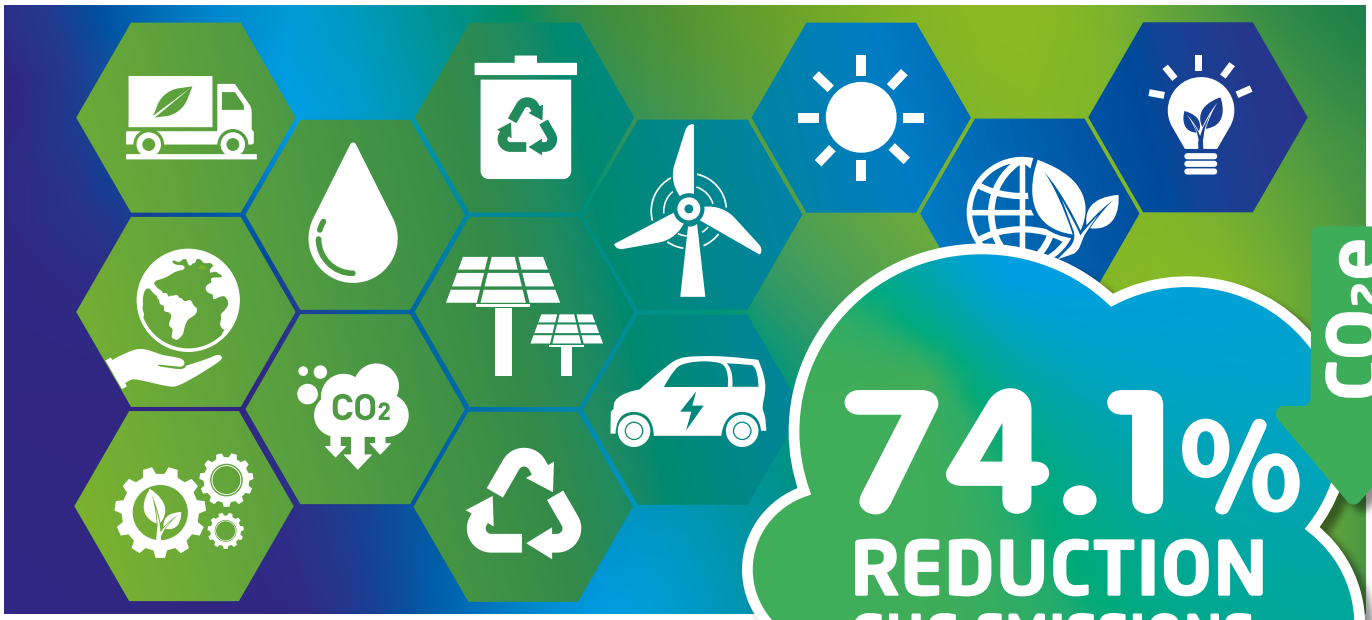
Leicestershire County Council

Appendix F

Environmental Performance 2023-24 - Summary



Leicestershire County Council's Performance

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

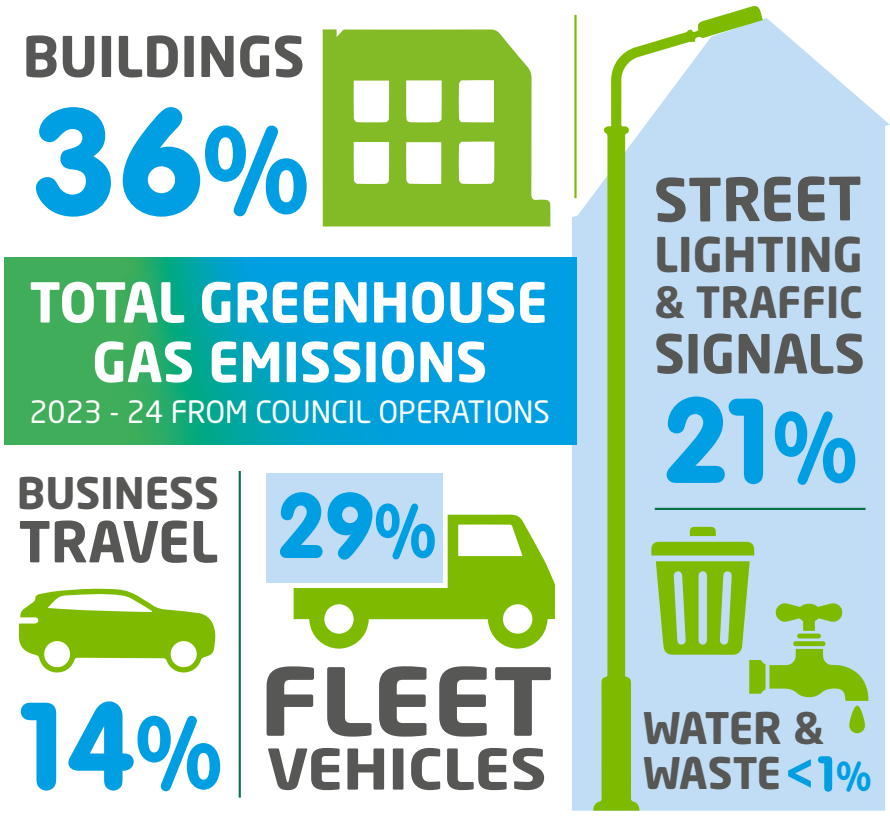
Since **2008-09** the County Council has reduced its operational greenhouse gas emissions (GHG)[1] by **74.1%**. In **2023-24** the Council reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by **2.7%** compared to **2022-23**.

08-09	35,778t
22-23	9,536t
23-24	9,282t

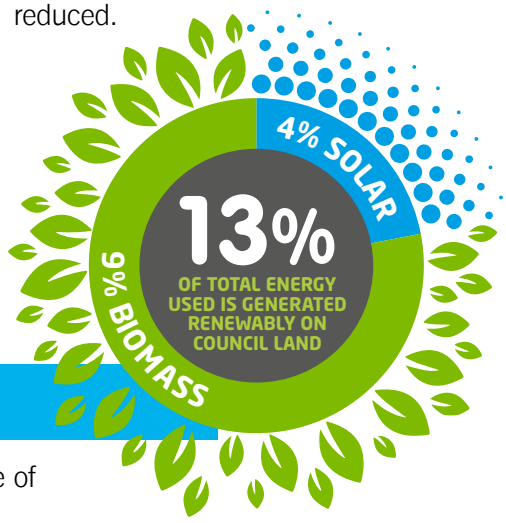
NET ZERO LEICESTERSHIRE

Net Zero
BY 2035

Main Sources of County Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions



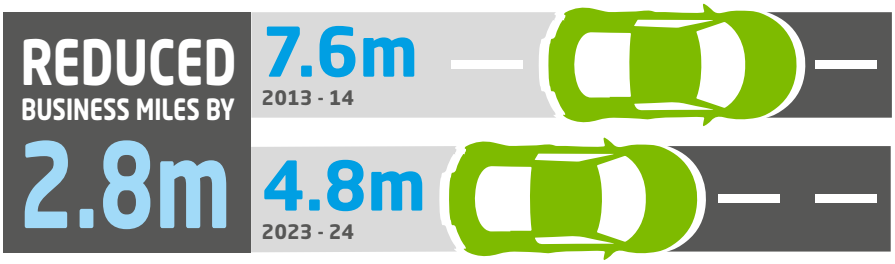
The main sources of greenhouse gas emissions for the County Council in **2023-24** were our buildings, fleet, streetlighting & traffic signals and staff business travel. All the main sources saw a reduction compared to **2022-23**, except business travel which saw a rise of **0.5%**. Overall, emissions from business travel have increased as a proportion of total emissions, while building emissions have reduced.



Renewable Energy

The amount of renewable energy generated on council land, as a percentage of total energy consumed, rose slightly to **13%** in **2023-24**. Of that, **4%** was generated from solar power and **9%** from a biomass (woodchip) boiler. The generation of on-site renewable energy avoided 392 tCO_2e of emissions – equivalent to **4.2%** of the council's emissions. Improvements to the solar PV system have led to a second successive annual record for solar PV generation from council assets. The biomass boiler generated 1,613,400 kWh of energy in 2023-2024, this represents a 13.3% increase from 2022-2023.

Business Mileage



The Council has reduced its business miles by **2.8 million miles** since **2013-14** saving over **1,001 tonnes** of greenhouse gas emissions. Business mileage increased by **136,888 miles** (**2.9%**) compared to **2022-23** largely due to the continued Covid bounce-back.

Office Recycling

The County Council recycled **62%** of its total office waste[2] in **2023-24**. The total amount of waste generated in 2023-24 increased by **10%** to **275** tonnes. Overall compared to pre-covid levels the tonnes of waste produced has decreased significantly from 357.7 tonnes in 2019-20.

Footnotes:

[1] The GHG emissions consist of a mix of gases in addition to carbon dioxide, including methane, nitrous oxide, and hydrofluorocarbons. These make up our overall greenhouse gas figure, which is expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent or CO2e. GHG reporting follows HM Government's Environmental Reporting Guidelines.

[2] Excludes waste from operational activities e.g. highways maintenance and forestry waste.

Leicestershire Environmental Performance

Leicestershire's Carbon Emissions

20% 0.9m tonnes **DOMESTIC**

35% **INDUSTRY, COMMERCIAL, PUBLIC & AGRICULTURE** 1.6m tonnes

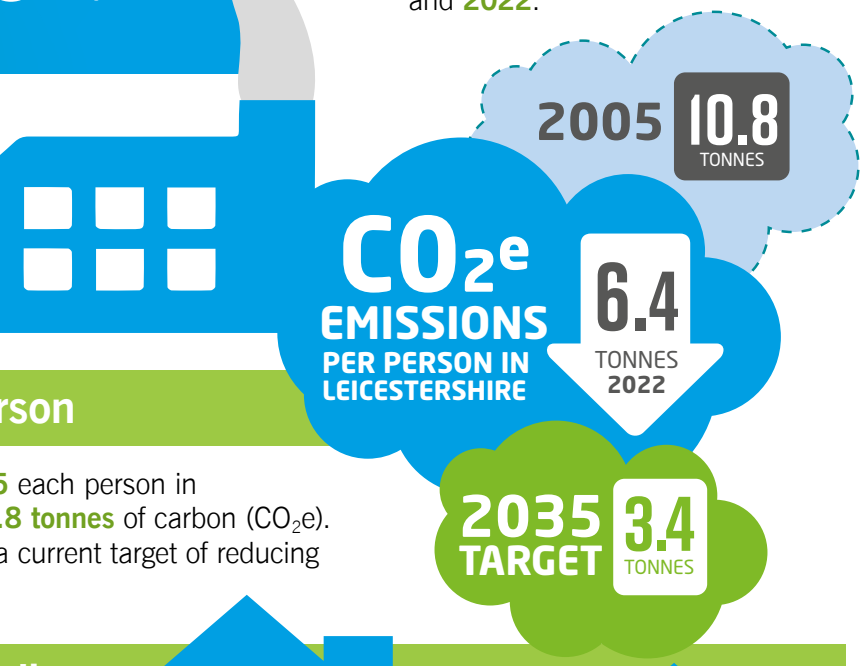
TOTAL CO_{2e} EMISSIONS 4.64m FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

TRANSPORT **40%** 1.8m tonnes

Based on figures provided by the Government[3], the carbon emissions for Leicestershire were **4.64 million tonnes** in **2022**. Emissions are split between industrial, commercial, public sector & agriculture, transport, and domestic sources. Emissions have reduced by **31%** between **2005** and **2022**.

Carbon Emissions Per Person

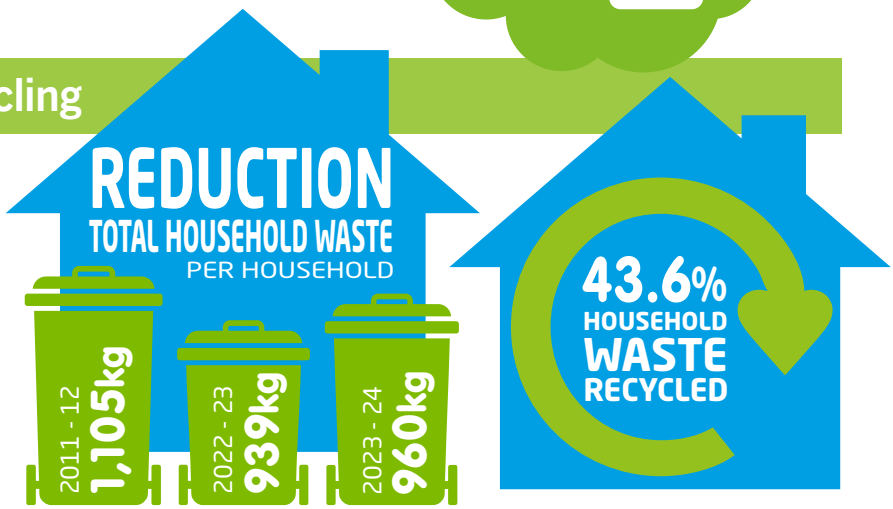
The Government figures show that in **2005** each person in Leicestershire emitted the equivalent of **10.8 tonnes** of carbon (CO_2e). This reduced to **6.4 tonnes** in **2022** with a current target of reducing this to **3.4 tonnes** by **2035**.



Household Waste & Recycling

During **2023-24** the amount of household waste generated per household increased by **3.5% to 960kg**. This increase can be explained by a 30kg increase in recycling and a 6kg increase in green waste per household.

The amount of household waste recycled in Leicestershire in **2023-24** was **43.6%, a 1.8% increase from 2022-23.**



Footnote:

[3] Data is provided by the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero for all UK regions and is two years in arrears. This includes emissions from industrial, commercial, public sector, agriculture, transport and from domestic sources (i.e. homes). More information on the figures can be found here www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics

Projects on the ground

Leicestershire Collaborate to Accelerate Net zero (LCAN) project

The Council, along with partners, secured funding from Innovate UK to take forward the **Leicestershire Collaborate to Accelerate Net zero (LCAN) project**. This project will support delivery of a number of key actions within the **2050 Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan**. Four work packages will be delivered which will focus on providing research and support to create effective governance to support net zero, developing a web based **Local Area Energy Plan**, boosting community energy projects in the county and supporting businesses and organisations to act on carbon reduction.

Low-Carbon Smart Street Lighting

An 18-month trial to dim and trim county **streetlighting** commenced in early 2024 and has resulted in projected electricity savings of 1,336,166 kWh which equates to **277 tonnes of CO_2e** - an estimated **saving of £523,700** in this financial year, based on the current energy tariff. The project was awarded **'Most Sustainable Project of the Year'** at the Highway Electrical Association Awards.

Environment Matters

Want to keep informed of what is happening within Leicestershire County Council and beyond on environmental and waste matters?

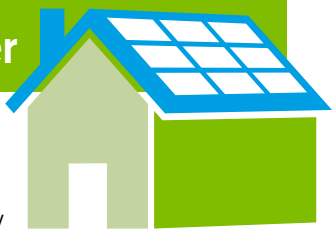
Why not sign up to get an electronic copy of our Environment Matters newsletter - Click here for more details.

Climate Change Reading Lists

Interested in learning more about Climate Change?

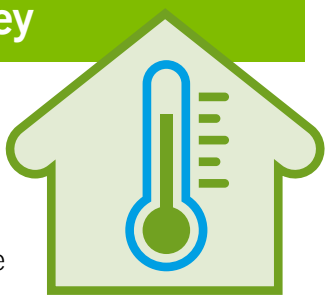
Why not use our climate change booklists. Enjoy learning about climate change from either the children's or adult booklists. For more information click here.

Working Together with Solar together



The Solar Together project has been supported by the County Council this year and saw **223 installations** across the County with **87%** of participants opting to add a battery to their solar panel installation. The scheme delivered a total of **£2.2 million of private resident investment** in renewables in 2023 and is estimated to deliver over **4,500 tonnes of carbon reduction over 25 years**.

Warming Homes and Saving Households Money



Leicestershire's Warm Home service launched its **Home Energy Retrofit Offer (HERO) project**, funded by Midlands Net Zero Hub, to provide tailored energy advice and in person support for low income and vulnerable residents. The Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2, running until March 2025 aims to improve around **190 homes** with an anticipated capital budget of up to **£2.85m**.

Parish Council Toolkit Update

Leicestershire County Council has updated its **Net Zero Leicestershire Toolkit** to help and inspire **parish and town councils** and local groups to address climate change within their local communities. This toolkit offers a range of actions that parish and town councils might consider for their areas from introductory steps to larger projects.

Sustainability Climate Change Guidance for Schools

Schools in England contribute **a quarter** of public sector carbon emissions, makig them crucial in achieving the UK's net zero goals.

Teams across Leicestershire County Council have created a **booklet to support schools** on their journey to net zero. Green skills, carbon management, transport, waste and supply chains are just a few of the topics that are covered, along with a list of **useful resources**. The booklet can be found by clicking here and on the County Council's net zero pages by clicking here.

ACTION FOR NATURE

Leicestershire County Council

Action For Nature Performance

Hectares of Council Land in Better Management for Nature

Total Land in Better Management for Nature 2023-24

3,736 hectares

County Farms **2,164 hectares**

Highway Verges **1,068 hectares**

Country Parks **585 hectares**

Playing Fields **37 hectares**

These metrics are **currently under development** and are seeking to show how much of council land is in **better management for nature**, in area terms and as a percentage of the total council land that could be in better management for nature.

Only land where there is a **conscious decision made to manage the land in a way that protects or enhances nature** is included. The figures do not say anything about the quality of that land from a nature perspective. The figures presented are based on the **current available data** so are not definitive figures but are **indicative of the position**. Further refinement of the data will be carried out on an ongoing basis.

The available data shows that **3,736 hectares** of council land are in better management for nature and include county farms and highway verges. This is equivalent to **97%** of the land that could possibly be suitable.

% of Suitable Council Land in Better Management for Nature

Wildlife Verges

2023 - 24

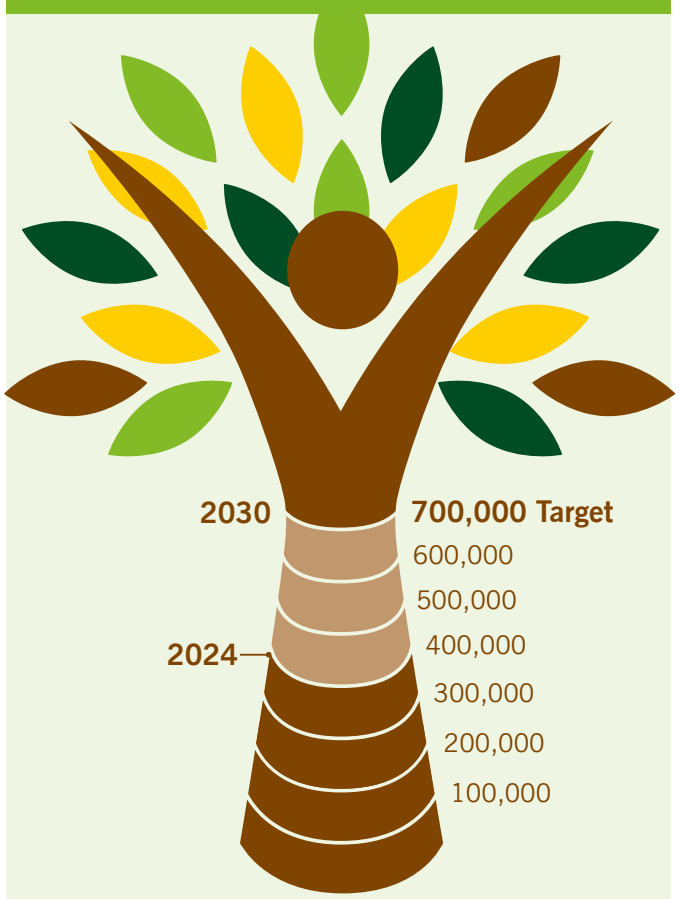
79 verges

52 parishes participating

The County Council started the **Urban Wildlife Verge scheme** pilot in **2020**. At the end of **2023-24** there were **79 verges** in the scheme managed by **52 parishes**. These verges are managed by reducing grass cutting, which is also done at the best time of the year for wildlife. In July 2023, the Wildlife Verge scheme won the Defra Bees Needs Champion Award under the Community Category.

For more information on the scheme go to the Leicestershire County Council website.

Number of Trees Planted in Leicestershire



The County Council has set a target to help plant **700,000 trees** in Leicestershire by **2030** as part of its net zero and nature recovery commitments. At the end of **2023-24** some **398,920 trees** were planted across the county by the county council and other organisations and individuals. For more information on this and to keep track of how many trees are being planted visit the Leicestershire County Council website.

Action for Swifts

There has been great interest in the Action for Swifts project which will install **364 Swift boxes** across Leicestershire.

Funded primarily by Natural England through a **£77,000 grant** and Leicestershire County Council, the project is also supported by the Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society (LROS). LROS have worked with communities, assessed sites, led on box and bird caller installation.

This project is about taking a **strategic approach** to bird conservation working alongside our partners and colleagues. The project has also taken the opportunity to engage with property owners, raising awareness of steps that they can take to **aid species recovery**. From this project it is hoped that people will have greater regard for this threatened species.

Projects on the ground

Tackling Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

In 2022, Leicestershire County Council established the **Leicestershire Invasive and Non-Native Species Initiative** (LINNSI) that is recognised by the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat www.nonnativespecies.org

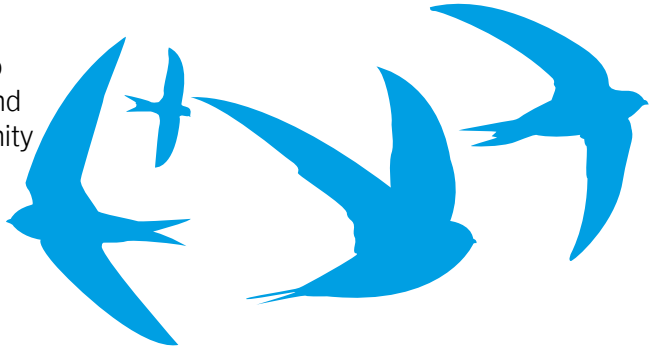
The LINNSI involves several partners including East Mercia Rivers Trust, The Soar Catchment Partnership, Trent Rivers Trust, Canal & River Trust, Environment Agency, Severn Trent, Brooksby Agricultural College, University of Leicester, Leicester City Council, and the Leicestershire & Rutland Mammal Group.

The purpose of the partnership is to develop and maintain cost-effective strategic approaches to prevent, detect, control, and eradicate specified priority INNS in Leicestershire & Rutland, including the associated water catchments through coordinated action of river catchment partnerships and via the implementation of the LINNSI local strategic action plan.

The partnership developed a project funded by **Natural England Nature Recovery Seedcorn Fund** asking for **£8,888** to evaluate who was already tackling INNS and who could tackle INNS in the future. The project also sought to engage with the public and groups to enable education but also recording of sightings of key species. 29 new volunteers have signed up to work with partner organisations to help record and tackle INNS.

A walk over study was undertaken to capture detailed data of INNS such as Himalayan Balsam, Floating Pennywort and American Mink along watercourses in the North and Southeast catchments where data was lacking.

The LINNSI partnership has led to further funding of **£17,881** being obtained from **DEFRA** for INNS control which began in 2023 and will continue until 2025. So far this has resulted in training for volunteers to learn the methods involved with controlling INNS and the recruitment of 12 volunteers to partner organisations to help in INNS control. The project has started engaging with landowners where INNS are found and is working in partnership with landowners to tackle the spread of key invasive species.



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