

Tackling the Climate Emergency Together



Somerset West and Taunton Council is committed to creating a more sustainable future for our families and the places we enjoy. We are working with partners to produce plans for tackling climate change within our district and across the wider County. This will only be truly effective if we create something that we all feel involved with and that will inspire each of us to take action.

**“We now want to hear your views on what the issues are
and how we can collectively solve them”**

Impacts on Somerset

Too often we see the impacts of global heating as something only governments can resolve. The truth is we all contribute to the problem.

From:

- The things we choose to buy
- How we choose to travel
- How we run our businesses
- How we build our homes
- How we help to shape new policies

The Met Office predicts that by 2070
summers will be upto 5.8°C hotter
and **57% drier. Winters could be 33%
wetter.**

This could lead to:

- Increased flooding and coastal erosion
- Higher risk of heatwaves
- Destruction of wildlife habitats
- The most vulnerable unable to adapt
- Threats to job security and business



Join us in making a commitment

We can take action now by reducing our contribution to global heating and by preparing for local impacts.

We will use all our powers to action, enable and support everyone to work towards achieving carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030.

“What will your commitment be?”

Turn to pages 2 and 3 to view our ideas →

Turn to page 4 to find out how to have your say →

These are some of our ideas...

Transport

54% of carbon emissions in our district come from transport.

Actions should grow a green transport system, increase active lifestyles and reduce business travel, by:

- Electrifying transport options and meeting that demand through renewable energy.
- Supporting Taunton Park & Ride, re-opening Wellington Train Station and exploring innovative urban and rural transport options.
- Developing new routes and pedestrian zones that make walking and cycling the preferred choice.
- Enabling people to reduce the amount they need to travel (e.g. through better digital connectivity).



Energy

Our lives are energy intensive and we can't continue to meet that demand through fossil fuels. 37% of

carbon emissions in the UK derive from heating homes and businesses.

Activity is required to help generate, store and consume energy in smarter ways:

- Building new cases for renewable energy like wind, solar and biomass.
- Enabling and raising awareness of local community energy projects.
- Providing advice for reducing and shifting energy demand.
- Developing a Somerset Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.



Waste

Although ranked in the top 10% areas in England for recycling household

waste, Somerset must continue to reduce its environmental impact.

Our ideas include:

- Creating campaigns to help us all reduce plastic use.
- Diverting remaining waste away from landfill to energy generation projects.
- Working with businesses to develop joint waste schemes.
- Reducing supply chain waste in key areas, like the public sector.



Farming & Food

Many existing practices for producing, distributing and consuming food generates significant carbon and methane emissions.

We want to work with partners to explore:

- Land management techniques that reduce emissions and protect wildlife.
- Supporting farmers in adapting to the impacts of climate change.
- Improving understanding about the importance of buying local produce.
- How we reduce reliance on the use of plastics in food packaging.



The Built Environment

There are about **80,000 homes and businesses in our district** and plans for more, all of which must be fit for the future.

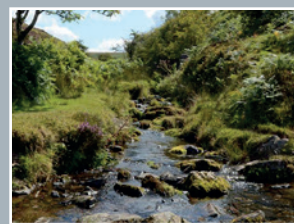


Ideas to enable this include:

- Retrofitting homes and advising home owners on changes they can make.
- Locating new developments sustainably, close to transport and services.
- Ensuring new buildings achieve zero carbon emissions as soon as possible.
- Planting trees and re-wilding urban spaces to increase well-being.

Natural Environment

Somerset's many **special landscapes** are **under threat**. We need plans to radically improve the chances for wildlife and carbon capture through better land management. We plan on:



- Planting more trees and sowing more wildflower meadows.
- Working with landowners to enhance vulnerable habitats.
- Introducing less intensive practices in managing Council owned spaces.
- Empowering residents and communities to deliver local wildlife projects.

Water

Climate projections predict **more** intense and variable **rainfall** patterns, leading to more **flooding, drought** and water quality issues.



Ideas to mitigate these risks include:

- Delivering flood alleviation improvements and coastal erosion management.
- Harnessing the energy generating potential of water treatment processes.
- Working with businesses with significant water usage to reduce their consumption.
- Increasing use of sustainable urban drainage systems in developments.

Industry, Business and Supply Chain

Our **economy** accounts for **29.5%** of **carbon emissions** in Somerset.



Actions are required to help businesses and employees improve operations and influence supply chains, such as:

- A business toolkit to help reduce emissions from supply chains.
- Sharing best practice and championing businesses that make positive changes.
- Increasing the resilience of small businesses affected by changes.
- Changing Council procurement processes to engage sustainable suppliers.

We want to hear your ideas and find out what you as individuals, businesses and communities are already doing.

Turn to the back page to find out more and how you can have your say....

Working towards achieving carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030

Developing our plans

The information used within these pages is a summary of a 30 page draft 'ideas' plan we have produced for our district, called the **'Somerset West and Taunton Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan'**.

We have also been working with partners to produce a similar draft document for the county of Somerset, called the **'Somerset Climate Emergency Framework'**.

Both these documents will evolve at the same time and are designed to start conversations with our residents, businesses and communities. We are also continuing to take action whilst we develop these plans.



What does being Carbon Neutral mean?

Human activity produces damaging gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, which lead to global heating and impacts on the planet.

Carbon dioxide is the biggest contributor to the problems and we are producing far more than the planet is able to deal with. We urgently need to get the balance back.

This requires action to radically reduce our carbon emissions. We also need to find ways to capture and store carbon so that ultimately we are retaining as much as we are releasing.

Timetable for District and County Plans:

Jan-Feb 2020	Phase 1 consultation with public
Mar 2020	Draft plans finalised
Apr-May 2020	Phase 2 consultation with public
Jun-Aug 2020	Final plans finalised

Have Your Say

You can now have your say on both the district and county plans. You can do this by attending one of our events or by heading to our website, where you can:

- Find out about district and county plans
- View key documents
- Complete an online survey
- Email us with your thoughts



You can also post comments on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.
Find us @swtcouncil



www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/climate-emergency