportunities for green spending had the highest level of disagreement (20%) (Q33 – 'Have Your Say' Survey).

The priorities raised in the open comment responses for the green economy are:

- Provide support for businesses
- Invest in the local, green economy
- Include measurable targets and monitoring
- Collaborate with businesses, volunteers and schools
- Create a demand for low carbon goods
- Ensure affordability for businesses and residents

¹² Percentages based on 172 responses.

3.10 Climate Friendly Communities

The aim of this theme is to inform, engage and involve our residents in identifying and delivering local solutions to achieve net zero carbon. The majority (82%) of respondents agreed with the aim and 15% disagreed¹³. 3% neither agreed nor disagreed (Q37 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

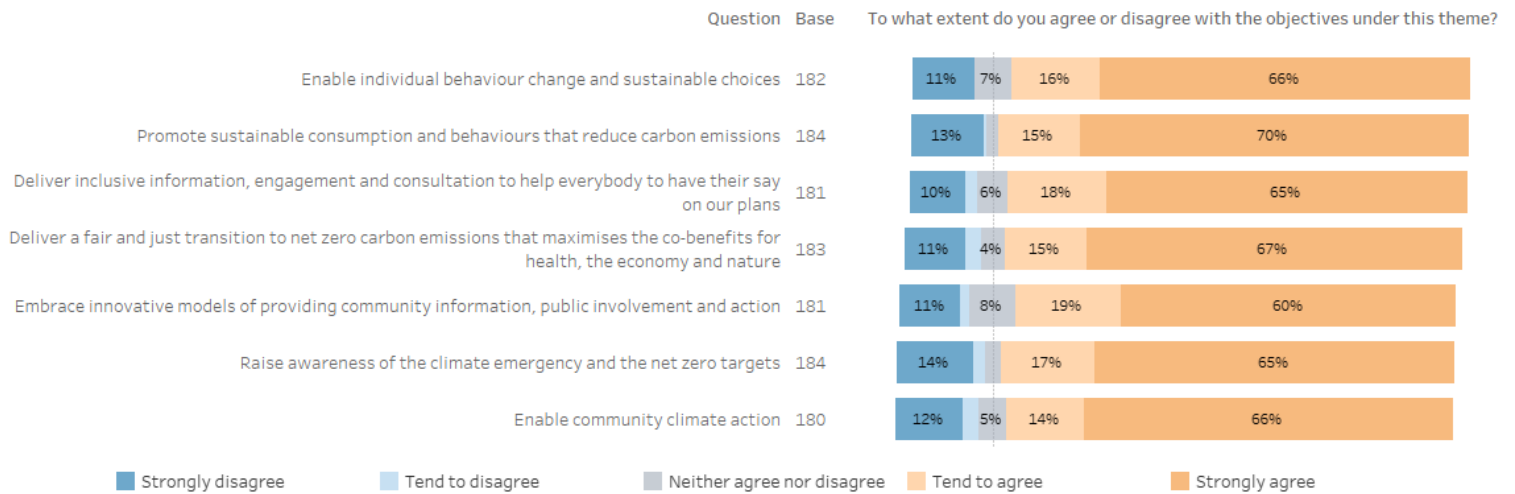


Figure 8: The extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with the objectives of 'climate friendly communities'

As shown above in Figure 8, there was at least 79% of agreement for all seven objectives listed under this theme. Promoting sustainable consumption and behaviours that reduce carbon emissions had most support (85%), while raising awareness of the climate emergency and the net zero targets had the highest level of disagreement (16%) (Q38 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

The priorities raised in the open comment responses for climate friendly communities are:

- Increase education and engagement
- Increase support for volunteer / community groups
- Provide support and funding for residents
- Improve public transport
- Improve energy efficiency of all buildings

¹³ Percentages based on 183 responses.

3.11 Nature and Land Use as Carbon Stores

The aim of this theme is to develop a growing and resilient network of land and water that is richer in plants and wildlife, optimises carbon storage and supports climate resilience. 84% of respondents agreed with this theme, while 12% disagreed and 4% neither agreed nor disagreed¹⁴ (Q42 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

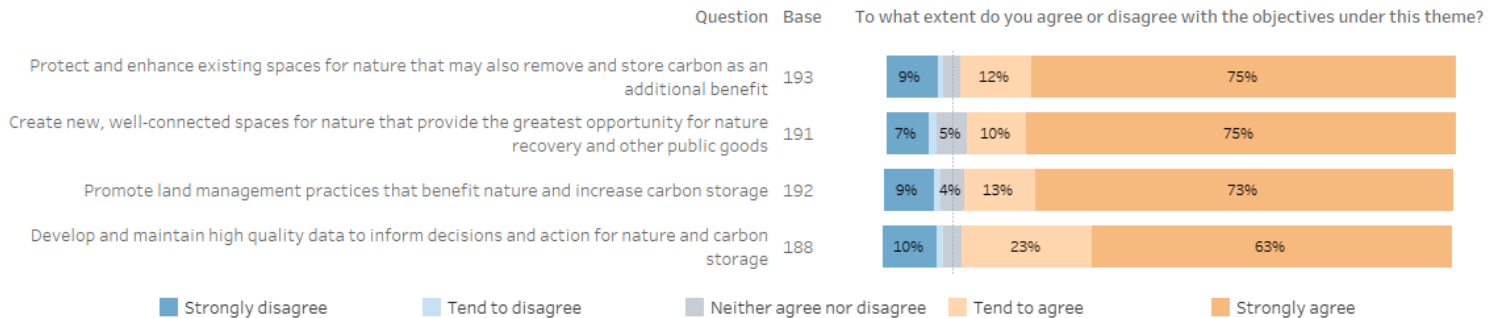


Figure 9: The extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with the objectives of 'nature and land use as carbon stores'

As shown above in Figure 9, there was at least 85% of agreement for all four objectives listed under this theme. Protecting and enhancing existing spaces for nature that may also remove and store carbon as an additional benefit had most support (87%). Develop and maintain high quality data to inform decisions and action for nature and carbon storage had the highest level of disagreement, with 10% strongly disagreeing (Q43 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

The priorities raised in the open comment responses for nature and land use as carbon stores are:

- Focus on tree planting
- Support biodiversity, rewilding, nature recovery, and wetland / grassland protection
- Increase consideration of land use and management
- Restrict the number of new developments on greenfield land
- Increase education
- Ensure new buildings are energy efficient

3.12 Making sure everyone is included

When individuals were asked if they have (or anticipate having) any difficulties in the transition to net zero carbon, 59% stated yes and the remaining respondents answering with no (28%) or don't know (13%)¹⁵ (Q47 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

Of the 300 respondents who left an open comment regarding this, almost half (42%) referred to the potential cost implications for residents and identified this as a barrier. Cost barriers were also

¹⁴ Percentages based on 195 responses.

¹⁵ Percentages based on 571 responses.

acknowledged in terms of purchasing alternative fuel vehicles (12%) and retrofitting homes (12%). A further 11% stated that public transport must be improved before it is used by more residents.

3.13 Your role in net zero

When asked to what extent respondents agreed that they were willing to make lifestyle changes to help achieve net zero, 57% agreed and 37% disagreed¹⁶. 6% had a neutral view and neither agreed nor disagreed (Q49 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

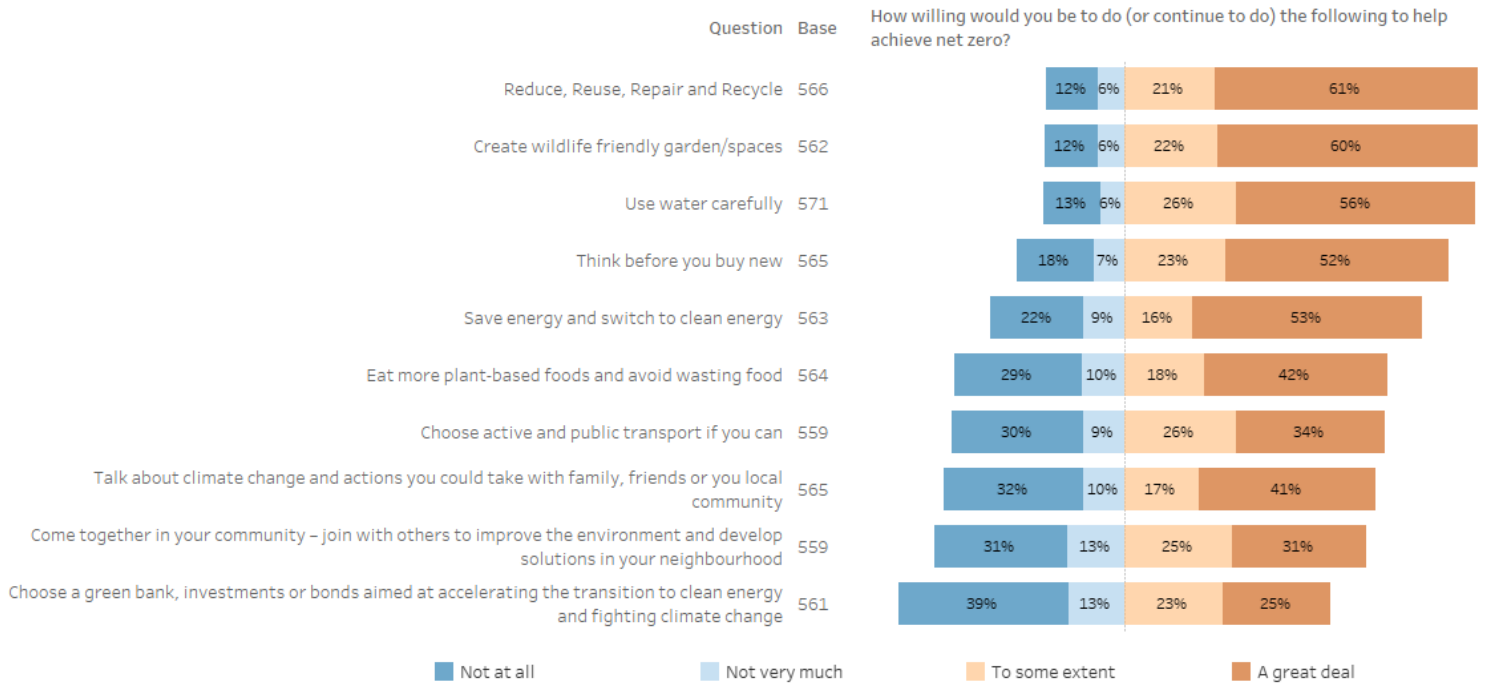


Figure 10: The extent to which respondents would be willing to do (or continue to do) certain activities to help achieve net zero

As shown in Figure 10 above, the highest number of respondents would be willing to reduce, re-use, repair and recycle in order to help achieve net zero (82%), as well as by creating wildlife friendly gardens/spaces (82%). The activity that the largest number of respondents disagreed with was choosing a green bank, investments or bonds aimed at accelerating the transition to clean energy and fighting climate change (52%). This was followed by coming together in your community (43%) (Q50 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

¹⁶ Percentages based on 575 responses.

3.14 The Strategy and Action Plan overall

As shown below in Figure 11, over half of respondents (55%) agreed with the draft Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan overall, while 39% disagreed (Q51 – ‘Have Your Say’ Survey).

Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with our draft Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan?



Base: 571

■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Tend to disagree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Tend to agree
 ■ Strongly agree

Figure 11: The extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with the draft Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan

Of 298 further comments about the Strategy, 13% reiterated that it was not ambitious enough. Further comments referenced the need for more short-term targets / goals alongside regular monitoring (10%) and more detail as to how the Strategy will be achieved (9%). Many of the respondents who listed cost as an area of concern (9%) felt that they didn't understand the cost-benefit of the Strategy, and 8% were concerned about cost implications.

3.15 Summary of findings

Error! Reference source not found. below presents a summary of the key themes from the open comments received on the Strategy. These are not presented priority order.

Table 1: Summary of key themes from the open comments

Topic	Key themes	Overview of open comment responses
Strategy and delivery	More ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring deadlines forward Go further and aim for negative carbon emissions
	Clarity and achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More detail of how the strategy will be achieved Clarity and simplicity of the strategy Understandable language and terms
	Interim measurable targets, monitoring, and achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term / interim targets Regular monitoring and reporting of targets to demonstrate achievement Clear actions required
	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCC to lead by example Strong leadership needed to enforce change Use buying / purchasing power Limitation of freedom and choice Change at national level
	Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work together with community groups, organisations, businesses and national government to deliver Wider focus, national, international
Cost	Cost implications for residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost and affordability concerns regarding retrofitting, alternative fuel vehicles. Disproportionate for those on lower incomes Funding / grants for residents Cost of living crisis concerns
	Cost-benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scepticism about a lack of impact on a global scale, when considering high associated costs
Community	Education and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some residents do not believe that climate change is an issue and / or that it is a natural phenomenon only Increase understanding of residents Use of incentives and enforcement Create opportunities to invest in local schemes
	Support for community and volunteer groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time and resource support for groups to help to spread messages locally
	Behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make it is easier to make the most environmental choice Discourage consumerism Discourage car usage Lower carbon lifestyles
Businesses	Provide support for all businesses and SME's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate businesses to help make better decisions Provide incentives Help create demand for low carbon products

Topic	Key themes	Overview of open comment responses
	Encourage localism and creation of local industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage businesses to set up locally, reducing demand for transport Local production of renewable infrastructure (solar panels, heat pumps etc.) Skills training / apprenticeships for retrofitting
Alternatives	Sufficient infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electric vehicle charging Prioritise renewable energy
	Reliability of alternative infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative fuel vehicles Grid capacity following transition of renewables
Transport	Improve and encourage public and active transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of rural areas and expand rural services Interlinking systems (bus/rail etc.) Reliability, hours of service, affordability Transition to alternative fuels (public transport) Improvement of infrastructure (cycle, walk pathways and public transport) Ensure safety of cycle and walk pathways Bicycle storage facilities Encourage active and public transport use Reduce / disincentivise car use
	Reduce freight related emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movement of freight from road to rail Reduction of airfreight
Homes and buildings	Planning policy for new homes / buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all new homes/buildings are energy efficient (insulation, solar panels, heat pumps) Build in appropriate areas, near to existing public transport and amenities Ensure no development takes place on greenfield land
	Retrofitting existing homes / buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support residents in retrofitting homes Encourage insulation Availability of grants and funding
	Energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise energy saving behaviours Shared workspaces / encourage home working
Environment and nature	Nature creation and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree planting, rewilding, wetland protection, biodiversity and nature recovery Reduce use of weedkiller and pesticides Improve air quality Dissatisfaction of carbon offsetting use
	Environment access for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow appreciation and better relationships with the environment
Waste	Increased waste services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of more materials Collection of food waste
	Waste reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce consumption Encourage reuse and repair activities

4 Results – Consultation Events and Activities

Where possible, feedback was sought from stakeholders in addition to directing them to the ‘Have Your Say’ survey. It is estimated that 220 additional respondents were reached through the additional consultation activity.

4.1 Meeting findings

By analysing the feedback from the range of meetings attended during the consultation, the following themes have been identified:

Table 2: Summary of key themes from meetings

Theme	Instances Feedback Received	Description of key points
1. Working with others to deliver Net Zero	22	A range of stakeholders were identified that would be required or wanted to contribute to Net Zero Leicestershire including public sector, landlords/ landowners/ developers, businesses, individuals, schools, universities and other organisations. There was a desire for advice and guidance on how to contribute. There was a desire for partnership working and co-creation.
2. Concerns over Transport solutions	14	A range of issues relating to rural transport provision were raised, including EV charging infrastructure, high levels of car use and public transport availability.
3. Securing buy in and sufficient levels of ambition	13	Leadership and senior officer/councillor engagement was seen as important, as well as leading by example and ensuring that policies aligned with net zero. The pathway to Net Zero was also important with a call for swift action.
4. The Strategy is hard to understand or inaccessible	9	Technical terms such as sequestration, carbon capture and offsetting were not well understood. Clarity and simplicity were requested. Accessibility for all groups was also a concern.
5. The importance of Local Planning and the impact of growth	9	Local plans were repeatedly referenced as important for achieving net zero by setting standards for development and land use. There was also some concern over the impact of growth on net zero.
6. Concern of the cost of taking action	8	There was concern over low income households being able to pay for climate action, as well as fuel poverty concerns. SMEs were also referenced as needing funding support.
7. Experiences of taking action – both positive and negative	6	There was an equal split between positive experiences of taking action (all examples were solar energy) and negative (relating to domestic retrofit and the impact of air quality schemes on SMEs)

4.2 Event and roadshow findings

The feedback from events and roadshows came primarily from individual residents with varying levels of net zero knowledge. The following themes were identified:

Table 3: Summary of key themes from events and roadshows

Theme	Instances Feedback Received	Description of key points
1. Working with others to deliver Net Zero	11	A range of stakeholders were identified that should be engaged with to deliver net zero including large businesses, community groups, developers and land owners.
2. Concerns over waste management	9	Segregation of waste and recycling were thought to require improvement. Litter picking was also seen as important as well as reducing plastic waste and consumption of resources.
3. Raising awareness and educating	8	Recommendations for providing additional information, training and events were made. Increasing education and engaging communities were also raised.
4. Concerns over Transport solutions	7	Public transport and road emissions were raised as concerns, alongside the cost of public transport and availability of EV infrastructure.
5. Securing buy in and sufficient levels of ambition	5	Near term targets and increased buy in were recommended.
6. The importance of Local Planning and the impact of growth	4	Development and building policy were raised as concerns.
7. The importance of Nature	3	There was a concern over biodiversity decline and an interest in nature based solutions.
8. The importance of low carbon heat	3	Energy efficiency and low carbon heat was seen as important.
9. The importance of renewable energy	2	Solar and flexible energy were referenced.

4.3 Workshop findings

The key feedback from the three workshops held is described in the table below.

Table 4: Summary of key themes from workshops

Theme	Parishes	Stakeholders	Communities	Total	Description of key points
1. Working with others to deliver Net Zero	17	17	14	48	A wide range of organisations and groups were identified as essential for net zero delivery, as well as individual action. There was also repeated mention of farming as a key sector to target. District councils, community groups and national government were also seen as central to delivery.
2. Securing buy in and sufficient levels of ambition	3	9	14	26	Leading by example was commonly referenced as a requirement. Allocating resourced, demonstrating political commitment and ensuring the action plan led to delivery were also referenced.
3. Raising awareness and educating	3	9	11	23	Engagement/communication and consistent messaging were seen as important, as well as culture change, raising awareness and education.
4. Concerns over Transport solutions	11	4	1	16	Active travel, public transport and EV infrastructure were all raised as needing further planning and delivery.
5. Concern of the cost of taking action	3	9	4	16	The need for financing and the prohibitive cost of taking net zero action were raised. There was also concern about affordability for individuals and duplication of efforts leading to inefficiency.
6. The importance of Nature	4	4	6	14	The need for more green space was raised, including allotments, tree planting, rewilding as well as friendly farming practices.
7. Concerns over waste management	6	0	6	12	The prominence of waste in the plan was referenced, covering recycling, food waste, fast fashion, repairs etc.
8. The importance of Local Planning and the impact of growth	7	0	2	9	New build standards were frequently mentioned as important to achieving net zero, as well as land use allocations.

Theme	Parishes	Stakeholders	Communities	Total	Description of key points
9. The Strategy is hard to understand or inaccessible	0	6	3	9	Simplification, plain English and SMART targets were called for.
10. The importance of renewable energy	0	1	6	7	There was a desire for additional wind and solar generation.
11. The importance of low carbon heat	1	1	2	4	Reducing demand for heat and introducing low carbon technology was seen as important.

4.4 Summary of findings

In summary, from the engagement undertaken by LCC, 12 themes were identified in the following order of frequency raised:

- Working with others to deliver Net Zero (75)
- Securing buy in and sufficient levels of ambition (54)
- Concerns over Transport solutions (47)
- The importance of Local Planning and the impact of growth (33)
- Concern of the cost of taking action (31)
- Raising awareness and educating (26)
- The importance of Nature (23)
- The Strategy is hard to understand or inaccessible (18)
- Concerns over waste management (15)
- The importance of renewable energy (12)
- Experiences of taking action – both positive and negative (6)
- The importance of low carbon heat (4)

The most important areas for focus when delivering net zero were clearly identified as:

Working with others to deliver Net Zero

LCC must ensure that they engage with a wide range of organisations and individuals to ensure that net zero delivery is a success. This includes businesses, landowners and managers, local government, national government and communities. Only together and with the buy in and action from all will net zero be achieved.

Securing buy in and sufficient levels of ambition

Although there was general agreement that the Strategy set a high level of ambition, there was a call for this to be translated into action at pace and scale. There is a need for LCC to provide a demonstrable level of leadership and for governance to be considered to ensure successful monitoring and delivery of the plan.

Concerns over Transport solutions

Issues with rural transport infrastructure were commonly raised, including the need for active travel, public transport and EV infrastructure. This should be a key area of focus in the action plan and working alongside Transport colleagues and partners a clear and deliverable plan will be required to tackle transport emissions.

5 Results – Participation People research

Young Researchers, working on behalf of Participation People, co-facilitated 2 focus groups with 22 young people, who would be less likely to take part in the 'Have Your Say' survey.

A Young Researchers survey was also developed, to which 570 young people aged 7-25 responded. The survey had a 92% completion rate and took an average 8 minutes to complete.

The key findings from this research were as follows:

- **Collaborate and work with others to deliver net zero:** Young people would like an increased involvement in decisions in Leicestershire, especially regarding tackling climate change.
- **Leadership, buy in and ambition:** As above, young people would like more involvement in decision making. Young people would also like to see increased support for people in Leicestershire to use renewable energy and easier recycling, particularly in schools.
- **Ensure the Strategy is understandable and accessible:** Young people really like to consume information in the form of short videos or animations (47%).
- **Interim targets, monitoring, and achievement reporting:** 37% of young people didn't like the look and feel of either the net zero Leicestershire or national grid website, whilst only 12% liked both.
- **Cost benefit implications:** Young people's spending priorities are renewable energy, easy recycling, and involvement in decision making, all of which had a vast majority of respondents calling it an immediate priority.
- **Raise awareness, engagement, education and behaviour change:** Young people are focussed on renewable energy, easy recycling and involvement in decision making, including in schools.
- **Improve and promote transport solutions (public, active and freight):** 14% of young people would like to see improved transport links in Leicestershire, however this was one of the lower priorities.
- **Importance of renewable energy:** Renewables are young people's highest priority to tackle climate change in Leicestershire.
- **Prioritise energy efficiency and low carbon heat:** 48% of young people see helping homes to use less energy as a massive priority for investment.
- **Importance of nature and access:** Young people told us that access to nature is very important to them and was a key deciding factor for young people saying they would want to live in Leicestershire in 10 years time (25%).
- **Waste management service, education, and provision:** 27% of young people told us that they would love to see Leicestershire get cleaner to make it even better (their second biggest priority behind making Leicestershire safer).

Recommendations from this research are:

- Summarising the Strategy in a video with subtitles
- Youth proofing the websites and keeping young people updated with progress in conjunction with regular events with young people (25% of young people told us they would like this).

6 Conclusion

6.1 Consultation responses and objectives

The 'Have Your say' survey generated almost 600 responses, but almost all were by respondents already knowledgeable on net zero (98% of respondents). The survey comprised 53 questions and required reading both the consultation summary document and the Strategy document itself. The need for the latter was not always appreciated by the respondent and resulted in confusion when completing the survey. It is considered that the length of the survey would have been a deterrent to some respondents.

Table 5, below, summarises the objectives of the consultation (see Section 2.1), the actions (relevant consultation activities) and the achievements.

Table 5: Achievement of Consultation Objectives

Consultation Objective	Actions	Achievement
a. Inform residents and stakeholders about climate change and the need to reduce carbon emissions urgently.	'Have Your Say' Communications campaign, meetings, events, roadshows and workshops	Over 200,000 social media impressions across a range of platforms.
b. Provide an overview of the draft countywide Strategy for achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions in the county by 2045.	'Have Your Say' Communications campaign; included access to the draft Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan and a consultation summary	1,900 views of the consultation page 1,117 full strategy / consultation summary downloads
c. Invite feedback on the draft countywide Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan and support to define and shape existing / additional asks and actions.	'Have Your Say' Survey, meetings, events, roadshows and workshops	Feedback from c.1,400 across the range of engagement delivered (including 593 'Have Your Say' survey responses and 570 youth survey responses)
d. Test agreement between the priority objectives and the important issues for organisational stakeholders.	'Have Your Say' Survey, meetings, events, roadshows and workshops	12 key themes identified from consultation responses, to be considered in the final draft of the strategy and action plan.
e. Open discussions on working together to deliver the net zero target, build productive relationships and invite others to pledge support.	Meetings, events, roadshows and workshops	Feedback was sought and obtained on respondents' ability to support net zero action and a range of individual pledges were made. Held stakeholder workshops with c.20 organisations.
f. Hear diverse views on carbon reduction actions and lived experience of interventions.	'Have Your Say' campaign activities and survey available to all Leicestershire's population	Respondents profile was broadly comparable to the Leicestershire population. Females, and under 25s were underrepresented, whilst those aged 45-84 were overrepresented.

Source: LCC Net Zero Team

6.2 Themes arising from consultation

The themes that emerged in the 'Have Your Say' survey were also echoed in the LCC events (Section 4 of this report) and the Participation People Survey.

Several themes have emerged from the public consultation events and the 'Have Your Say' survey, as discussed in sections 3 – 5 of this report. These have been combined into the following 12 Net Zero Consultation Strategy key themes, please note that these are not presented in priority order.

- Collaborate and work with others to deliver net zero
- Leadership, buy in and ambition
- Ensure the Strategy is understandable and accessible
- Interim targets, monitoring, and achievement reporting
- Cost benefit implications
- Raise awareness, engagement, education and behaviour change
- Improve and promote transport solutions (public, active and freight)
- Importance of local planning policy and growth
- Importance of renewable energy
- Prioritise energy efficiency and low carbon heat
- Importance of nature and access
- Waste management service, education, and provision

Error! Reference source not found. presents these key themes together with the various themes raised from the consultation activities, their sources, and demonstrates the commonality that emerged. The comments and actions raised about the key themes during the consultation activities is summarised in Table 7, providing direction for implementation of the Strategy

Table 6: Key themes arising from public consultation activity

Net Zero Consultation Key Themes	Themes arising from consultation activities			Source				
	Have Your Say Survey (Open Comments)	Meetings, events, roadshows, and workshops	Participation People Research – Young People	Open Comments	Meetings	Event / roadshows	Workshop	Participation People
Collaborate and work with others to deliver net zero	Collaboration Provide support for businesses and SME	Working with others to deliver net zero Experience of taking action – both positive and negative	Increased involvement in decision making	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leadership, buy in and ambition	Leadership Education and engagement Behaviour change More ambition	Securing buy in and sufficient levels of ambition	Increased involvement in decision making	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure the Strategy is understandable and accessible	Clarity and achievability	Strategy is hard to understand or inaccessible	Information in accessible formats e.g., short videos	✓	✓		✓	✓
Interim targets, monitoring, and achievement reporting	Interim measurable targets, monitoring and achievement reporting	Experience of taking action – both positive and negative. The Strategy is hard to understand or inaccessible		✓	✓		✓	
Cost benefit implications	Cost implications for residents Provide support for all businesses and SMEs Cost benefit	Concern of the cost of taking action		✓	✓		✓	
Raise awareness, engagement, education and behaviour change	Education and engagement Behaviour change Support for community and volunteer groups	Raising awareness and educating	Focused on Net Zero initiatives More education within schools	✓		✓	✓	✓
Improve and promote transport	Improve public and active transport	Concerns over transport solutions	Improved transport links in Leicestershire	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Net Zero Consultation Key Themes	Themes arising from consultation activities			Source				
	Have Your Say Survey (Open Comments)	Meetings, events, roadshows, and workshops	Participation People Research – Young People	Open Comments	Meetings	Event / roadshows	Workshop	Participation People
solutions (public, active and freight)	Sufficient infrastructure Behaviour change Encourage active transport Reliability of alternative infrastructure Reduce freight related emissions							
Importance of local planning policy and growth	Planning policy for new homes / buildings Encourage localism and creation of local industry	The importance of local planning and the impact of growth		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Importance of renewable energy	Sufficient infrastructure Reliability	The importance of renewable energy	Renewables are highest priority to tackle climate change	✓			✓	✓
Prioritise energy efficiency and low carbon heat	Retrofitting existing homes / buildings Energy efficiency Sufficient infrastructure	The importance of low carbon heat	Investment in energy efficient homes is a priority	✓		✓	✓	✓
Importance of nature and access	Nature creation and protection Environment access for all	The importance of nature	Access to nature was very important	✓		✓	✓	✓
Waste management service, education, and provision	Increased waste services Waste reduction Behaviour change	Concerns over waste management	Leicestershire become cleaner	✓		✓	✓	✓

Table 7: Key themes, comments and potential actions arising from public consultation activity

Net zero consultation key theme	Consultation comments and actions raised
Collaborate and work with others to deliver net zero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working together and in partnership with a range of stakeholders, including the public sector, landlords / landowners / developers, businesses, schools, universities, organisations, district / borough councils and residents. Involvement in decision making. National government seen as central to delivery. Supporting businesses and SMEs.
Leadership, buy in and ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCC to lead by example, use purchasing power and have strong to enforce change. Buy in from residents through ensuring their understanding and making it easy to change behaviours. The Strategy could be more ambitious, through bringing deadlines forward or going further (e.g. negative carbon).
Ensure the Strategy is understandable and accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase clarity through giving more detail about how net zero will be achieved. Accessibility for all residents, for example through explaining key terms and phrases, using easily understandable language and producing short summary videos with sub-titles.
Interim targets, monitoring, and achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More short term / interim goals with regular monitoring and achievement reporting. The use of SMART targets. Identify clear actions. Experiences of taking action (both positive and negative)
Cost benefit implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost implications and affordability for residents, particularly those on lower incomes. Adoption of lower carbon lifestyles (through retrofitting, alternative fuel vehicles etc.) with consideration of cost barriers. Cost-benefit analysis of the Strategy. Financial support for residents, businesses, and SMEs.
Raise awareness, engagement, education and behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased provision of training, events and education, including within schools. Education for businesses/SMEs so that more informed decisions could be made. Increased communications activity and introduce rewards / enforcements. Time and resource support for community groups who can help spread educational messages locally. Increased levels of understanding / awareness can encourage a move away from unsustainable / high carbon lifestyles such as over consumption, over reliance on personal vehicles and fast fashion.
Improve and promote transport solutions (public, active and freight)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transport to be improved through better reliability, efficiency, hours of service and a move to alternative fuel vehicles. More inclusion of rural areas and expand rural services. More investment in active transport infrastructure e.g. safe walk and cycle paths, bike storage.

Net zero consultation key theme	Consultation comments and actions raised
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the use of active and public transport to discourage car use. • Sufficient and reliable infrastructure for the transition to alternative vehicles (e.g., charging points). • Reduce freight related emissions through less airfreight and a move from road to rail.
Importance of local planning policy and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stricter planning policy to ensure that new building developments are energy efficient, e.g., solar panels, insulation, heat pumps etc. • New developments to be built near existing transport links and amenities. • Reduce developments on greenfield sites. • Encourage more businesses to set up locally. • Some concern that net zero cannot be achieved alongside economic growth, while others saw net zero as an opportunity for growth through job creation e.g. the production of renewable infrastructure, retrofitting of homes, installation of infrastructure.
Importance of renewable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in renewable energy, such as solar and wind. • Ensure secure capacity and reliability of the grid.
Prioritise energy efficiency and low carbon heat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise energy saving behaviours. • Retrofitting. • Reduce demand for heat and introduce low carbon technology. • Encourage shared workspaces and home working.
Importance of nature and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance the environment through tree planting, rewilding, wetland protection, increasing biodiversity and supporting nature recovery. • Reduce the amount of weedkiller and pesticides used. • Improve air quality. • Dissatisfaction of carbon offsetting. • Allow appreciation and better relationships with the environment.
Waste management service, education, and provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of more materials at the kerbside and at Household Waste Recycling Centres. • Introduction of food waste collections. • Encourage reuse and repair activities, to discourage consumption.

The results of this consultation will be used to develop the final version of the Strategy. A “you said, we did” report will be published here: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/have-your-say/you-said-we-did/engagement-2022>