

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Monday, 7 October 2024 at 2.00 pm
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House,
St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Members: Councillor Ian Selby (Chairman)
Councillor Emma Baker (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing, Councillor Steven Cunnington, Councillor Barry Dobson, Councillor Gloria Johnson, Councillor Paul Martin, Councillor Mark Whittington and Councillor Paul Wood

Agenda

This meeting can be watched as a live stream, or at a later date, [via the SKDC Public-I Channel](#)

- 1. Public Speaking**
The Council welcomes engagement from members of the public.
To speak at this meeting please register no later than 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting via
democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Disclosure of Interests**
Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.
- 4. Minutes from the meeting held on 4 June 2024** (Pages 3 - 13)
- 5. Updates from the previous meeting** (Page 15)

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01476 406080

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive
www.southkesteven.gov.uk

To consider actions agreed at the meeting held on 4 June 2024.

6. **Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**
7. **Waste Policy, Battery Collection and Disposal of Vapes - Verbal Update**
To receive a verbal update from the Head of Waste and Markets.
8. **Progress update on upgrade of District Council Streetlights to LED units** (Pages 17 - 21)
To provide an update to the Committee on the Council's ongoing programme to upgrade all district council streetlights to LED.
9. **Update on Carbon Emissions for 2023/24** (Pages 23 - 42)
To provide an update on South Kesteven District Council's carbon emission reporting for the 2023/24 financial year.
10. **Bulky Waste Collection Service** (Pages 43 - 48)
This report highlights the business case for expanding the bulky waste collection service resource base by one vehicle and crew to accommodate increasing demand.
11. **Commercial Food Waste Collections** (Pages 49 - 57)
To highlight the business case for delaying the introduction of commercial food waste collections.
12. **Re-wilding Ambitions** (Pages 59 - 96)
To provide the Committee with an update on the Council's corporate ambition in relation to re-wilding.
13. **Communal Recycling scoping**
A discussion item (requested by Cllr Bailey).
14. **Work Programme 2024-25** (Pages 97 - 99)
To consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2024-25.
15. **Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 4 June 2024, 2.00 pm



SOUTH
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Committee Members present

Councillor Ian Selby (Chairman)
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Gloria Johnson
Councillor Paul Martin
Councillor Mark Whittington
Councillor Paul Wood

Other Members present

Councillor Ben Green
Councillor Graham Jeal

Cabinet Members

Councillor Rhys Baker
Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Philip Knowles
Councillor Rhea Rayside

Officers

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer
Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services
Ayeisha Kirkham, Head of Public Protection
Debbie Roberts, Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance
James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager
Louise Case, Sustainability Project Support Officer
Heather Green, Licensing Team Leader
Charles James, Policy Officer

1. Public Speaking

A number of submissions from Mr Peter Bell on the draft Animal Welfare (Licensing) Policy (item 8) were published as a supplementary pack, available

at [Public Pack\)Agenda Supplement Agenda Supplement for Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 04/06/2024 14:00 \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](https://publicpack.southkesteven.gov.uk/AgendaSupplement/EnvironmentOverviewandScrutinyCommittee/04/06/202414:00).

Mr Bell wished in particular to highlight page 8 of the pack, which was a comparison with similar businesses.

The Licensing Manager responded to the submissions highlighting the following (clause references were highlighted in red):

- Typos, any wording inconsistency or omitted words to aid reading would be updated.
- The Corporate Objectives had been updated.
- The Enforcement Policy was on the Council's website, links were not provided to avoid them being changed as did happen and becoming ineffectual. (page 2, 20.2)
- The consultation was not with the Council's legal advisor, legal advice was taken at a different time, therefore they were not included within the consultation list. (1.6)
- The date in the title of the Primate legislation had been updated since the policy was written and consulted upon and would be updated (4.5)
- It was not believed that the Council had fettered its discretion by saying 'not normally', it was not saying 'we will not'. (7.2)
- The policy needed to be read and applied in its entirety, not in isolation regarding reference to (7.3)
- A vet was appointed by SKDC, not the applicant and per s13 of the Animal Welfare Regulations 2018, may charge such fees as it considered appropriate, hence why the policy stated that the Council would reclaim vets fees (where appropriate). Appointing an independent vet overcomes impartiality issues and discussion re being on Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons list of approved inspectors (9.2, 17.2)
- Regarding Dangerous Wild Animals, the conditions were dependant upon the inspection and results and the animals kept, therefore clarity could not be offered (12.5)
- Fees and charges did not include the vets as it was detailed in the policy and was not applicable to all applicants but was stated in 9.2 (19.1)
- Removal of previous grandad rights for inspectors could be removed, as the timescale had passed but was current when the policy was initially drafted/introduced (19.1)
- The aim of defining relevant conviction was to point towards where the type of conviction was in the policy (App1)

This policy was a local document, and was not meant as a recital of the relevant legislation or regulations:

- Tribunals were specialist courts, therefore using the word courts was not misleading (1.2)

- Rating, Star rating – S10 of the policy stated ‘Duration of a licence and Star Rating’ (10.4)
- Liable for a fine or to a fine per the legislation (20.15, 20.17)

The Council received legal advice on the policy following the 13 February 2024 Environment Overview and Scrutiny committee and Mr Bell’s previous feedback;

- The Council were not wishing to enter into discussions regarding reference the Crime and Disorder Act, Care Act and Children’s Act; legal advice had confirmed that they were correctly referred to as Local Authorities (Licensing Authorities) and do have a duty to consider the provisions (1.9, 3.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.5)
- Therefore it was not believed to be ‘Wednesbury’ unreasonable, as it was not bizarre or so unreasonable that no other authority would include this – as was seen in other Authorities animal welfare policies (2.3)
- Fit and proper was not defined in the legislation which was why it was stated how SKDC would interpret it. Having viewed other Authorities definitions the context was in order (5.5, 5.6, 6.1)

Data Barring Service (DBS) basic certificates were not detailed within the policy, therefore the Council had not considered this aspect further (6.4)

The provision regarding refused licences could be amended but the provision clearly stated the legislation that applied and when a licence would not normally be issued (13.5)

An equality impact assessment had been undertaken in line with the Authority procedure. Mr Bell raised concerns regarding indirect sex discrimination, however its aims were legitimate. There was no less discriminatory way of overcoming the issue of males potentially being more likely than females to have criminal convictions as the provisions within the policy applied equally to male and females. (1.9, EIA Page 60)

Whilst the efforts that Mr Bell and his legal advisors had gone to, to critique this policy were appreciated, this was a local policy consistent with other policies within the County and wider. If Mr Bell felt that there needed to be specific wording within such a policy, it was suggested that he lobbied government to produce a national document rather than current DEFRA guidance depending on the type of licence.

Going forward, the policy had been drafted and along with previous feedback had been subject to legal review by Legal Services Lincolnshire. The Council believed that with some of the minor amendments outlined that this document was fit for purpose.

However, there was no statutory requirement for a local authority to adopt an Animal Welfare Policy. The Council currently issued Animal Welfare licences, without issue and if Committee felt unable to recommend Cabinet approval of the policy, it could be withdrawn and not progressed further.

Mr Bell replied with a supplementary statement, and highlighted the following:

During Mr Bell's research into several areas of Council work, he found that errors had been duplicated across other Councils in the same areas due to the copying of other policies. Mr Bell believed that some of this policy was extracted from other sources.

Mr Bell had not yet received legal advice, although was seeking it currently from criminal justice authorities.

In terms of case law – 5 cases had been decided at first tier tribunal where judges had accepted or rejected. He asked that councils look at case law so that any policy was not discriminatory. It was unclear why the Animal Welfare Policy was giving these restrictions.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Emma Baker and Steven Cunnington.

Councillor Tim Harrison substituted for Councillor Steven Cunnington.

In the absence of the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Emma Baker, Committee Members moved, seconded and **AGREED** the appointment of Councillor Paul Martin as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for this meeting only.

3. Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

4. Minutes from the Joint Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 March 2024

The minutes from the Joint Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 March 2024 were approved as a correct record.

5. Minutes from the meeting held on 19 March 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

6. Updates from the previous meeting

The updates were noted.

7. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service

There were no announcements.

8. Animal Welfare Policy

This report provided an updated draft of the new Animal Licensing (Welfare) Policy following the receipt of further legal advice.

There was no statutory requirement to have such a policy; however, it was considered good practice.

There were approximately 75 animal welfare licences with the District of South Kesteven. The policy also referred to other issues such as animal boarding, horse riding, dangerous and wild animals and zoo licences.

Currently, animal welfare issues could be raised through the Police. However, there were a series of licensable activities that the Council was responsible for.

Having been moved and seconded, and following a vote it was **AGREED:**

That the Committee:

- 1. Provides a recommendation to Cabinet for approval of the updated South Kesteven District Council Animal Welfare Policy.**
- 2. Approves a recommendation to Cabinet that the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing, be delegated to make minor amendments to the Policy, such as legislative updates, which may become necessary from time to time to ensure its continued accuracy, but do not affect its direction or intent.**

9. Corporate Plan 2020-23 Key Performance Indicators End-of-Plan and 2023/24 End-Year (Q4) Report

This report outlined South Kesteven District Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2020-23 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from January-March 2024, and presented a summary of overall performance over the lifecycle of the Corporate Plan 2020-23.

The Corporate Plan 2020-23 listed nine actions under the corporate priority 'Clean & Sustainable Environment'. These actions set the Council's agenda for the life of that Plan. The criterium was used as a yardstick to judge overall performance against the stated actions. 6 of the 9 actions had been achieved, with explanations given for those that had been marked as 'unachieved'.

Appendix B of the agenda pack presented the overall performance against the five actions being submitted for Q4 2023/24, as well as specific performance against the sub measures contained within those. Specific commentary was provided for each action, which was summarised as follows:

- Three of the actions were rated Green. These were actions which were on, or above target as planned.
- One of the actions was rated Amber. This was an action which was currently below the planned target.
- Zero of the actions were rated Red. These would be actions currently significantly below the planned target.
- One action was currently awaiting data from Lincolnshire County Council.
- Four of the original nine actions were either no longer reported (e.g. the Big Clean programme) or were not reported in this period (e.g. carbon accounts).

A new suite of KPIs was adopted by the Committee in March 2024, and the first report on these would be available in Q3 of this year.

During debate on this item, the following points were highlighted:

- The building of the new Depot was rated as 'amber' due to the fact that the construction phase was anticipated to have started when the Corporate Plan had been drafted, whereas it had not yet commenced. There was a standing item on the agenda for the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor the project.
- The Depot had planning permission and a budget in place. Officers were in discussions with the contractor to value engineer the price submission. The target date to be on site was September 2024, as per the programme; this was roughly in line with the expectations set out by Full Council and on target with the timeline presented to Cabinet.
- Part of the planning application for the new Depot was the inclusion of a biodiversity net gain.
- **Action – when recycling rates were available from Lincolnshire County Council they would be emailed to Committee Members and reported back to a future Committee.**
- The hours and the start times attached to the Big Clean Programme had been changed, with staff unable to adhere to DEFRA best practice guidelines in this instance. However, the Big Clean Programme was a successful initiative to undertake a deep clean of streets across the District. It had been a high standard to maintain, and it was not a KPI the committee had chosen to retain.

- There had been instances across the District where residents had been unclear on what day to put their waste out. To address this, communications with groups using Street Scene was being investigated.
- The number of green bins collected was not a good measure of the service as the preference would be for as many people as possible to recycle or compost their green waste at home. The actual number of green bins collected in 2023/2024 was less than that seen in 2022/2023. There was a seasonal aspect to green waste collection; in those months where more plant growth was seen there was likely to be a higher level of collections.
- The wagons collecting trade waste were not able to collect any further waste at this point, therefore any extension of this scheme would require another wagon. There was a licence for a further wagon at the existing Depot but no space to accommodate it.

The report was **NOTED**.

10. Disposal of Vapes

Members considered an update on the recent announcements from Government on the sale and disposal of disposable vapes.

A dramatic increase in littering and waste had been seen as a result of the use of disposable vapes, which could put the Council's crew at risk.

In December 2023 there was a Government consultation on small waste items. In January 2024 the Government announced that all disposable vapes would be banned in England, due to growing concern on their environmental impact.

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- Battery collection had been delayed to the summer. There had been a delay in gaining the licence for this; a variation was needed on the Council's permit to store them. Officers were working with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) on an interim solution where they received SKDC's waste at their site. There was confidence on introducing this from September 2025; however, collection would not commence before it was ready. There was also the possibility of funding from Government.
- The battery collection scheme would require education materials for residents.
- Councils had responded to Government to say that funding for this scheme was insufficient.

The Committee **AGREED** to note the report and revised timescales.

11. Twin Stream Update

Members considered an update on the roll out of the twin stream project and the timelines for the reintroduction of contamination monitoring process for the dry mixed recycling (DMR) bins.

Members of the Council had all been invited to an all-member briefing on this topic taking place at 6pm on 4 June 2024.

The following points were highlighted during the introduction and debate on the item:

- 99% of bins had been collected.
- It had been agreed to address contamination in silver bins alongside the roll out of paper and card collection. The contamination rate was around 30% of bins collected.
- Alongside a proactive educational campaign, a 'tag and take' exercise was undertaken to highlight to residents the problematic items in their recycling waste; this included paper and card. This was paused in February 2024 due to a number of issues.
- To address the issues that occurred on the last exercise, a project group had been established which was made up of SKDC officers, LCC representatives and Cabinet representatives. The group assessed what could be tackled differently and decided that a data-driven, phased approach would be best.
- When bins were rejected from w/c 10 June there would be a comprehensive rejection tab. A public apology for any mistakes made by the Cabinet Member was contained within the minutes of Full Council on 29 February 2024.
- The legislative requirements for recycling were vague; when something was 'recyclable' this simply meant that it could be recycled anywhere within Europe. If residents were still not sure after reading guidance from the Council on whether their packaging was recyclable, then they should use the black bin rather than potentially contaminate their recycling bin.
- Operatives would be sharing leaflets on their round w/c 10 June. It could also be argued that the 'hoop tags' on contaminated bins were a form of education.
- It was pleasing to see the provision of additional staff training and resources. Resources and time would also be used to educate members of the public as to what they could or could not place into their bin.
- Not all waste in a black bin went to landfill, as some of it was sent to the local Energy from Waste plant.
- **ACTION – an update on how latest round of rejected bins was received would return to Committee when possible.**

- A general rule with plastic recycling was that if it could be scrunched up in one hand, then it should be placed into the black bin. Residents would not be punished for well-meaning mistakes. However, more significant contamination would have to be enforced; for example nappies or clothing in recycling bins.
- Space for the extra bins was an issue that was still being explored, with bespoke solutions being sought. Larger bins had previously been offered; however households struggling with capacity should contact the Council for assistance in the first instance.
- Leaflets distributed to residents would factor in local differences, such as the different coloured bins and bags within Stamford.

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report and the revised action plan for the reintroduction of the contamination monitoring process for the Dry Mixed Recycling waste stream.

12. Environment Act 2021 Update

Note: The Committee adjourned at 3:59pm and re-convened at 4:06pm.

Members considered an update on the implementation timescales of the Environment Act 2021, in respect of:

- Simpler Recycling (previously Consistency in Recycling),
- Extended Producer Responsibility, and
- Deposit Return Scheme (DRS).

In 2023 DEFRA announced that extended producer payments would be deferred. The DRS had seen a more recent announcement in April 2024, where it was outlined that the Scheme would be delayed until October 2027.

A more significant change was announced on 9 May 2024 concerning mandatory food waste collection, a core set of standard recyclables and soft plastic and microfilm collections. Commercial food waste collections would be required to present food, dry recyclables and residuals separately by 31 March 2025.

Mandated food waste collections covered those organisations with 10 or more full-time equivalent staff; micro-firms would be required to comply by 2027. Less than 4% of the current customer base met the criteria for the 2025 deadline; most of SKDC's customers were 'micro-firms'.

No more recycling bins were anticipated (following the roll out of the purple lidded bin). Peterborough City Council had used caddies successfully.

It was estimated that around 13 vehicles were required to collect food waste within the District. There may be a capacity issue at the current Depot.

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report and the revised timescales applied by Government and future funding implications.

13. Rewilding process (Verbal Update)

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste gave a verbal update on the re-wilding process.

The following points were raised:

- In May 2024 a community wildflower meadow in Market Deeping was cut in error by Street Scene. An apology had been issued to the Deepings Lions Club, who maintained the meadow, from the Cabinet Member and the Leader. The Streetscene Manager had met with the Deepings Lions Manager to agree remedial actions. The Streetscene team had cleared away the clippings so that the meadow could be allowed to re-establish.
- Internal procedures had been tightened to prevent further mistakes.
- Grounds maintenance teams carried out a wide range of interventions to mitigate climate change and reverse biodiversity loss.
- Rewilding appropriate areas was one initiative which would go a long way towards helping mitigate climate change. A Climate Change working group had been established by the Cabinet Member and this had identified two suitable re-wilding areas near Bourne. It was vital that resources and staffing were in place to ensure any scheme could be maintained. Initial seed money could be used from the Climate Action Fund.
- There was an ambition to incorporate 'no mow May' in a way that was appropriate to SKDC, as LCC were the responsible authority for many of the District's grass verges. In larger spaces such as Wyndham Park an appropriate mowing regime was required for the variety of people that used the facility.
- The mowing regime at the Council required that litter should be picked prior to mowing the area.
- There were certain areas of the District where conversations would need to be held with developers, particularly with unadopted parcels of land.
- There was value in scrub land, where plants would eventually return, followed by trees, birds, and other wildlife.

The update was **NOTED**.

14. Update on Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3c

Members considered an update on the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3c grant funding offer to update the existing heating systems at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre, which had been reported to Cabinet on 14 May 2024.

The project was in its initial stages, with an intention to complete work by March 2026. The intention was to install low carbon heating to replace the current system. By switching from gas to electricity a reduction in carbon emissions would ensue.

Utility costs last year were around £770,000, so any attempt to mitigate these costs were welcomed.

The update was **NOTED**.

15. Work Programme 2024-25

A request to add in the Annual Carbon Emissions report for October's meeting was agreed.

The remainder of the Work Programme was noted.

16. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent

The latest Climate Action Group saw discussions around Drainage Boards, the Canal Society, pollution levels in Grantham, Active England and Cycle Ways. The Leader had also reminded everyone to sign up for a cycle from Grantham to Belton House.

If Members wished to be included in the group then they were to let Councillor Rhys Baker know. Notes could be shared with members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting closed at 4:40pm.

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Action Sheet

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Actions from meeting of 4 June 2024

Min no	Agenda item	Action	Assigned to	Comments/Status	Deadline
9	Corporate Plan KPIs	That the Committee receive information on recycling rates from LCC.	Cllr Rhys Baker/Kay Boasman	Email sent from Democracy on 23 September 2024	Complete
11	Twin Stream Update	An update on how latest round of rejected bins was received.	Kay Boasman	Email sent from Democracy on 23 September 2024	Complete
		Research into the adoption of roads, and whether developers have to hand over land after 10 years for care and maintenance. An update to be provided to the relevant Member	Emam Whittaker	Email sent to the relevant Member on 19 September 2024	Complete

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SOUTH
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Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7 October 2024

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Progress update on upgrade of District Council Streetlights to LED

Report Author

Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

 Serena.brown@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides a progress update on the ongoing project to upgrade District Council operated streetlights to energy efficient LED units.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Notes the updates regarding the upgrade programme of District Council streetlights to LED.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Clean and sustainable environment

Which wards are impacted? All wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The overall electricity spend for 2023/24 for streetlighting was £321k, a marked increase to previous years due to the rising cost of utilities. While a modest decrease of around 25% of the tariff cost of utilities is projected for the following year, the project to upgrade streetlights to LED will reduce the utility spend in the short term as well as reducing reactive maintenance costs. The funding for the replacement programme is being met from Council reserves in accordance with the Council decision on 28 September 2023.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 Councils do not have a duty to provide streetlighting, however once provided, the local authority does have a duty to maintain the system in a safe condition.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

Climate Change

- 1.3 The energy reduction potential of upgrading the Council's stock of lamps to LED is significant, with streetlighting being the single largest area of electricity consumption for the Council. Annual carbon savings are included within the report which will contribute towards the Council's carbon reduction target.

Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager

2. Background to the Report

2.1 South Kesteven District Council is responsible for managing a total of 3,893 streetlights within the district all of which are funded from the Council's General Fund. These lights are predominantly for providing lighting to footways, as opposed to the separate and much more significant stock of streetlights provided for highways in the district, which are managed by Lincolnshire County Council.

2.2 The majority of lights operated by the Council are 35W (or 36W) low pressure sodium lamps. The total electricity consumption arising from the lamps result in just over 4% of the Council's total carbon emissions – the single largest category for electricity use of Council assets.

2.3 On 28 September 2023 Full Council approved a funding allocation of £1m to accelerate the replacement of the Council operated streetlights with LED energy efficient lamps.

2.4 A tender exercise was completed in early 2024 through the YPO Highways Electrical Installations framework, and EON Energy Solutions Ltd. were appointed as the successful contractor. The specification for the upgraded lamps included:

- Replacement dimmable LED luminaires, with dimming profile set from midnight to 6AM
- Photocell controllers to activate lamp automatically at dusk and switch off at dawn
- NEMA socket to facilitate future connection to a networked system if required

2.5 Following submission of information from the supplier, the expected energy saving from the new LEDs lamps with a dimming profile from midnight to 6am is 75% across the portfolio once all upgrades are completed. At current electricity costs, this results in a payback period of 3.7 years and an annual carbon emissions saving of 148 tonnes.

	kWh	Carbon emissions (scopes 2 and 3)	Electricity tariff per kWh (£)	Annual utility cost for streetlights (£)
Streetlighting pre- accelerated upgrade	848,940	191	0.38	321,196
Streetlighting following full replacement	212,235	48	0.28	60,224
Potential saving	(636,705)	(148)	-	(260,972)
Pay back				3.7 years

2.6 The luminaire included in the successful tender is also Dark Sky accredited, meaning that there is zero upwards light spill. Front and rear shields can also be fitted to lamps which can reduce any unwanted light spill and help to mitigate the wider effects of providing illumination to people and wildlife.

2.7 Following award of contract, upgrade work commenced in May 2024 which is in line with the project plan. It is expected that all existing streetlights will be upgraded within a maximum period of 18 months from the start of contract, which will ensure that the Council benefits from energy and utility cost savings as soon as possible. The upgrades are also covered by a 10 year warranty which should significantly reduce the maintenance costs.

2.8 Each upgraded streetlight is supplied with a full condition report advising the condition of the column, bracket, lantern, door & paint condition, along with an electrical test report. If required, the light is renumbered/identified.

2.9 At 30 August 2024 1,193 streetlights had been successfully upgraded via the current contract, which is in addition to the 810 streetlights which had previously been upgraded to LEDs. This equates to a current completion rate of 51.5% of the Council's existing General Fund stock.

Status		Number of streetlights upgraded
Additional work required	Completed with no additional work required	1137
	Column replacement	6
	Bracket replacement	43
	Inaccessible and requiring landowner correspondence	7
TOTAL		1193

2.10 The programme of streetlight upgrades are completed on a location by location basis which ensures that an efficient process is being followed. Upgraded locations to date include:

Aisby	Gelston	Marston
Ancaster	Graby	Morton
Barkston	Hanthorpe	Old Somerby
Carlton Scroop	Heydour	Stubton
Claypole	Honington	Syston
Deeping St James	Horbling	Tallington
Dowsby	Hougham	Uffington
Dry Doddington	Langtoft	Westborough
Dunsby	Lenton	West Deeping
Foston	Long Bennington	
Frognall	Market Deeping	

2.11 Following completion of the tender process and prices for specific upgrades being agreed, the expected overall spend is slightly below the original estimate of £1m, allowing for the inclusion of some additional advisory work. This work includes: proactive column upgrades; pole bracket upgrades; straightening columns and re-concreting, upgrading supply box and brackets.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 Current unit cost for electricity is at a historic high and there remains a strong case for accelerated upgrade of the council's stock of streetlights, to maximise savings on energy costs and return on investment.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The report is provided for information. Members are asked to take note of the update on the progress of the project to date.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 The report is provided for information to note of the update on the progress of the project to date.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee 22nd June 2023 - [Streetlights report.pdf \(southkesteven.gov.uk\)](#)
- 6.2 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 11th July 2023 - [Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th July 2023](#)
- 6.3 Cabinet 11th September 2023 - [Cabinet on 11th September 2023](#)
- 6.4 Council 28th September 2023 - [Council on 28th September 2023](#)

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Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 7 October 2024

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker,
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Update on Carbon Emissions in respect of Council Operations

Report Author

Louise Case, Sustainability Project Support Officer

louise.case@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

The climate and carbon dashboard provides an overview of South Kesteven District Council's operational carbon emissions for the 2023/24 period, including progress against the Council's carbon reduction targets of at least 30% by 2030.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Notes the reported carbon emissions for the 2023/24 period which cover operations from South Kesteven District Council buildings and vehicles.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Sustainable South Kesteven
Effective council

Which wards are impacted? All wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no direct finance or procurement implications from the report. A specific climate change reserve has been approved by Council that can be utilised to fund specific carbon and energy reduction initiatives. Any projects and initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and seek financial support are considered on a case by case basis.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 To demonstrate good governance and leadership on climate related issues in South Kesteven, it is important that Members are updated on the council's carbon emissions and on progress towards the declared carbon reduction target for council operations.

Completed by: Mandy Braithwaite, Legal Executive

Climate Change

- 1.3 The climate and carbon dashboard sets out the emissions reductions seen in the 2023/24 financial year. There is an overall reported reduction in the year of 25.27% against the baseline.

Completed by: Louise Case, Sustainability Project Support Officer

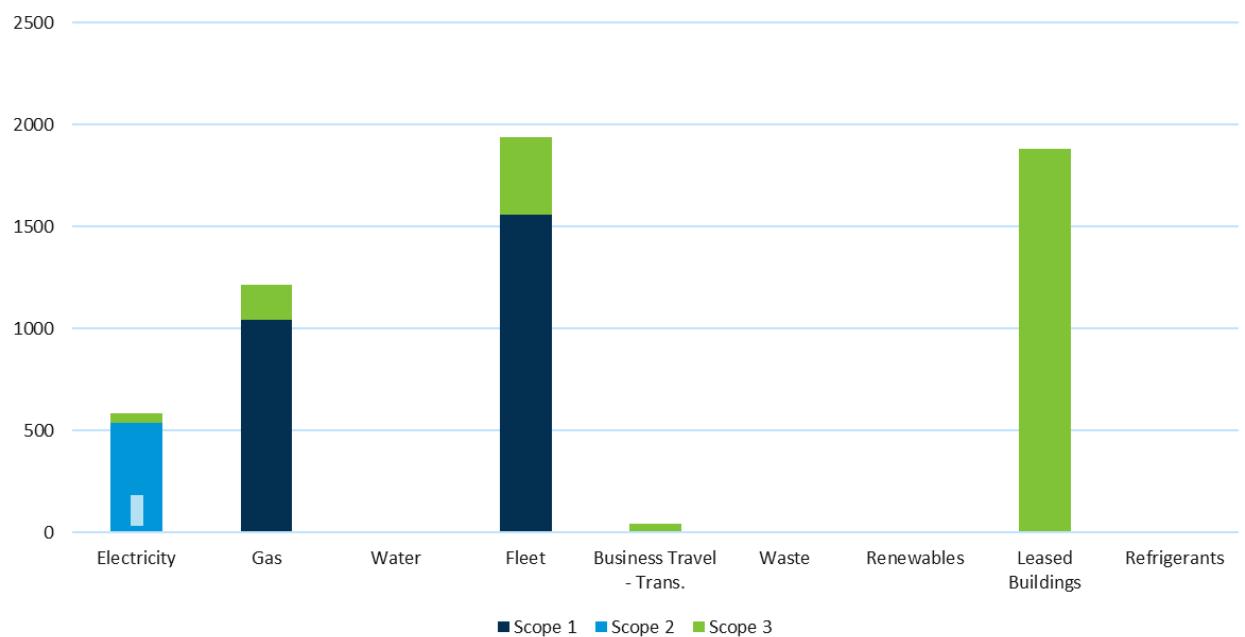
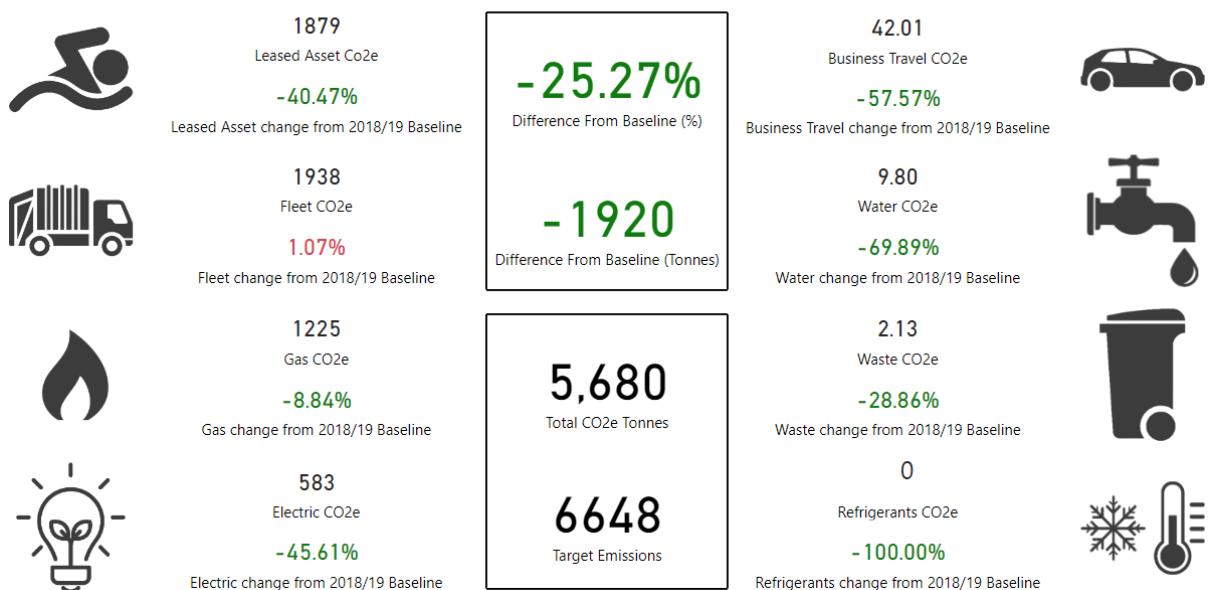
2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. South Kesteven District Council made a formal declaration of a climate emergency on 26 September 2019 with cross party support. Alongside this, the Council confirmed the political ambition to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2030, and to endeavour to become net-zero as soon as viable before 2050.

2.2. In order to monitor and manage the Council's carbon footprint, it is recommended to publish an (at least annual) update on reported carbon emissions. This carbon dashboard includes the full scope of South Kesteven District Council's carbon emissions for the 2023/24 financial year, against the Council's baseline year of 2018/19.

2.3. The 2023/24 financial year saw a decrease in carbon emissions of 25.27%, or an overall reduction of 1920 tonnes of carbon compared to the 2018/19 baseline. A breakdown of 2023/24 emissions can be seen below:

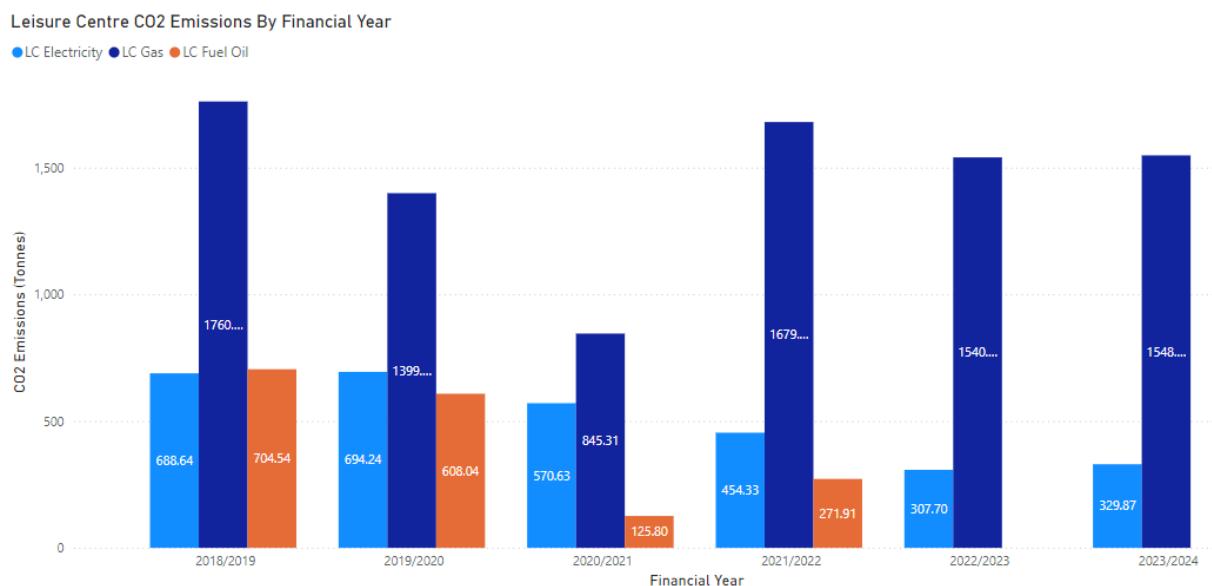
South Kesteven District Council Emissions 2023/2024



2.4. Scope 1 covers the direct emissions from sources that the Council owns or controls. For example, the emissions resulting from fuel use in the fleet are covered under scope 1. Scope 2 are the emissions that the Council indirectly cause, resulting from the production of the energy we purchase and use. The emissions resulting from the generation of the electricity that we use in our buildings would fall into this category. Scope 3 emissions include all sources not within the scope 1 and 2 boundaries. Scope 3 encompasses emissions that are not produced by the Council itself and are not the result of activities from Council owned or controlled assets. Instead, Scope 3 emissions occur throughout the lifetime of a product or process.

Leisure Centres

2.5. Leisure centres were responsible for 41% of carbon emissions in the Council's baseline. This has reduced to 33% for the 2023/24 reporting year as a result of the Deepings Leisure Centre returning to Lincolnshire County Council in July 2021. Since that time the Council has seen a sustained annual reduction in carbon emissions reported, as seen in the below graph:



2.6. Whilst the collective gas and electric consumption of the leisure centres has risen slightly since the last reporting year, marginal fluctuations are to be expected due to the operational nature of the facilities.

2.7. Several projects are underway to further decarbonise South Kesteven's leisure facilities. These changes include the installation of new pool covers to all pools in Grantham Meres, Stamford and Bourne Leisure Centres. The Council's own Climate Change Reserve facilitated the upgrade of the 3G pitch floodlighting to LED at the Grantham Meres Leisure Centre. Further to this, an upgrade of the lighting to LED in the small and large sports halls at Grantham Meres Leisure

Centre is set to further reduce the amount of carbon emitted for the upcoming 2024/25 financial year.

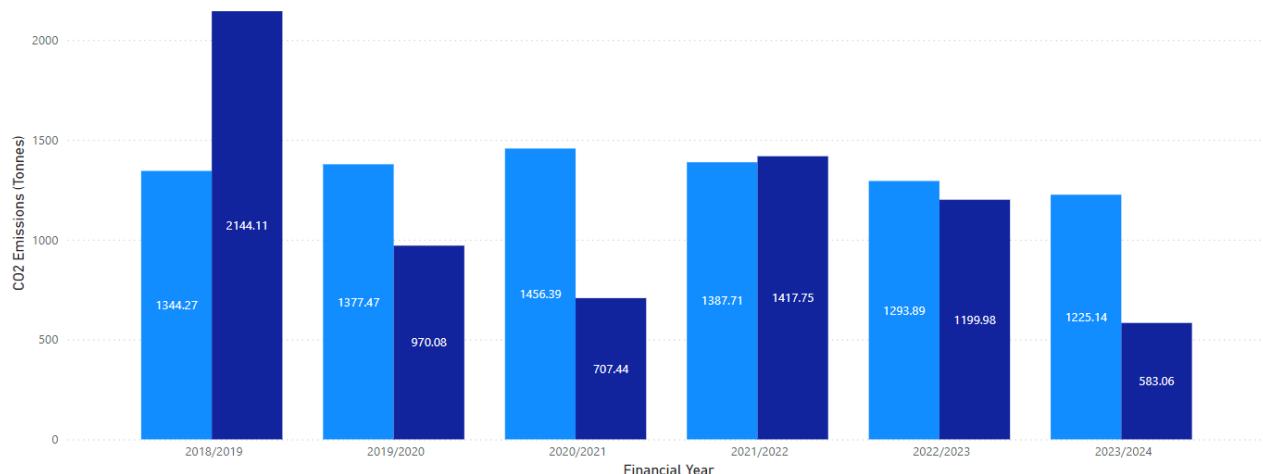
- 2.8. Funding was allocated via the Swimming Pool Support Fund (phase II capital), to purchase new pool covers at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre and will also see additional solar PV installed in late 2024.
- 2.9. An additional grant funding award via the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme phase 3c has allocated a budget of £4,080,000 to upgrade the existing heating system at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre to a new low-carbon system, which will dramatically reduce carbon emissions by a predicted 550 tonnes once complete.

Electricity Use

- 2.10. A significant reduction of over 45% from the baseline has been seen in the carbon emissions associated with electricity use in the Council's buildings. This can be attributed to both a reduction in total kilowatt hours (kWh) of energy consumed, as well as the national supply of electricity continuing to decarbonise as more renewable sources of energy contribute.
- 2.11. It is important to note that the 2023 generation emissions factor for grid electricity has increased from the 2022 figure. Despite this, the Council has seen an overall decrease of 129 tCO2e, or 18.12% in the overall tonnes of carbon emitted, since the previous 2022/23 reporting year.
- 2.12. Key changes include:
 - Deployment of energy efficient LED lanterns across the Council's Streetlights as part of an ongoing commitment to reduce energy consumption.
 - Upgrade of lighting in Guildhall Arts Centre to energy efficient LEDs
 - Upgrade of lighting in Wharf Road car park to energy efficient LEDs
- 2.13. The Council has a current contract for green electricity. This means that the electricity the Council receives is generated by either wind, wave or solar generation sources. These renewable forms of energy generation lead to lower greenhouse gas emissions than non-renewable fuel sources like natural gas.

SK Gas & Electric CO2 Emissions By Financial Year

● Gas ● Electricity



Gas Use

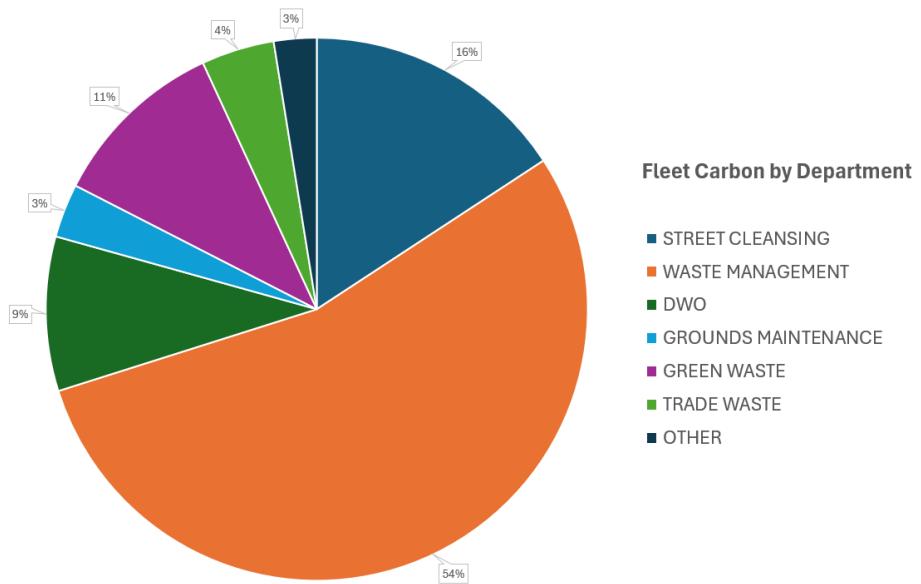
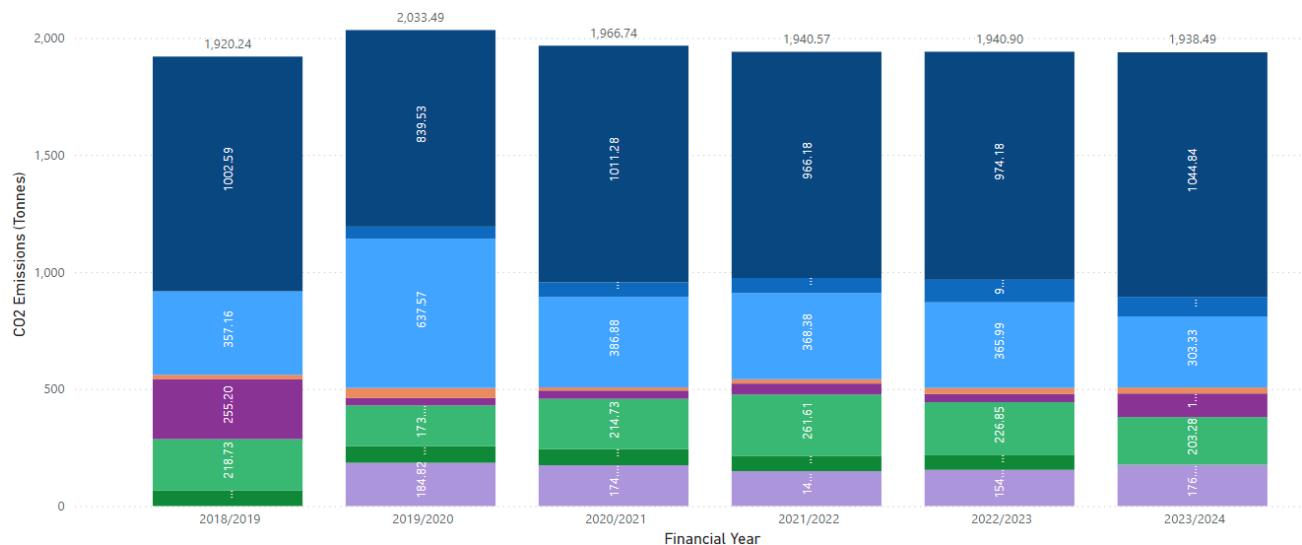
- 2.14. A reduction is also reported for gas used in Council buildings. Over the past year alone, the amount of carbon associated with gas consumption decreased by 85 tonnes since 2022/23, factoring an 8.84% reduction from the 2018/19 baseline.
- 2.15. Several key changes will continue to decrease gas consumption:
 - Relocation of the Council main offices to a significantly smaller, electrically heated facility at the start of 2023
 - Upgraded boilers installed at Guildhall Arts Centre
 - Completion of roof works at Stamford Arts Centre, improving efficiency of heating the building

Vehicle fleet

- 2.16. The carbon emissions from the operation of the Council's vehicle fleet remains consistently high, showing little change from the 2018/19 baseline. The fleet is now the largest contributor to the Council's carbon emissions, responsible for 34% of emitted carbon during the 2023/24 financial year.
- 2.17. Reporting includes a breakdown of Council department the vehicle is used within, with waste management and street cleaning responsible for most of the fuel consumption. Following the move of EnvironmentSK and its associated services to in house, these duties now sit under the provision of StreetScene. As a result of the partial restructure of the fleet, there has been a minor shift in the distribution of carbon emissions. An expected increase in fuel use over the past year can also be attributed to the greater distance covered during waste collection of the newly implemented purple bins.

Fleet CO2 Emissions By Financial Year

Department: DWO, EnvironmentSK, Green Waste, Other, Pool Cars, Street Cleaning, Trade Waste, Waste Management



Business travel

- 2.18. Business travel associated with staff and councillor movement in own vehicles has seen a significant reduction on the previous reporting year. The same pattern has been witnessed for staff travel via national rail. This downward trend is a direct result of the change of meetings and conferences to an online format. Not only has this had positive implications on the Council's carbon emissions but staff have also experienced greater connectivity with external stakeholders and the wider public sector.
- 2.19. Combined business travel accounted for 0.74% of the total carbon emissions for 2023/24. Collectively, this has resulted in a 57.57% reduction from the baseline.

Other categories

2.20. Refrigerants contribute to carbon emissions if they are seen to leak out of equipment or pipe work into the atmosphere. The Council can confirm that there has been no escape of refrigerants from internal systems in the 2023/24 reporting period. Therefore, there has been no carbon emissions reported for this category.

2.21. 2.13 tonnes of carbon was attributed to the waste category over the 2023/24 reporting period, demonstrating a 28.86% reduction from the baseline and a decrease of 0.9 tonnes since the last reporting year.

Moving forward

2.22. Through this update to its carbon emissions reporting, South Kesteven District Council has demonstrated its ongoing commitment to addressing the challenges posed by climate change, highlighting areas where improvement can still be made. Whilst some important reductions in carbon emissions have been seen in select categories, the Council should continue to look for further decarbonisation opportunities to ensure a downward trajectory towards the declared carbon reduction target of at least 30% by 2030.

2.23. With a further 4.73% reduction required to reach the Council's 2030 emissions target, upcoming decarbonisation and energy efficiency projects such as those at Grantham Meres Leisure Centre will contribute to significant carbon savings for the Council. Where streetlights were responsible for 4% of the carbon baseline, the ongoing Streetlights programme will also account towards the future change.

2.24. A summary of predicted carbon savings resulting from current or planned capital works can be seen below. On this basis, it is expected that South Kesteven District Council will exceed its 2030 carbon reduction target by the end of the 2026/27 financial year.

Energy project	Site/ building	Projected carbon saving*	Projected percentage reduction from baseline	Impacted reporting year
Streetlights upgrade to energy efficient LED units	SKDC operated streetlights	148 tonnes	1.95%	2025/26
Solar panel installation	Grantham Meres Leisure Centre	40 tonnes	0.53%	2025/26
Installation of an Air Source Heat Pump	Grantham Meres Leisure Centre	550 tonnes	7.24%	2026/27

2.25. *Additional upgrades will have a further impact on the carbon output of Council buildings. However, no accurate figure can be provided for the carbon savings associated with these measures. An update will follow for the 2024/25 reporting year.

- In Summer 2023, improvements at the South Kesteven Stadium Main Stand Plant Room saw two gas boilers upgraded alongside a Gas Fired Water heater. BMS Controls, pumps and new zoning of the heating system was installed on two circuits. This will increase boiler efficiency levels and help reduce power output in periods where heat is in low demand.
- In January 2024, upgrades were completed on three Gas Boilers and BMS Controls at the Bourne Leisure Centre Wet Side Plant Room. Similarly, an update to four boilers, pumps, BMS Controls and hot water calorifier was completed in March 2024 at the South Kesteven Community Access Point & Library.
- Upgrade of lighting to energy efficient LEDs at Wharf Road Car Park.
- Upgrade of lighting to energy efficient LEDs and boiler upgrade at the Guildhall Arts Centre.
- Completion of roof works to improve energy efficiency at Stamford Arts Centre.

2.26. Other projects that sit outside of the scope of the Council's annual carbon report, further demonstrate its commitment to reducing the district's wider environmental impact:

- Under the current Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Programme, the Council has upgraded many of its Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings with energy efficiency measures. These include upgrades such as the installation of solar PV arrays, cavity wall extractions and re-fills, loft insulation upgrades and ventilation measures. Whilst the majority of HRA properties are excluded from the Council's carbon reporting, as the Council is not directly responsible for the consumption of energy in tenanted dwellings, the completion of the SHDF Programme will have a significant impact on the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock. By targeting the lowest performing properties, the energy and carbon savings from upgrades will be significant and help to address issues of fuel poverty for tenants.
- The Home Energy Upgrade Scheme, comprised of two funding streams, offers a range of fully funded energy efficient retrofit home improvements to eligible homeowners in South Kesteven. The Home Energy Upgrade Scheme is from a consortium of councils which include City of Lincoln Council, North Kesteven District Council, South Kesteven District Council and West Lindsey District Council. The scheme helps residents living in homes with poor energy efficiency ratings of EPC band D or below who also have a low income of under £30,000 or receive means tested benefits. The scheme will deliver external wall insulation,

cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, solar panels and high heat retention electric storage heaters for properties that are suitable and fit the criteria.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The report is provided for information rather than decision. Members are asked to take note of the reported emissions and associated emission categories.

4. Other Options Considered

- 1.1 There is no statutory obligation to monitor or report on carbon emissions which arise from Council operations, nor to set or adhere to a reduction in carbon emissions. Nevertheless, regular review of carbon emissions is considered good practice to monitor progress against the Council's declared target to reduce carbon emissions.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The report is provided for information to track progress towards the Council's carbon reduction target.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1: Climate and carbon dashboard for 2023/24



South Kesteven District Council Carbon Emissions Tracker

Commentary :

This dashboard provides an overview of South Kesteven District Council's carbon emissions for the period of April 2023 - March 2024, including the use of gas and electricity in council owned buildings, emissions from the vehicle fleet and the operation of three Leisure Centres. Greater understanding of carbon emission changes is essential to track progress towards the Council's carbon reduction target of at least 30% by 2030 and to net zero carbon as soon as viable before 2050.

The 2023/24 financial year saw a decrease in carbon emissions of 25.27%, or an overall reduction of 1920 tonnes of carbon compared to the 2018/19 baseline.

A significant reduction of over 45% from the baseline has been seen in the carbon emissions associated with electricity use in the Council's buildings. This can be attributed to both a reduction in total kilowatt hours (kWh) of energy consumed, as well as the national supply of electricity continuing to decarbonise as more renewable sources of energy contribute. The Council has a current contract for green electricity. This means that the electricity the Council receives is generated by either wind, wave or solar generation sources.

A reduction is also reported for gas used in Council buildings. Over the past year alone, the amount of carbon associated with gas consumption decreased by 85 tonnes since 2022/23, factoring an 8.84% reduction from the 2018/19 baseline.

Whilst the collective gas and electric consumption of the leisure centres has risen slightly since the last reporting year, marginal fluctuations are to be expected due to the operational nature of the facilities.

⁸ The carbon emissions from the operation of the Council's vehicle fleet remains consistently high, showing little change from the 2018/19 baseline. The fleet is now the largest contributor to the Council's carbon emissions, responsible for 34% of emitted carbon during the 2023/24 financial year. Business travel associated with staff and councillor movement in own vehicles has seen a significant reduction on the previous reporting year as more meetings and conferences are now held online.

Whilst some important reductions in carbon emissions have been seen in select categories, the Council should continue to look for further decarbonisation opportunities to ensure a downward trajectory towards the declared carbon reduction target of at least 30% by 2030. With a further 4.73% reduction required to reach the Council's 2030 emissions target, upcoming decarbonisation and energy efficiency projects will contribute to significant carbon savings for the Council.

Data Quality Index :

Source	Frequency	Confidence
Electric	Quarterly	Green
Fleet	Quarterly	Green
Gas	Quarterly	Green
Green Waste	Annual	Orange
Leisure Centres	Variable	Green
Member Travel	Monthly	Green
Refrigerants	Annual	Green
Solar	Annual	Green
Staff Travel	Quarterly	Green
Waste	Quarterly	Orange
Water	Annual	Orange

Confidence Description

Green	High level of confidence in the data supplied.
Red	Low level of confidence in the data supplied. This may be incomplete or has not been effectively validated.
Orange	Moderate Level of confidence in the data. This may include estimated or proxy data.

South Kesteven District Council Emissions 2023/2024



1879
Leased Asset CO2e
-40.47%
Leased Asset change from 2018/19 Baseline



1938
Fleet CO2e
1.07%
Fleet change from 2018/19 Baseline



1225
Gas CO2e
-8.84%
Gas change from 2018/19 Baseline



583
Electric CO2e
-45.61%
Electric change from 2018/19 Baseline

-25.27%
Difference From Baseline (%)

- 1920
Difference From Baseline (Tonnes)

42.01
Business Travel CO2e
-57.57%
Business Travel change from 2018/19 Baseline



9.80
Water CO2e
-69.89%
Water change from 2018/19 Baseline



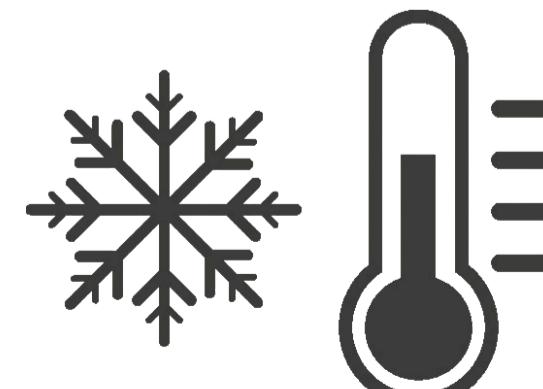
2.13
Waste CO2e
-28.86%
Waste change from 2018/19 Baseline

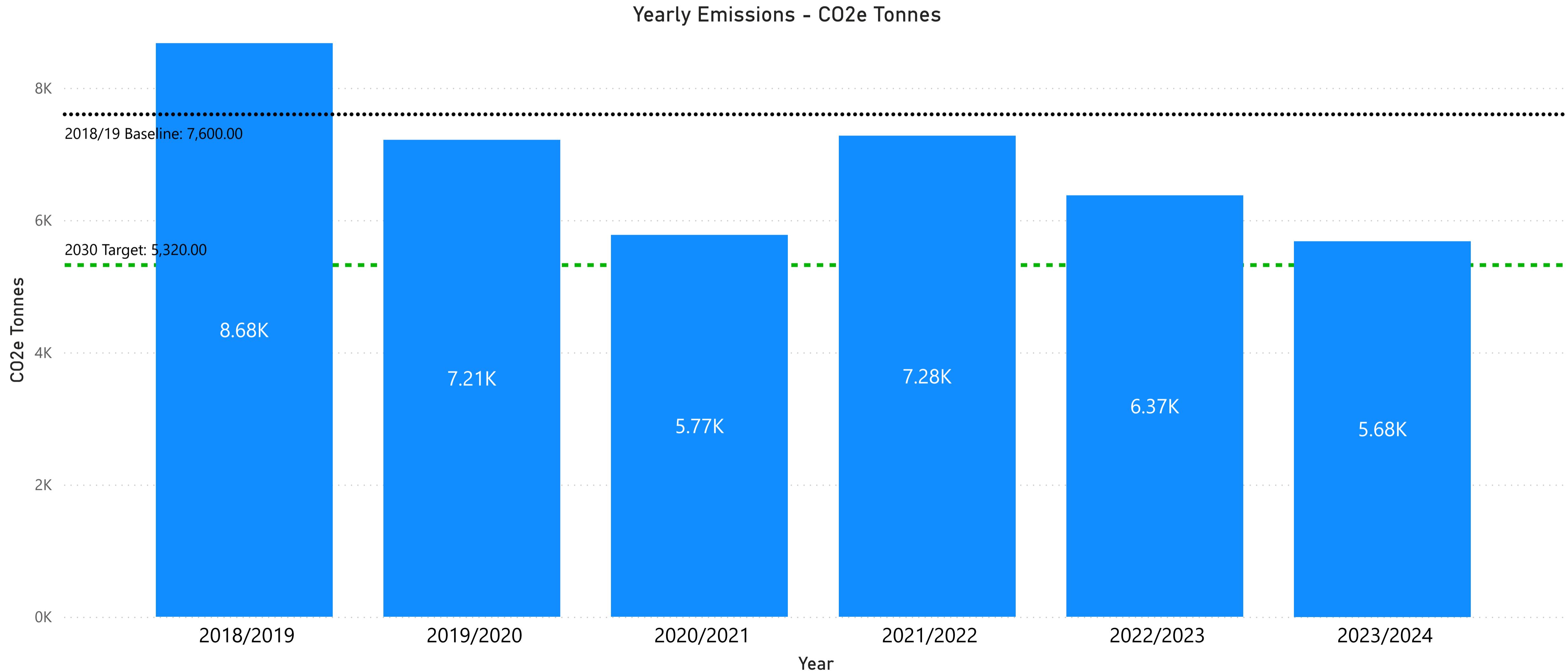


5,680
Total CO2e Tonnes

6648
Target Emissions

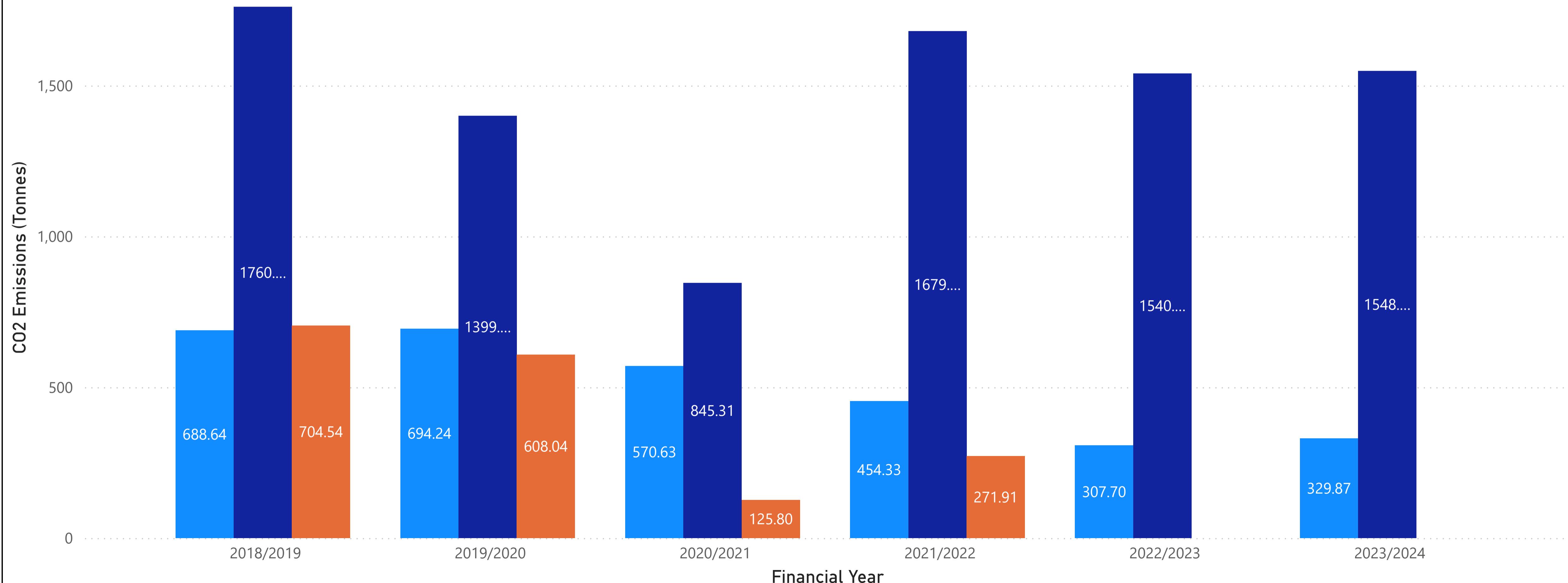
0
Refrigerants CO2e
-100.00%
Refrigerants change from 2018/19 Baseline





Leisure Centre CO2 Emissions By Financial Year

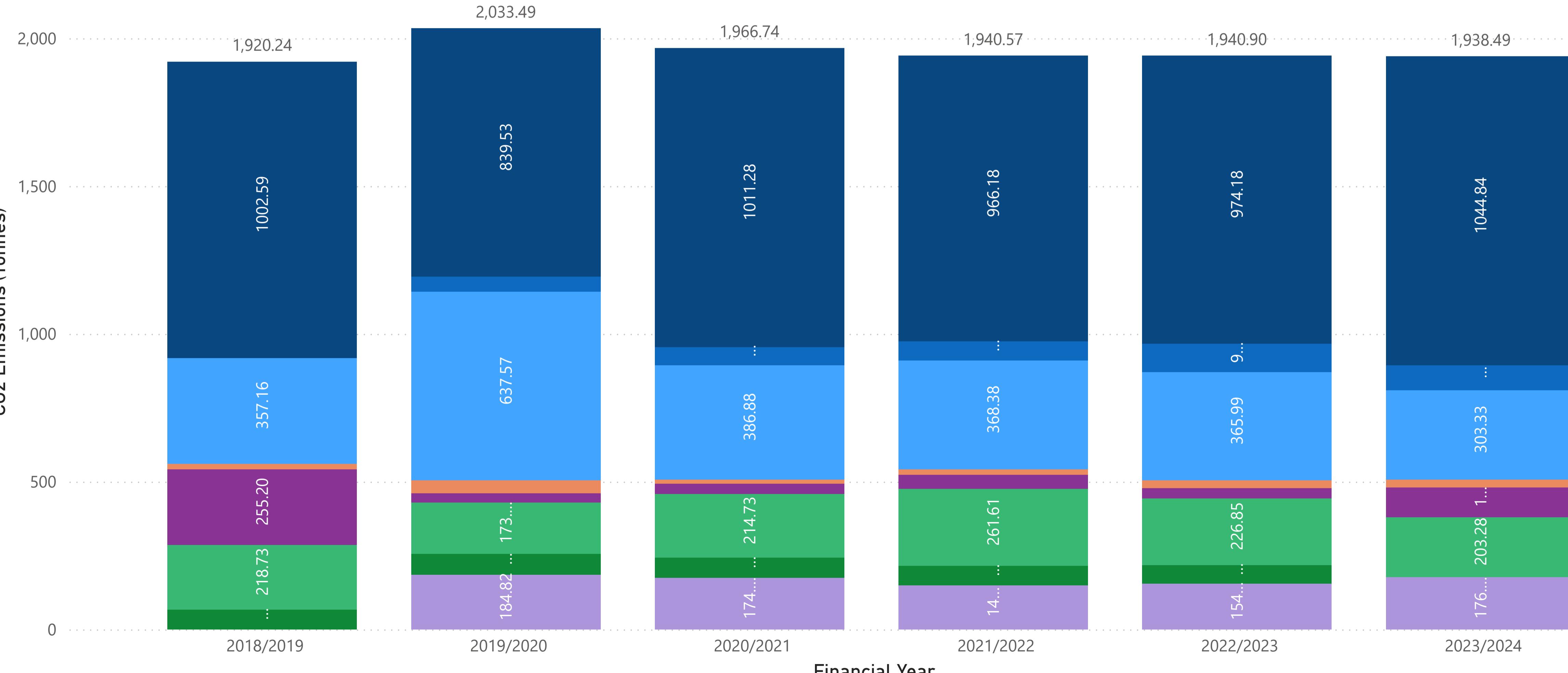
● LC Electricity ● LC Gas ● LC Fuel Oil





Fleet CO2 Emissions By Financial Year

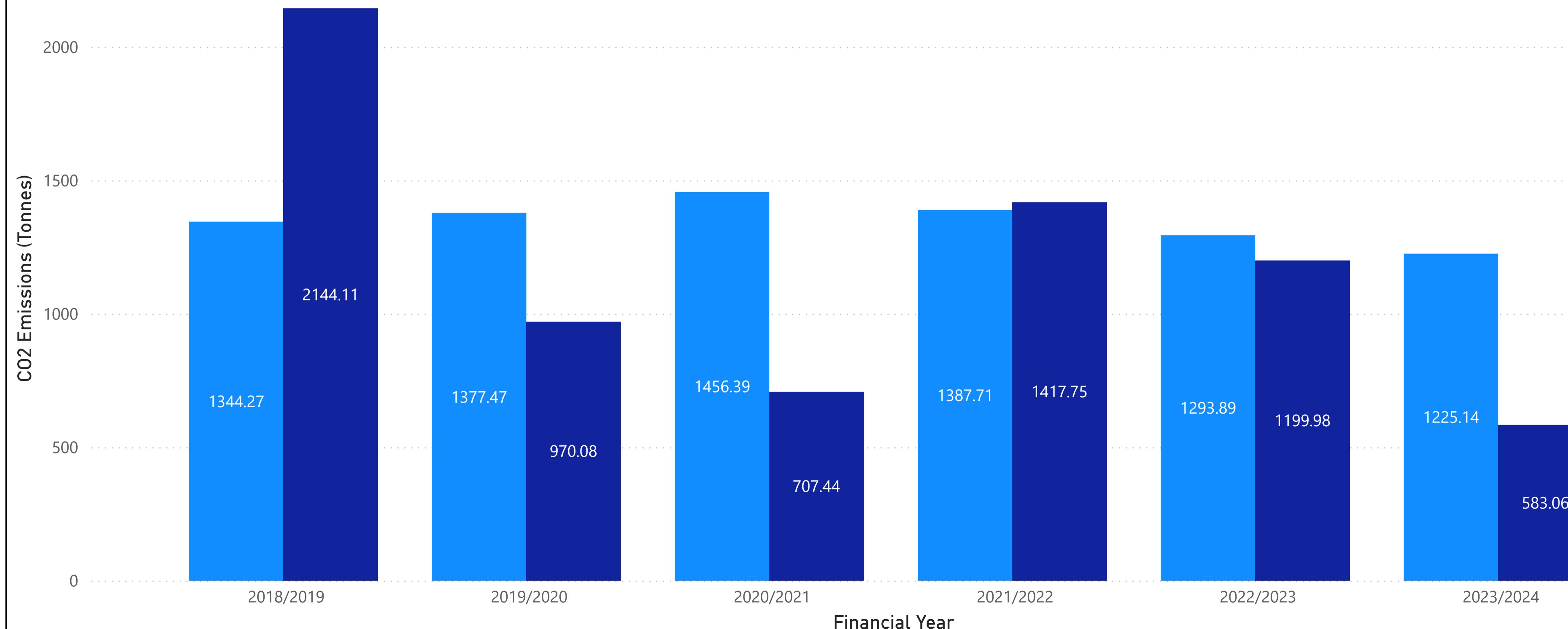
Department ● DWO ● EnvironmentSK ● Green Waste ● Other ● Pool Cars ● Street Cleaning ● Trade Waste ● Waste Management





SK Gas & Electric CO2 Emissions By Financial Year

● Gas ● Electricity

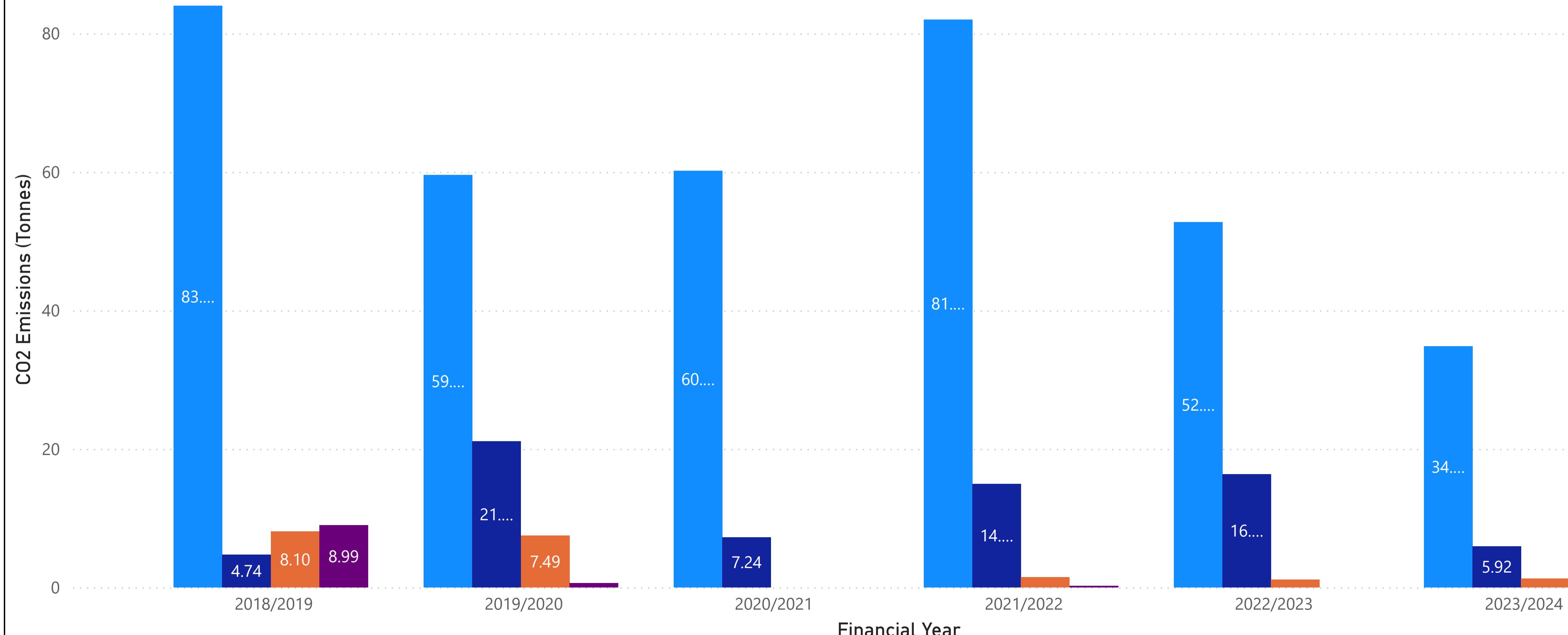




South Kesteven District Council Carbon Emissions Tracker - Staff & Councillor Travel

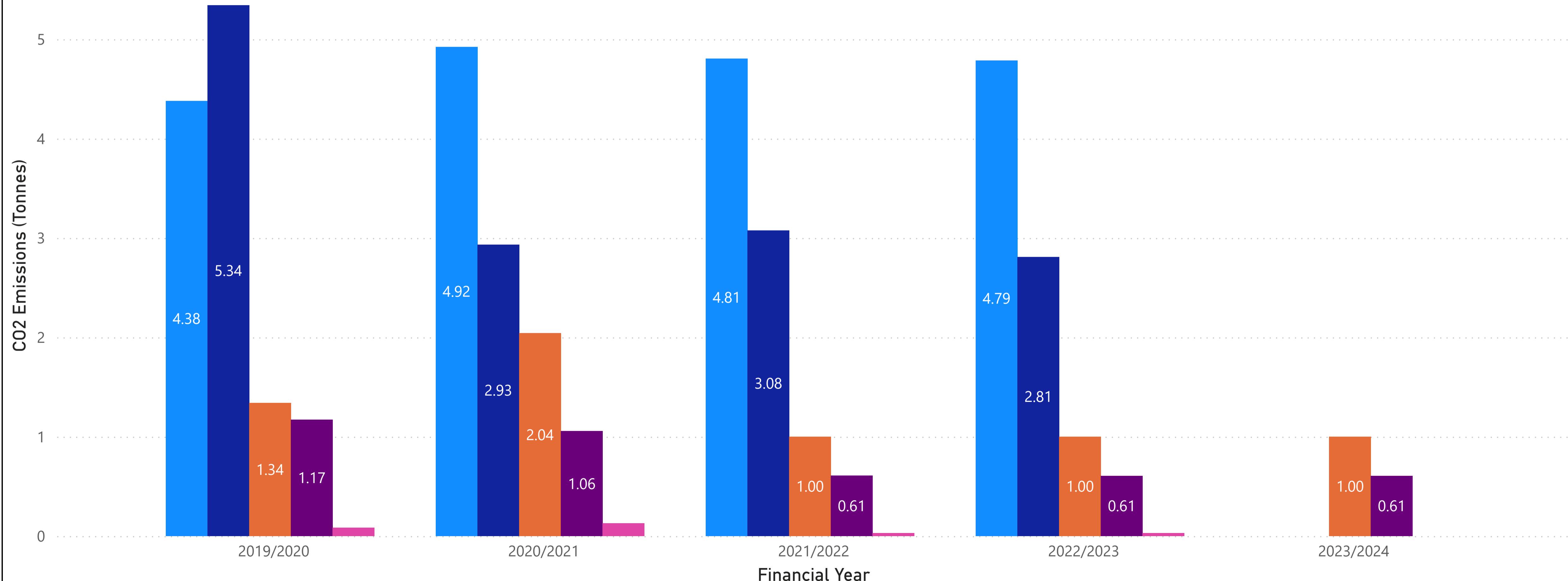
Staff Travel CO2 Emissions By Financial Year

● Staff Travel ● Member Travel ● Staff Train Travel ● ISK Travel



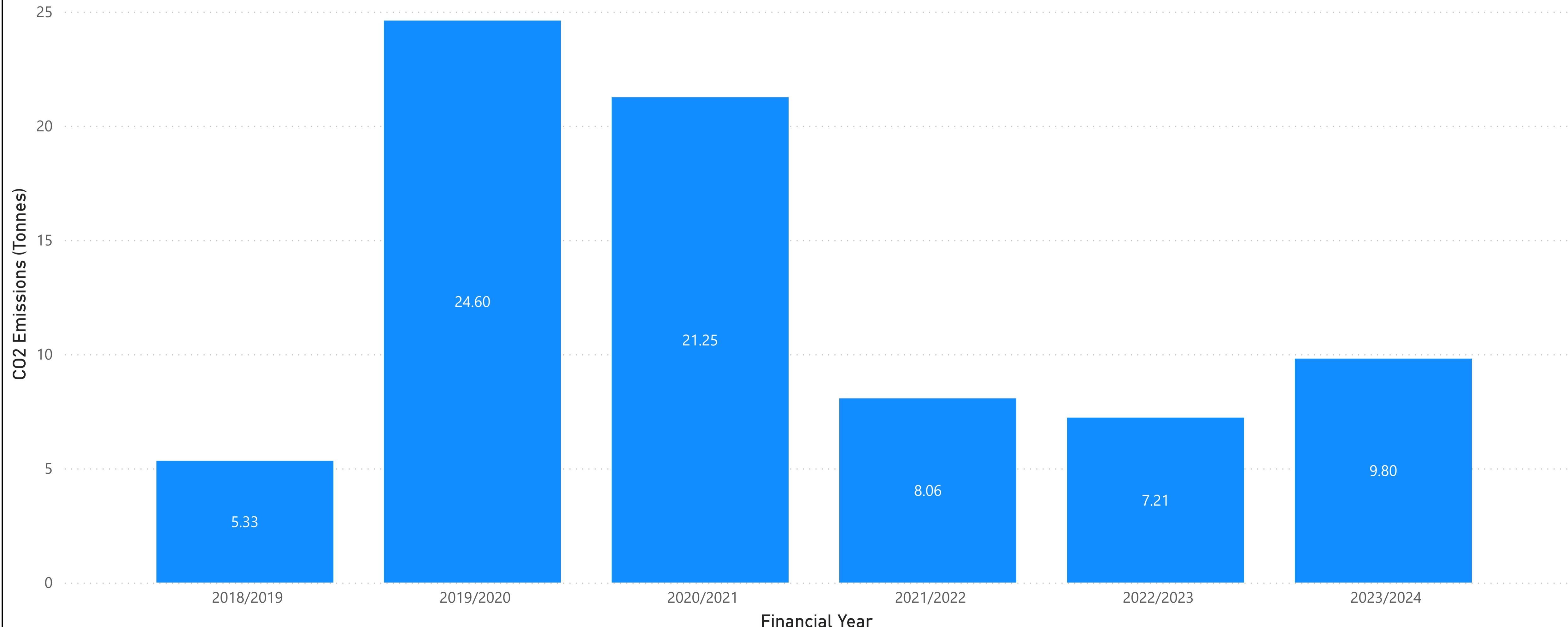
ESK CO2 Emissions By Financial Year

● ESK Gas ● ESK Electric ● ESK Waste ● ESK Green Waste ● ESK Water



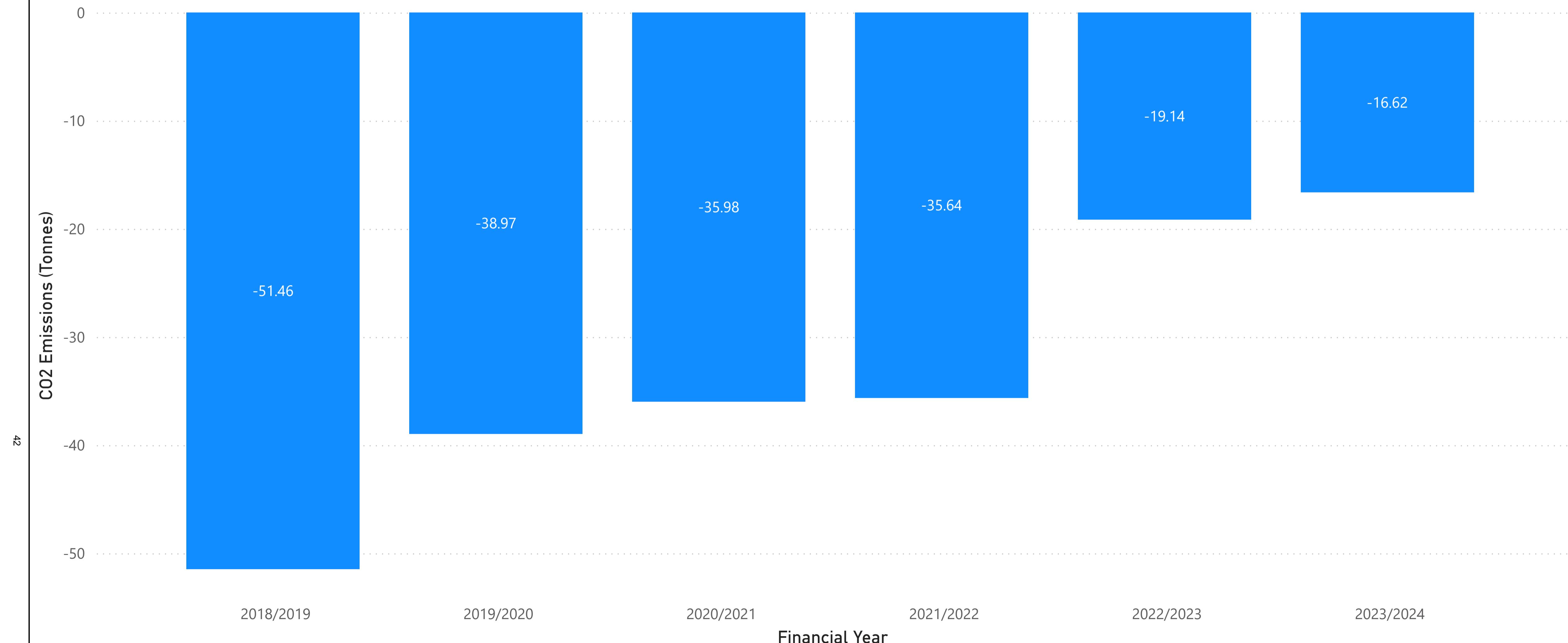


Water CO2 Emissions by Financial Year





SK Equivalent Tonnes of CO2 saved through use of Solar Power





SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 7 October 2024

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Expansion of the Bulky Waste Collection Service

Report Author

Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services

 kayleigh.boasman@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide an overview of the opportunities and associated risks of expanding the current bulky waste collection service. The bulky waste collection service is experiencing persistent high demand, and this report highlights the financial viability of introducing an additional vehicle and crew.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the business case for the additional bulky waste collection vehicle and crew and express a view on whether the proposal should go forward for inclusion into the budget setting process.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? **No**

What are the relevant corporate priorities? **Sustainable South Kesteven**

Which wards are impacted? **All Wards**

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1. The current high demand for the bulky waste collection service demonstrates a positive business case for an expansion to the service. However, as with any commercial venture, there is a risk that demand could fall before there has been a positive payback to the financial outlay. The high demand for this service has been sustained and therefore this risk can be managed. It is recommended that a budget proposal is put forward during the 2025/26 budget setting in order that this proposal can be taken forward.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2. There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from the report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

Climate Change

- 1.3. The bulky waste collection service offers residents a convenient collection option for large household items.

Completed by: Louise Case, Sustainability Project Support Officer

2. Background to the Report

Background

- 2.1. South Kesteven District Council operate a bulky waste collection service which is made up of 1 x 7.5 tonne cage vehicle, plus 2 operatives. The service operates 5 days per week and there are on average 21 booking slots available per day with specific item types collected on each day e.g. White goods / mattresses / electrical items. Over 400 bulky items are collected each month.
- 2.2. Bulky waste collections must be booked through the online booking system in Meritec, either by completing a booking online on SKDC's website themselves or assisted by a customer service advisor. Bulky items that are accepted are in a clear drop-down menu, and include white goods, sofas, mattresses and other large furniture items regularly found in a household.
- 2.3. The bulky waste booking system allows for three separate items to be booked per slot. Therefore with 21 daily slots available, it is possible to collect a maximum of 63 items per day.
- 2.4. Fridges, which require separate disposal, can only be booked on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays due to being a hazardous waste type and capacity limitations on the vehicle.
- 2.5. To maximise efficiency, available booking slots are displayed depending on postcode. The current collection schedule is as follows:
 - Monday: Grantham and villages north, up to 8 fridge slots,
 - Tuesday: Grantham and villages south, up to 8 fridge slots,
 - Wednesday: Stamford, Bourne, Deepings and villages south, up to 8 fridge slots,
 - Thursday: Stamford and villages south, and
 - Friday: Bourne, Deepings and villages south.

Capacity Restrictions

- 2.6. The current service is experiencing prolonged high demand and as there is only one vehicle and crew, there is no additional capacity within the service area to provide additional resources. Although support can be provided on a short-term basis, this is often done through overtime on a Saturday.
- 2.7. Furthermore, the geographical restrictions of the booking system also limit customer access. A particular capacity issue is fridge bookings in the Southern areas of the district which can result in an 8-week wait for an available slot.

- 2.8. On average the Council collects approximately 420 separate bulky waste bookings of up to 3 items monthly, on a paid for basis, which provided an income of around £90,000 in 2023/24.
- 2.9. Prior to 2020, residents were only able to book a collection up to 6 weeks in advance. However, since the Covid pandemic lockdown restrictions were imposed in 2020 there has been a higher demand for the service. As such, residents can currently book a bulky waste collection up to 8 weeks in advance.

Additional Resource Costs

- 2.10. By investing in a second vehicle it would reduce the booking timescales, increase annual revenue and provide vital support for our residents who are unable to dispose of their items elsewhere. Another vehicle will allow the collection of fridges on every day of the week, significantly reducing wait times for fridge collections for residents in the South of the District.
- 2.11 Table 1 highlights the costs associated with establishing a second bulky waste collection round.

Table 1: Bulky Waste Collection Operating Costs

Initial Capital Costs	Annual (£)	One Off (£)
Vehicle purchase		47,940
Total Capital Costs		47,940
Direct Operating Costs		
Driver – full time	39,643	
Loader – full time	32,306	
Associated vehicle costs	8,516	
Fuel	7,695	
Total Operating Costs	88,160	

- 2.12. Based on the figures in Table 1, the total direct operating costs are around £88,160 per year. A fully subscribed service has a potential income of around £90,000 per year. These financial margins are narrow and as with any commercial offering there is a risk that the demand will fall away over time. Table 2 shows the potential income generation by level of subscription; the level of subscription required to cover the operating costs would be lower if charges for the service were to be increased.

Table 2: Potential Income Generation by Subscription Levels

Second Bulky Waste Collection Crew at % capacity of bookings	Annual Income (based on current fees)	Annual Income (based on £2 increase in fee for first item)
85% capacity	£76,532	£83,354

95% capacity	£85,536	£93,160
100% capacity	£90,038	£98,063

2.13. Although Table 2 highlights that a high subscription level, or increased fees, would be required to cover the service costs, it should be noted that the resource could be redeployed to other tasks if there is spare capacity. This would include bin deliveries.

Opportunities and Risks

2.14. Table 3 highlights the key opportunities and risks associated with rolling out the service.

Table 3: Opportunities and Risks

Opportunity	Risk
Potential market: Currently, there is a high demand for this service and up to 8-week wait time for the service.	Financial risk: There is a risk that the costs of delivering the service will not be covered by the income generated.
Customer service: Improved service delivery times and more availability for the collection of white goods. The bulky waste collection service provides essential support to residents who are unable to transport large items to waste sites.	Competition: There will be other waste collection companies looking to collect this waste who will be able to offer more flexible pricing.

3. Key Considerations

3.1. Without the additional vehicle and crew, the service area will not be able to reduce the current wait times for the service. There is a risk that residents would then need to find other ways of disposing of bulky waste items and this may present an opportunity for illegal waste operators.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1. The other option considered is to do nothing and leave the service as it is now. There is a risk that this will leave residents with limited options for disposing of their bulky items and may result in an increase in fly tipping.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1. It is recommended that the committee consider the business case for the additional bulky waste collection vehicle and crew and express a view on whether

the proposal should go forward for inclusion into the budget setting process. By investing in a second vehicle there would be a reduction in the booking timescales and an increased ability to provide vital support for residents who are unable to dispose of their items elsewhere. Another vehicle will allow the collection of fridges on every day of the week, significantly reducing wait times for fridge collections for residents in the South of the District.



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 7 October 2024

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Commercial Waste Food Collections

Report Author

Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services

 kayleigh.boasman@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide an overview of the opportunities and associated risks of expanding the current commercial waste collection service to include separate food waste collections. Under the Environment Act 2021, it has been mandated that businesses must separate their food waste for collection. A financial appraisal and risk assessment have been undertaken to assess the feasibility of this opportunity.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the financial implications of this opportunity and support the conclusion that introducing a commercial food waste collection service is not financially viable at this time.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Sustainable South Kesteven
Enabling economic opportunities

Which wards are impacted? All Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 This report sets out a full financial appraisal with respect to providing a food waste collection service to local businesses and the conclusion reached is that at the present time It would create an operating deficit. Therefore, the recommendation is not to proceed but keep this opportunity under review.

Completed by: (insert name and job title)

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report, with reference to the legislative framework included in the body of the report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

Climate Change

- 1.3 The Environment Act offers new powers to set new binding targets, including for air quality, water, biodiversity, and waste reduction. The new policies outlined in this report regarding waste would, once implemented, support the improved recyclability of materials and the move towards a circular economy.

Completed by: Louise Case, Sustainability Project Support Officer

2. Background to the Report

Background

2.1. The Environment Act 2021 (the Act) introduced several changes to the way local authorities are required to collect household and business waste. One of the biggest changes mandated by the Act, is the separate collection of food waste. Whilst for household waste the Act mandates collections start by 31st March 2026, it outlines two different deadlines for commercial waste. These are:

- 31st March 2025 for all businesses with over 10 employees,
- 31st March 2027 for businesses with 10 or fewer employees (microbusinesses).

2.2. Currently, the Council's trade waste service collects residual waste (this includes food) and dry mixed recycling (DMR); the service does not offer a separate food waste collection and there is no capacity within the current service to offer this.

2.3. The current trade waste service is performing strongly; there has been year on year income growth and the current customer base is around 746 customers with an annual revenue of £709,000 (2023/24). There are approximately 4,705 businesses within the district, and this gives the Council's trade waste collection service a 15.9% share of the market.

2.4. This report outlines the opportunity for the Council's trade waste service to expand to include food waste collections and provide a financial assessment of the opportunity.

2.5. It should be noted that it is mandated that businesses arrange for separate food waste collections in-line with the deadlines highlighted in 2.1, it is not mandated that the Council (or any other waste collection service) must offer this service. Thus, if the Council choose not to expand their service to include food waste collections, there will be other companies offering this service and businesses within the district will be able to dispose of their food waste through these channels.

3. Key Considerations

Trade Food Waste Collection – Opportunities and Costs

3.1. An analysis of the businesses within the district has highlighted that around 20% of the 4,705 registered businesses are food outlets and therefore will be required to separate their food waste for collection by either 31st March 2025 or 2027 (depending on size).

3.2. Analysis of the Council's Trade Waste customer base has highlighted that the service currently has 746 customers, of these 175 (23.5%) are food outlets,

however, only 27 (3.6%) are estimated to have more than 10 employees. This means that, for 96.4% of the current customer base, there is either no requirement for a separate food waste collection or there will be no requirement to collect food waste until 31st March 2027. These figures indicate that there will be a small market for separate food waste collections by the 2025 deadline, but a larger market available by the 2027 deadline.

3.3. There would be significant costs associated with setting up the service. Initial cost estimates suggest that the annual operating cost of the service would be £208,039.33 per annum. Table 1 shows a breakdown of this figure.

Table 1: Projected Commercial Food Waste Service Annual Operating Costs

Operating Cost Description	Annual Cost (£)
Driver - full time	39,000.00
Overtime / Cover	5,750.00
Sales & Back Office	35,333.33
Disposal (forecast £20 pt)	32,256.00
2nd Lorry (£100k initial cost over 5 years)	20,000.00
Vehicle Repairs	15,000.00
Vehicle Tyres	2,500.00
Vehicle Depreciation	20,400.00
Total Transport Expenses (Fuel 150 miles @ £150 per day)	37,800.00
Annual operating cost	208,039.33
Estimated reduction in general waste tonnage charge for existing rounds (see 2.10)	59,352.80
Annual operating costs (inclusive of reduction in disposal fee)	148,686.47

3.4. A further consideration when setting food waste collection fees, is the potential financial savings which can be achieved when removing food waste from the residual waste stream. Based on estimates of the current level of food waste within the commercial residual stream, it is estimated that around £59,352 p/a could be saved on disposal costs. These financial savings are linked to the cost of waste disposal – when mixed with residual waste it costs around £114 per tonne for food waste disposal, if the food waste is separated and sent for anaerobic digestion the cost is around £20 per tonne. The £20/tonne is currently an estimate, and this may change once the food waste collections are mandated. If the £59,352 disposal fee savings are deducted from the annual operating cost shown in Table 1, there would be an annual estimated operating cost of £148,686.47 (in addition to the initial capital costs).

3.5. Initial capital investment would also be required for the specialist food waste collection vehicle; these are currently retailing at around £100,000 per vehicle depending on type required (the type of vehicle required will be linked to the disposal tipping specifications).

3.6. Unlike domestic collections, which will be predominantly funded by new burden funding, commercial food waste collections will not receive additional funding. Therefore, the costs of running the service will need to be covered by the customers. Currently, it is difficult to estimate what the cost per collection will be. However, Table 2 provides an estimate of projected operating costs and income for year one *based on a fully subscribed service*.

Table 2: Projected Operating Costs and Income for Year 1

Operational Costs	Annual Cost (£)
Annual operating costs (inclusive of reduction in disposal fee)	148,686.47
Income (existing switch to food @ 80 bins per day)*	171,360.00
Estimated loss on existing general bin size Y1	11,229.00
Year 1 forecast surplus	11,444.47

*pricing calculation based on trade waste pricing matrix and WRAP guidance

3.7. Whilst Table 2 shows a potential surplus, this is based on a fully subscribed service, and this would not be attainable by the 2025 deadline. The projections used in Table 2 would only be likely once the mandated collections are extended to all businesses in 2027.

3.8. The information within this section highlights that there is a small market for commercial food waste collections, however, this opportunity comes with a significant financial requirement. At the current time, it is not known what proportion of the food retailers within the district would be impacted by the 31st March 2025 deadline and without a fully subscribed service, the service would not cover its operating costs.

3.9. The next section provides an overview of the opportunities and risks associated with the decision to collect food waste from commercial premises.

Opportunities and Risks

3.10. Table 3 highlights the key opportunities and risks associated with rolling out the service.

Table 3: Opportunities and Risks

Opportunity	Risk
Potential market: Early access to the potential market – as the service is newly mandated there	Financial risk: There is a risk that the initial cost of setting up the service will not be covered by the income generated.

will be customers actively seeking this service to ensure compliance.	
	<p>Competition: There will be other waste collection companies looking to collect this waste who will be able to offer more flexible pricing.</p>
	<p>Loss of custom: 3.6% of the current customer base have been identified as needing the service by 31st March 2025, if these customers want all their waste to be collected by the same organisation, we may lose them to competitors who will offer the service.</p>
	<p>Storage of vehicle: The Operators Licence for Mowbeck Depot only allows for 38 vehicles, currently there are 37 vehicles registered on the licence.</p>

- 3.11. Based on the information outlined in Table 3, there are significant financial risks alongside the other risks identified which confirm that the Council should not introduce a commercial food waste collection service by 31st March 2025.
- 3.12. However, as the 2027 deadline approaches and 20% of the businesses within the district are mandated to separate their food waste for collection (including 175 current customers), there will be a stronger case for funding this service (see Table 2).

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The following options were considered:

- Introduce the service in line with the 2025 deadline – this would be costly and due to the small customer base; the service is unlikely to cover its costs.
- Do nothing – the Council's trade waste collection service would continue with only residual and recycling collections. The Council is not mandated to offer this service and there are other waste collection companies who will offer this service within this district.

5. Appendices

- 5.1. Appendix 1: Financial Breakdown of Commercial Food Waste Collections

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Appendix 1: Financial Breakdown of Commercial Food Waste Collections

Capital Costs

Vehicle estimate - £100,000

Caddies – Requirement TBC

Operating Costs

Direct Operating Costs	Annual
Driver - full time	£39,000.00
Overtime / Cover	£5,750.00
Sales & Back Office	£35,333.33
Disposal (forecast £20 pt)	£32,256.00
2nd Lorry (£100k initial cost over 5 years)	£20,000.00
Vehicle Repairs	£15,000.00
Vehicle Tyres	£2,500.00
Vehicle Depreciation	£20,400.00
Total Transport Expenses (Fuel 150 miles @ £150 per day)	£37,800.00
Annual Operating Cost	£208,039.33
Existing switch to food @ 80 bins per day	£171,360.00
Potential loss on existing general bin size Y1	£11,229.00
Surplus Y1	-£47,908.33
Reduction in general waste tonnage charge for existing rounds @ 676 tonnes (based on 24/25 gate fee)	£59,352.80
Total surplus Y1	£11,444.47

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Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 7 October 2024

Report of Councillor Rhys Baker
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Waste

Rewilding – Ambitions

Report Author

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place

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Purpose of Report

To provide an update in relation to South Kesteven District Council's rewilding ambitions.

Recommendations

In consideration of this report the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

1. Endorse the Council's plan to adopt rewilding initiatives on the trial sites which have been identified.
2. Recommend that the learning taken from the trial is captured and used to inform future rewilding plans across the district.
3. Agree to receive a future report on the outcome of the trial and future rewilding plans and initiatives.

Decision Information	
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting Communities Sustainable South Kesteven
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from the introduction of the trial rewilding schemes identified within this report.
- 1.2 Should rewilding schemes be more widely implemented, it will be necessary to identify any costs in relation to any additional equipment which may be required as well as any potential savings to ensure these are reflected as part of future budget setting.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.3 There are no legal or governance implications arising from this report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Climate Change

- 1.4 The further introduction of rewilding schemes across the district presents an opportunity for the Council to increase biodiversity and work towards building a more resilient landscape to offset the impacts of climate change.

1.5 As well as the benefits in terms of biodiversity, rewilding is a nature-based solution to reducing the impact of greenhouse gasses on the environment as it presents an increased opportunity for the storage of carbon dioxide in vegetation and soil.

Completed by: Louise Case, Sustainability Project Support Officer

2. Background to the Report

2.1. The natural environment is facing a triple threat in terms of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. To combat this in September 2019 South Kesteven District Council formally declared a climate emergency and acknowledged the need to accelerate reductions in carbon emissions.

2.2. The South Kesteven District Council Corporate Plan (2024 – 2027) sets out the Council’s mission to meet the challenge of climate change and ensure a clean, green and healthy natural and built environment for present and future generations. This is under-pinned by an ambition to protect and enhance the natural environment and wildlife habitats, working to actively restore and rehabilitate damaged ecosystems.

2.3. A recent study by the Wildlife Trust has suggested that 90% of lowland grassland has been lost in the 20th century. This has contributed to a loss or reduction in insects, wildlife and grassland species which are an integral part of the UK’s ecological infrastructure.

2.4. Actively rewilding areas of land provides the opportunity to restore healthy ecosystems, improve biodiversity and reverse the loss of wildlife.

2.5. The area of South Kesteven covers 365 square miles and the Council delivers the maintenance of all Council owned land through its Street Scene team. In addition to General Fund and Housing Revenue Account open space, this includes the maintenance of three parks in Grantham, Grantham Cemetery, closed churchyards and sports pitches. In addition, the Street Scene team are contracted by Lincolnshire County Council to maintain the grass verges in Grantham.

2.6. This presents an opportunity for the Council to implement rewilding initiatives across the open public spaces it is responsible for. As well as contributing to the Council’s carbon efficiency targets this may also reduce the costs associated with maintaining these areas in the longer term.

2.7. When developing the Council’s plans for rewilding it must be recognised that the public open space the Council maintains is used by residents in different ways, including dog walking and for informal leisure and physical activity pursuits. The benefits of rewilding must be balanced with local community need to avoid negative perception and publicity.

2.8 The introduction of wildflower meadows on selected areas as a trial presents an opportunity to test the appetite of residents and raise awareness of the benefits of rewilding. The learning from the pilot scheme can also be evaluated to form part of the Council's future ambitions.

Existing Rewilding Sites:

2.9 There are pre-existing sites and examples of successful rewilding schemes across the district on land owned by the Council. This includes the following:

- A wildflower meadow has been established at Tattershall Drive, Market Deeping. This land is owned by the Council and maintained under licence by Deepings Lions.
- Queen Elizabeth Park is owned and maintained by the Council as a nature park and incorporates meadow and woodland areas. This was complemented and enhanced as part of the Witham/Slea Blue Green Corridor project which restored and improved the ecology of the River Witham and surrounding riverbanks and nearby green spaces.
- As part of the Blue Green Corridor work an area of meadow was incorporated into Dysart Park.
- The Heroes Orchard is adjacent to Wyndham Park and incorporates meadow and fruit trees, the area is maintained by volunteers.

Rewilding Trial Sites

2.10 Potential trial sites have been identified across the district where elements of rewilding can be incorporated. It is proposed to complement the rewilding schemes with the addition of wildflowers to ensure the areas are attractive from Spring 2025.

2.11 It is proposed that the trial sites will be publicised to ensure residents are aware of the benefits of rewilding and that the learning be captured to inform future plans for rewilding across the district. This will include notices and signage including a QR code which links to a specific webpage on the Council's website.

Bourne –Beaufort Drive/Rochester Drive:



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Beaufort Drive Bourne

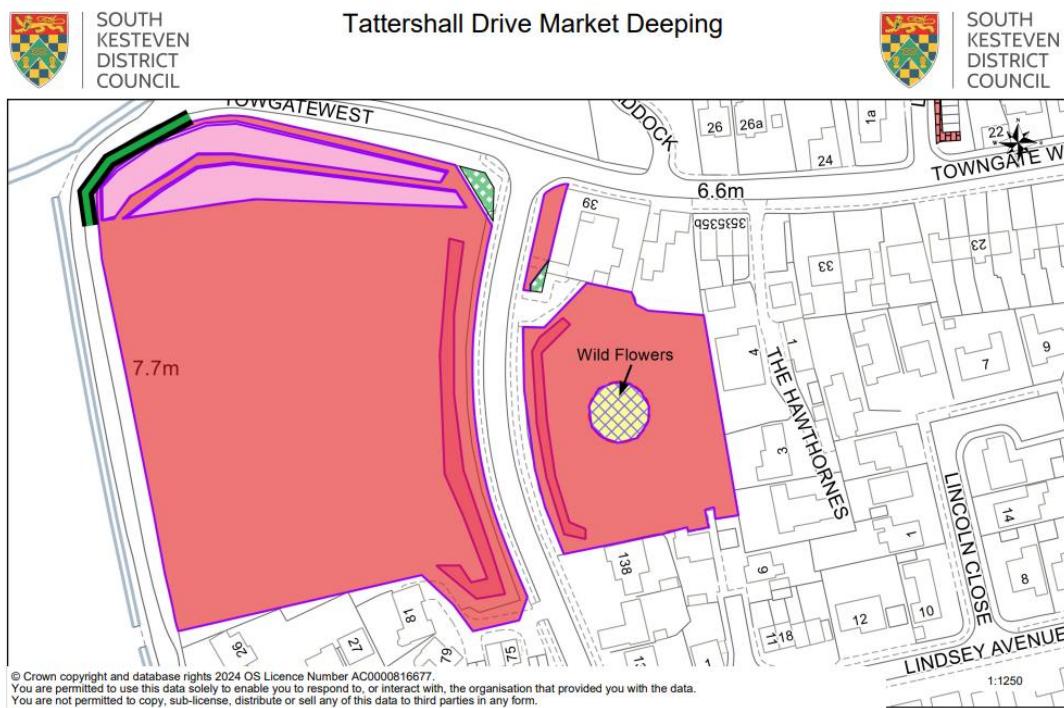


SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



- 2.12 The ground conditions in this area are susceptible to water logging. This makes the area ideal for focusing on the promotion of wetland wildflowers, and the presence of nearby water bodies supports the establishment of a diverse wetland habitat.
- 2.13 Should the trial be successful and no significant maintenance issues or negative public perception be identified, there is a potential to expand the rewilding initiative into adjacent green spaces to further enhance local biodiversity and create a substantial wildlife corridor.

Market Deeping – Tattershall Drive:



2.14 To complement the wildflower meadow located across the road it is proposed to plant wildflowers on a centre circle of Tattershall Drive to create a vibrant and natural habitat for bees, butterflies and other pollinators.

Stamford – Green Lane/Corporation Coppice:



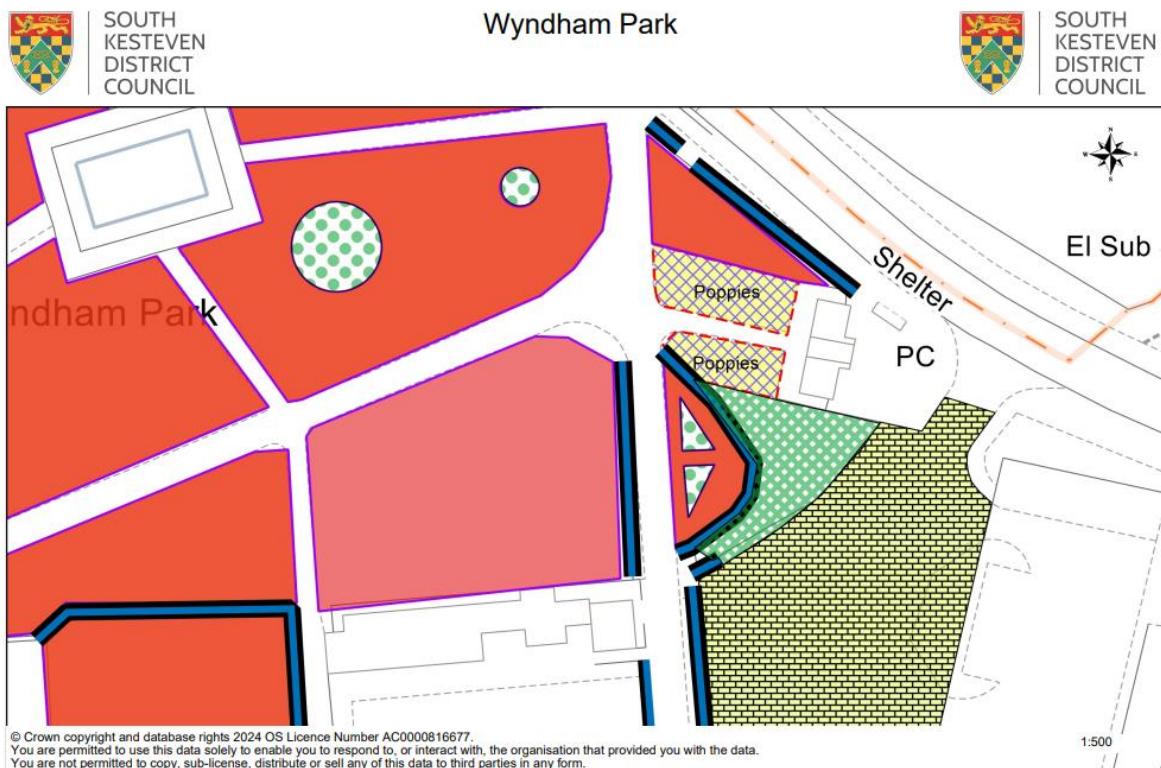
2.15 This area is adjacent to The Bluecoat School and therefore provides an excellent opportunity for outreach, allowing the public and school pupils to observe and learn about rewilding and its role in the ecosystem. If this trial is well received there is scope to extend rewilding along Green Lane and other adjacent public areas to create a larger network of green spaces.

South Witham Play Area – Great Close/Throughton Walk:



- 2.16 This location features two newly planted tree sections which presents an opportunity to add a complementary rewilding scheme to create a habitat that supports arboreal and ground level biodiversity. Wildflowers will be sown to provide ground cover and attract insects.
- 2.17 Should the trial prove successful additional rewilding areas could be introduced along Throughton Walk to link the tree sections and create a cohesive green space.

Wyndham Park – Grantham:



2.18 Wyndham Park is a World War 1 memorial park with heritage features and recently celebrated its 100-year anniversary. Given the park's historical context a section of the park near the entrance archway has been selected for rewilding and planting. This includes the inclusion of poppies and Attila Graffiti tulips which have been chosen as their colour matches the distinctive berets worn by British 1st Airborne Division in the battle of Arnhem.

Maintenance Considerations

2.19 In addition to the environmental benefits, the implementation of rewilding schemes also has the potential benefit of reducing the cost of the Street Scene service longer term.

2.20 Whilst the introduction of the meadow areas detailed in paragraph 2.9 has been extremely positive in environmental terms, the Council do not currently have the equipment necessary to maintain these areas and are currently buying in support to enable an annual cut to take place.

2.21 It has been identified that no specific equipment will be required to maintain any of the trial sites detailed within this report. However, given the costs of maintaining the meadows, any equipment to support this and future rewilding ambitions will need to be considered as part of the Council's budget round for financial year 2025/26.

Rewilding Menu:

- 2.22 In addition to the trial sites identified within this report, a successful bid to the Councils UK Shared Prosperity Fund by Officers in the Sustainability and Climate Change team has secured £40k of funding which is available for Parish and Town Councils to enable rewilding initiatives on their land.
- 2.23 To support this valuable initiative, a guide has been developed by the team to provide information and a menu of rewilding options which are eligible for funding. The guide also includes advice on the successful introduction of schemes and ongoing maintenance. By way of background information this is included at **Appendix One**.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The introduction of rewilding schemes on land within the ownership of the Council presents an opportunity for the Council to contribute to the fight against climate change, as well as providing a range of associated benefits including the opportunity to reverse biodiversity loss, improve health and wellbeing outcomes, and achieve improvements to air, water and soil quality.
- 3.2 The sites selected for rewilding are currently maintained by the Council and have been chosen specifically to limit the impact on the local community surrounding the areas. It is hoped a successful trial, complemented by an awareness campaign, will provide a platform for wider consultation with a view to expanding rewilding across the district.
- 3.3 To support the trial a communications plan will be developed to ensure that the reasons for the introduction of rewilding and the associated benefits are clearly communicated.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council could choose not to implement rewilding schemes on its land, but this does not support the previously declared climate emergency, or the ambitions set out within the Corporate Plan.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to endorse the trial sites selected for rewilding and continue to receive updates on the success of the trial and the Council's future plans in relation to rewilding.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix One – Rewilding Menu.

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Rewilding Menu

A guide to rewilding options to support biodiversity



The importance of rewilding

Our natural environment is currently facing a triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

In September 2019, South Kesteven District Council formally declared a climate emergency, reflecting the urgent need to accelerate carbon emission reductions. To overcome the ongoing degradation of our environment, the importance of integrating green infrastructure into urban environments has been identified as a crucial element of nature recovery.

Rewilding involves the restoration of healthy ecosystems, aimed at increasing biodiversity and reversing the loss of our wildlife. By developing and protecting existing habitats, we can build towards a more resilient landscape that is better positioned to adapt to the effects of climate change.

Rewilding serves a dual purpose of reconnecting people with nature, at minimal cost. By altering our approach to the management of our open spaces, we can provide better habitats for wildlife, improve biodiversity, and increase amenity value.

This is especially important as many people are spending a significant amount of time indoors where a busy, technology-mediated life leads to a disconnect with nature. The incorporation of green space within our environment can foster a deeper sense of connection to nature, reduce stress and promote healthier living. Encouraging people to spend more time moving in nature-focused environments can also help lessen the effects of mental and physical illness.

To align with biodiversity initiatives, specific pocket sites across the district could be maintained differently to attract a diverse range of beneficial species.

The creation of rewilding areas may be complemented by regularly mown sections and pathways, maintaining the visually appealing environment of South Kesteven whilst supporting local wildlife populations. By considering the environment, wildlife species and need of local people in individual locations, a tailored approach can be taken to ensure maximum benefit across the wider community.



SKDC Officers will be happy to provide recommendations on the suitability of different rewilding measures and support in funding searches.

This guide has been developed by South Kesteven District Council to support town and parish councils in their endeavour to tackle local biodiversity loss and improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

It presents a menu of rewilding options with projected costings that may provide inspiration for new rewilding initiatives within the district. Ideal sites will be areas of open space with existing public access that are currently underutilised within residential areas, which are either town or parish council owned.

Projects carried out within areas of open grass that currently lack any interesting features will be especially beneficial to biodiversity net gain. It will be the responsibility of the town or parish council to identify areas of interest within the district and manage the organisational element of project work that is beyond the scope of volunteer capacity.

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Establishment and maintenance

MEASURE	ESTABLISHMENT PERIOD	MAINTENANCE REQUIRED
Wildflower meadow	<p>The best time to sow wildflower seeds is in the autumn. Ideally, the chosen location should be free from existing grass and weeds. To provide the best chance of wildflower establishment, the top 5-10cm of soil should be removed prior to sowing to reduce soil fertility. This will reduce competition from different grass species.</p> <p>To aid establishment, it is important to mow mixed meadow regularly in the first year after sowing, encouraging strong root growth. Six to eight weeks after the seedlings appear, cut to a height of 5cm. Repeat this every eight weeks throughout the first summer.</p> <p>Ask people not to walk over the area dedicated to the wildflower meadow.</p>	<p>As the meadow establishes, there are three main timings for cutting. These include a spring cut (no later than the end of April), the main summer cut (between late June and August end) and the autumn cut (between the end of August and late November).</p> <p>One or more of these cuttings will help to establish a strong meadow. Cuts should be tailored to encourage the plants deemed most suitable for the plot and to help manage grass-dominant meadows. By the fourth year, a spectrum of colour can be expected as the diverse mix of perennials flower at different stages throughout the season.</p> <p>The Royal Horticultural Society provides a useful guide for meadow maintenance.</p>

MEASURE	ESTABLISHMENT PERIOD	MAINTENANCE REQUIRED
Beetle banks	<p>Beetle banks will take between two and three years to establish. In the first summer after sowing the seed, the bank should be cut several times to encourage the grasses to root and grow more thickly. It is important to protect the populations of insects and other wildlife that may be present. Do not cut the whole bank in one go. Check the bank before cutting. If there are signs of nesting birds, delay cutting until birds fledge.</p> <p>Do not let people walk over the bank as this can erode the ground, increase weeds and damage wildlife that has moved in.</p>	<p>After the first year, it is best to leave beetle banks untouched and unmanaged. After two or three years, the habitat will be ideal for predatory insects and spiders.</p> <p>Once established, an effective beetle bank will have thick tussocky grasses, including dead stems from previous seasons. The bank should have few weeds and there should be an abundance of invertebrates present. To control the presence of weeds, it is possible to spot spray, carry out localised cutting of problem areas, dig out or pull any weeds by hand.</p>
Tree planting	<p>It is best to plant trees between November and March. Keep a one-metre diameter around the tree free of weeds and grass for the first few years – this will reduce competition for moisture and nutrients, increasing the trees' chance of survival.</p> <p>Trees will adapt to natural conditions so shouldn't need watering, especially as this will encourage roots to grow up towards the soil surface rather than down towards groundwater. If there is a particularly long dry spell and watering is necessary, saturate the ground to ensure water soaks deep into the soil.</p>	<p>In Year One to Three, ensure everyone involved in the maintenance of the area knows where the trees are to avoid accidental damage. Then, in Year Three to 10, ongoing maintenance of tree planting areas will involve removing tree guards as they start to split. Responsibly dispose of the plastic. Pruning can encourage trees to grow upwards rather than outwards once established. This can also help to create a diverse canopy structure.</p> <p>The Woodland Trust provides a useful website guide to tree care.</p>
Hedgerow development	<p>In the first spring after planting the whips, trim all lateral branches back by 50%. Prune damaged, diseased or dead wood after the first leaf break. To aid establishment, it is best to maintain a metre wide strip in weed free condition for a minimum of three years, reducing competition for moisture and nutrients from grass and weeds.</p>	<p>In the first five years of a hedge's development, annual cutting can help encourage a thicker hedge.</p>

Pollinator-friendly

A wildflower meadow is a nature-friendly addition that can replace a lawn and change an open area into a visually appealing arrangement that also makes a difference to declining species.

To provide maximum benefit to local wildlife, a British wildflower mix targeted towards bees and pollinators is ideal. These vibrant mixes contain an assortment of annuals, perennials, and grasses to attract different species.

Perennial plants live for several years, whilst annuals flower in summer and die off once they have set seed. However, if left to allow them to scatter seed, new plants will grow and flower the following year. Other mixes can be tailored to support butterflies, moths or seed-eating birds.

Seeds are best sown onto bare earth with the seeds hand broadcast at 2g per square metre. However, if sowing onto existing grass, only 1g per square metre is needed. It is important to choose a mix of wildflowers to suit the soil type at the intended location.

The price of 500g of seed can range from £40 to £157, depending on the representative mix. Pre-planted trays and plug plants are also an option, though these vary in cost.

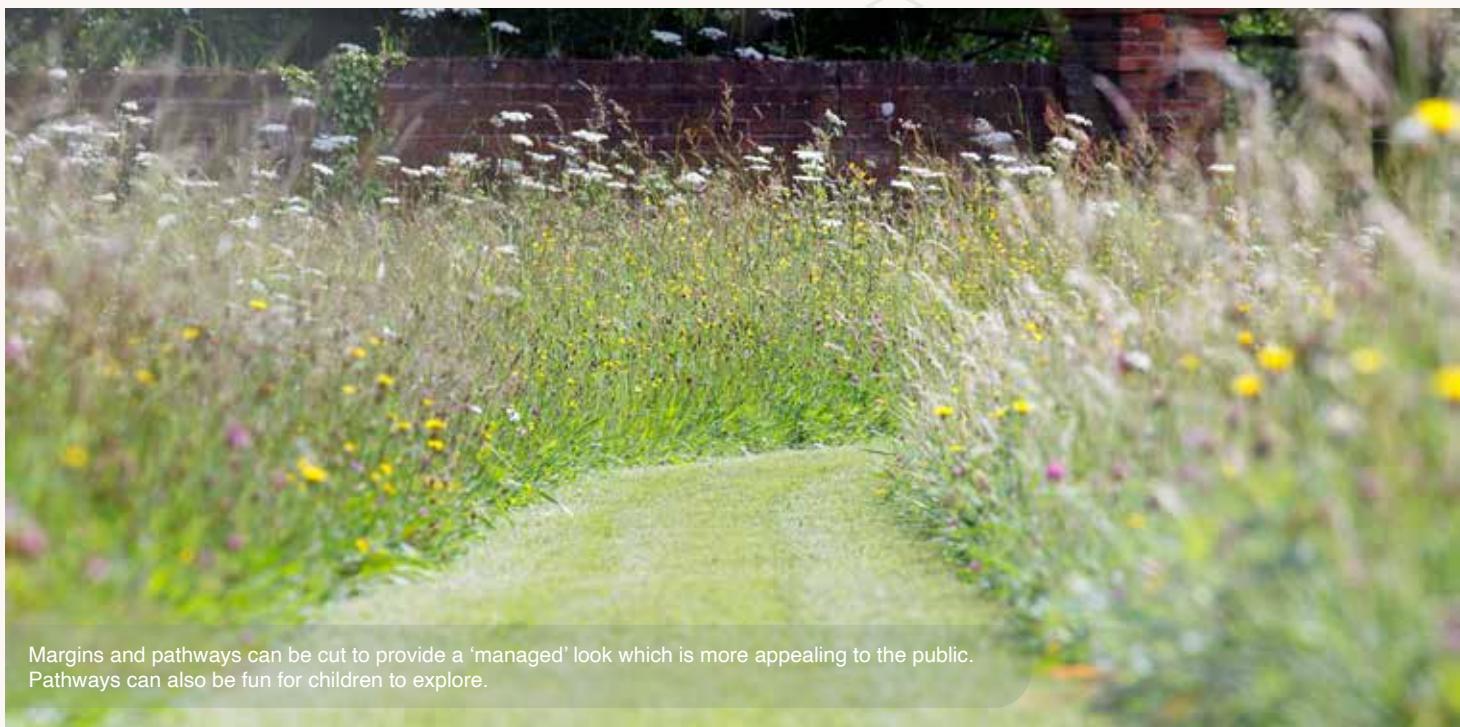




Wildflowers next to a cut verge at Keele Cemetery.
Image: Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Streetscene Services / Chris Hollingworth



Wildflower meadows are an excellent way of supporting pollinator species whilst creating a colourful landscape for all to enjoy.



Margins and pathways can be cut to provide a 'managed' look which is more appealing to the public.
Pathways can also be fun for children to explore.

Beetle banks

Unknown to many, beetles play an important ecological role. The UK has more than 4,000 beetle species, many of which are predators, pollinators and decomposers.

Ladybirds can help limit aphid populations whilst water beetles keep mosquito larvae under control in ponds. Beetles also feed both the soil and larger visiting mammals, such as birds and hedgehogs.

Considering beetles don't tend to travel far when foraging, the best way to support beetle populations is by creating a specialised environment, known as a beetle bank.

Beetle banks are elongated, permanent, raised berms that provide a daytime refuge for nocturnal beetles.

When night falls, the beetles will come out of hiding to forage for prey. Not only do beetle banks provide an ideal daytime habitat, but they also provide beetles with an insulated overwintering site.

Whilst normally positioned throughout arable crop land, smaller beetle banks, or 'bumps', can be implemented in areas of open space, close to adjacent cover. The banks are planted with tall grasses and native plants. A range of species and heights will also help attract a variety of ground-nesting birds and small mammals.





Set asides

Set asides involve the allocation of land to serve as a wildlife refuge. When the mowing of carefully selected areas of open space is ceased, then plants traditionally considered weeds - such as buttercups, dandelion and yarrow - will be given the chance to flower among the grass.

Although the area will predominantly be composed of grass, any wildflowers present will be able to grow and flower. As the grass varieties flower and produce seedheads, these will attract pollinators. Not only do seeds provide a nutritious food for wildlife such as birds, but longer grass can provide valuable sheltered habitats for many species.

If the location chosen as a set aside is not appropriate, the long grass can be easily returned to lawn by strimming and reinstating a regular mowing routine. No Mow May is an excellent time to trial this measure. If this works well and is well received, further measures can be implemented to create a diverse, balanced meadow in the longer term.

The cost of specially selected seeds can range from £6.10/kg, sown at a rate of 8kg/acre. Meanwhile, ground preparation can be done at very little cost, given sufficient volunteer capacity.

Swales & filter strips

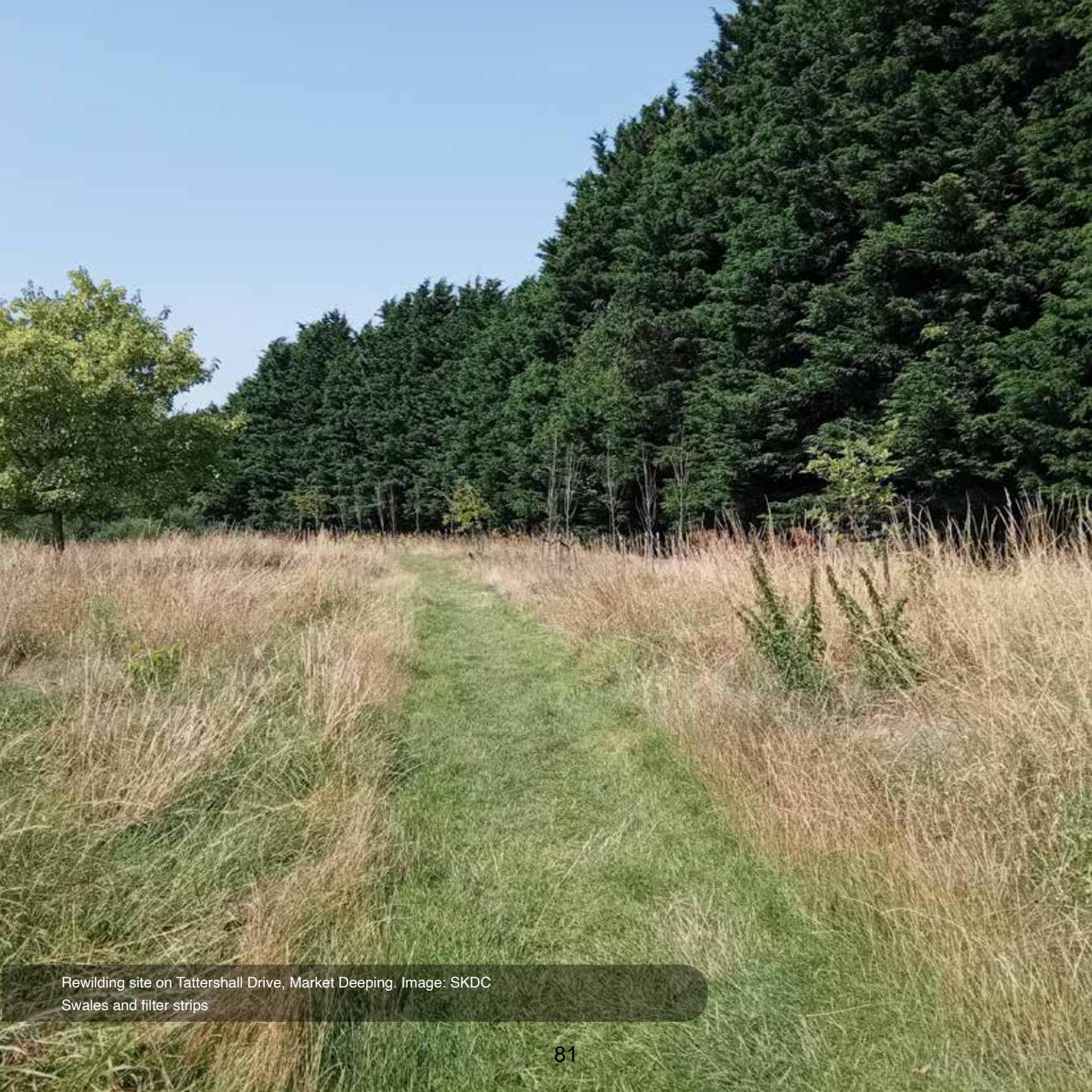
Swales and filter strips are source control elements of Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Swales are shallow channels used to collect or move water, often covered with grass and flood resistant plants. Filter strips are gently sloping, vegetated strips of land that provide opportunities for slow conveyance and infiltration.

In appropriate locations, they provide a simple, yet effective, way of managing surface water runoff. The grass or other vegetation slows water down, allowing more to soak into the ground. Swales are suitable as a low intervention method in more open rural areas.

Costs will vary and will be dependent on factors such as scale, machinery requirement and volunteer capacity.

As a representative example, smaller volunteer powered projects that cover 50m² could cost £5,000, whereas larger projects may equate to £460/m². **Susdrain** offer a comprehensive list of case study examples.



Rewilding site on Tattershall Drive, Market Deeping. Image: SKDC
Swales and filter strips

Rain gardens

Based on the concept of Sustainable Drainage Systems, the central notion of a rain garden is that drainage should mimic the way water naturally behaves in the landscape.

Rain gardens are an increasingly important part of habitat design, incorporated to manage surface water runoff in areas at higher risk of flooding. A rain garden is a shallow area of ground that receives water run-off from roofs and other hard surfaces.

These depressions can act as infiltration points for run-off and other 'clean' surface water that is low in contamination. Unlike swales, which are more often used in rural environments, rain gardens are ideal in urban environments. Small rain gardens can be implemented to catch water runoff from buildings.

Rain gardens are planted with native vegetation that can withstand waterlogging for up to 48 hours at any one time, with more drought-tolerant plants being placed near the edges.

This offers the opportunity to grow and range of attractive plants that are beneficial to insects and birds. Rain gardens can be easily incorporated into open space design but can also be retrofitted to suit existing residential developments where flooding is a risk.



Rectory Gardens Rainpark in Haringey. This SuDS project will prevent local flood risk and reduce pollution entering the River Moselle. Information and images collated from susdrain.org, 2024.

Hedgerow planting

Hedgerows act as multifunctional wildlife corridors, providing many benefits to both people and wildlife. Hedges are useful for carbon capture and noise reduction, alongside the provision of shade and privacy.

However, hedges also provide a food source and shelter for many invertebrates, birds and mammals. This includes bats, who use hedgerows as 'commuter routes' for foraging and roosting.

One hundred and thirty Biodiversity Action Plan species are associated with hedges. This includes lichens, fungi and reptiles. The more diverse a hedgerow in its composition, the more species it will support.

A wide variety of native trees and shrubs will provide greater diversity in flowering and fruiting times. As the hedgerow develops, they will contain more dead wood and plant litter within their structure, providing cover for small mammals and a valuable habitat for many invertebrates species. This, in turn, will attract predator species such as bats, shrews and birds.

Hedgerows should be planted at a density of six plants per metre. The ideal composition is suggested to be 60% hawthorn, with the remainder made up of at least four other species from the following: Blackthorn, Hazel, Field Maple, Dogwood, Crab Apple, Guelder Rose, Dog Rose, and Wayfaring Tree. The ideal hedge will have a margin next to it, dotted with hedgerow trees.

The representative cost for 600 plants (covering 100m) is £612.



Clare Bowen / The Tree Council

Tree planting

Trees are vital for ecosystem services. Alongside their role in carbon storage, filtering pollutants, reducing temperatures in warm weather and reducing the risk of flooding, trees have a positive influence on human health and well-being, recreation, and community and cultural connections.

Publicly accessible trees and woodland increases the value of nature to the public, and thereby increases public support for restoring biodiversity more widely.

Care should be taken to ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place. Aim to plant a variety of species, varieties and genotypes to provide greater resistance to pests and diseases. Species should be appropriate to the soil type and texture of the site.

In built areas, plant locally native species, but more ornamental species of high biodiversity value may also be included.

It is especially beneficial to target 'gapping-up' of existing hedgerows and restoration of lost hedgerows which will help increase habitat connectivity at the landscape scale.

For more information, the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership has an excellent **guide** for tree planting.

Living walls

A Living Wall is a wall partially or completely covered with vegetation. They may be indoors or outside, freestanding or attached to an existing structure. They can range from a simple, inexpensive 'green facade', formed from climbing plants grown at ground level. These designs are the most versatile and require less maintenance.

However, more complex living walls can have a much larger biodiversity impact. The variety of plant species within these Living Walls provides unique possibilities for habitat preservation and the protection of local flora and fauna, even within an urban setting.

Costs can vary significantly depending on scale, vegetation chosen and materials. Living walls also need additional consideration on positioning and orientation. They often require more maintenance, so are more suited to areas where there is an ongoing management scheme or existing team who would take over responsibility of maintaining plant health.

Bat boxes

A landscape design that attracts bats will support other wildlife and positively impact on biodiversity.

Bats are predatory mammals and feed on a wide range of nocturnal flying insects. Areas rich in native vegetation will encourage a variety of insects, helping to support great bat abundance and biodiversity. Bat boxes will ideally be placed near to hedges and tree lines.

Bat boxes can be purchased for as little as £13. Higher quality bat boxes are priced in the region of £30-60. Alternatively, the creation of a bat box can form an ideal DIY project. It is important that only untreated wood is used.

Bird boxes

Putting up nest boxes provides nesting sites for cavity or hole-nesting birds.

Different nest boxes exist to suit a range of bird species and locations. There are also specific nest boxes to suit owls. It is especially beneficial to locate bird boxes close to a food source.

There are various bird boxes available, of variable wood quality. Prices range from £5 to £40.



Bug hotels

Bug hotels provide ideal pollinator nesting sites for solitary bees and wasps and are a great way of attracting other species like beetles, ladybirds, spiders and centipedes, which hide away in the cavities of the bug hotel.

Purpose designed bug hotels can be purchased, with small hotels costing in the region of £13, moving up to £475 for larger bug hotels. However, it is also easy to make a bug hotel by layering natural materials to form a structure. These include big rocks, old bricks, different lengths of wood, leaf litter, straw or hay, bark, and some larger branches.



Gostrey Meadow, Surrey. Image by Green Up Britain.

Hedgehog houses

The British hedgehog population is in decline and have been disappearing from our rural countryside. Hedgehog houses provide hedgehogs with safe daytime cover and can increase their chances of survival as a hibernation spot over winter.

Placement of hedgehog homes will have a large impact on whether they become occupied. Hedgehogs prefer to move alongside linear features such as fences or hedgerows. For a greater chance of success, the hedgehog home should be placed somewhere quiet, out of direct sunlight, where it is sheltered from the wind. Also ensure that there is nothing to obstruct the entrance or ventilation.

To promote the connectivity of 'hedgehog highways', creating small gaps in fences is an excellent way of allowing hedgehogs to move through urban areas and prevent them becoming trapped.

Prices can range from £18 to £130.

Community pond

Ponds contribute to the provision of high quality freshwater habitats that support a wide range of species such as frogs, great crested newts and dragonflies.

Ponds act as 'stepping stones' for wildlife to move between areas. As such, ponds should be dug in close proximity to grass set-asides, scrub or hedges.

The edges of ponds and lakes are usually the richest areas for wildlife. To increase this habitat, create long, irregular shaped edges and shallow, undulating banks. Some species prefer cold, deep water, while others need warmer, shallower water. Aim to vary the depth of the pond or lakebed.

Pond creation may be subject to sufficient risk assessment and planning guidance.



Pond in the Rectory Paddock, Market Deeping. Image: SKDC

Community garden

Community gardens should be formed within spaces that are easily accessible by the community. However, this doesn't need to be in a green or grassy area.

The outskirts of a shared car park or paved area is sufficient, subject to the necessary permission being obtained.

Plant pots, planters, compost and basic tools are generally required to start a garden. Encourage residents to contribute unused items. It may be beneficial to set out the collective vision for the space in a document, to aid group decision-making.

It is a good idea to signpost community gardens to advertise to everyone the purpose of the initiative and what will be achieved. Start small, then scale the garden up to a manageable level. The placement of single benches can form a quiet area to allow reflection, whilst group benches can help make the garden somewhere to socialise with others.

Engage the local community when producing plans for the space. People may suggest features, such as specific raised beds dedicated to growing veg or flowers.

A community garden can be implemented alongside other measures, such as bug hotels, to attract more pollinators. A significant impact can be made in a small area, so creativity is key. Consider reaching out to local community groups and businesses to sponsor or support the growth of the garden.



Dead hedges

Dead hedges are piles of branches and twigs, arranged between vertical stakes to form a barrier.

They provide an excellent habitat for a range of insects and invertebrates. Dead hedges can also be placed to discourage people walking across sensitive habitat areas.



Log piles

Log piles are also a cost-free option creating a hiding space for bugs, insects, hedgehogs and frogs.

This measure is a good way of putting waste resources to good use. For example, the wood of native trees can be used to build log piles near to existing linear features.



Signposting

Public perception of rewilding schemes differs greatly, partly due to a lack of understanding on the scope of projects in both rural and urban environments.

Rewilding can enhance open space into visually appealing, wildlife-friendly habitat.

However, the establishment phase is the most difficult as many people struggle to envisage what the outcome will look like.

To overcome this, signposting areas where rewilding is in progress can help educate the public, improve how biodiversity measures are perceived and provide rewilding initiatives a greater chance of long-term success.

Information boards, or more simplistic signs, can be placed to demonstrate the timeline of a project, spotlight species benefitting from rewilding in a particular location, or provide a polite reminder to residents to respect the area. Signs can be more educational or can be more creative, which is ideal for engaging children.

For example, “can you spot” signs can be placed along mini nature trails. This can bring an element of fun to families with children, helping to spark learning and boost local engagement. Other terms may include “hedgehog highways” or “beetle bunkers”.

It may be a good idea to acknowledge the change in the area. A simple sign could communicate to residents why a certain measure in place; “pardon the weeds, we are feeding the bees” is an excellent example of this.

Re-wilding Area



This area of grass is being encouraged to go back to nature as part of a re-wilding trial project across the district by South Kesteven District Council.

Our aim is to increase local wildlife habitat and overall biodiversity.

Tall grasses and other plant species will flourish, encouraging wildlife, insects, birds and mammals. Over time more species will move in, creating a balanced natural environment.

We hope that you enjoy watching how nature develops and would politely ask that you do not walk on this area.

Re-wilding area designated on 9 July 2020



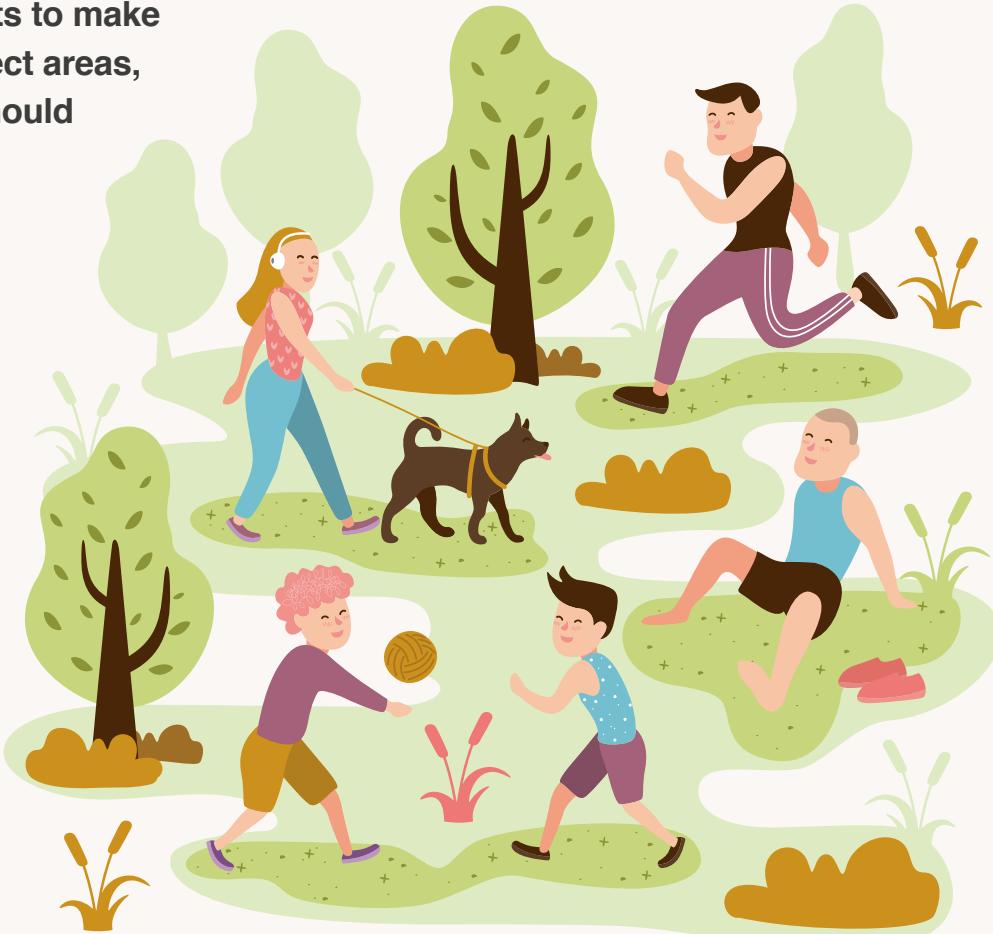
Sign design, as seen on rewilding sites in Market Deeping and Stamford. Image: SKDC

Additional features

Green space improvement is important to many people. To allow residents to make the most use of rewilding project areas, accessibility and enjoyment should be priority considerations.

Benches are an excellent addition to green open space, for their use as a resting place and spot to socialise.

Costs for a single bench vary in the region of £300 to £1,500, depending on design, material and quality.





The Rectory Paddock in Market Deeping. Image: SKDC

Contact Details

Alternative formats are available on request:
audio, large print and Braille

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SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2024/25

WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/PRIORITY
7 October 2024				
Waste Policy, Battery Collection and Disposal of Vapes – Verbal Update	Kay Boasman (Head of Waste and Markets)			
Progress Update on LED Streetlights	Serena Brown (Sustainability and Climate Change Manager)	To provide a progress update on the ongoing project to upgrade District Council operated streetlights to energy efficient LED units.		
Annual Carbon Emissions Report	Louise Case (Sustainability Project Support Officer)	The provide an overview of the Council's operational carbon emissions for the 2023/24 period, including progress against the Council's carbon reduction targets of at least 30% by 2030.		
Bulky Item Waste Collection	Kay Boasman (Head of Waste and Markets)			
Commercial Food Waste	Kay Boasman (Head of Waste and Markets)			
Re-wilding Schemes Across the District	Karen Whitfield (Assistant Director Leisure, Culture and Place)	To provide an update on the Council's ambitions for re-wilding across the District		
Communal Recycling scoping (requested by Cllr Bailey)	Kay Boasman (Head of Waste and Markets)	Discussion item		

REPORT TITLE	LEAD OFFICER	PURPOSE	ORIGINATED/COMMITTEE HISTORY DATE(S)	CORPORATE/PRIORITY
10 December 2024				
Mid-Year KPIs (Q2 2024/25)	Debbie Roberts (Head of Corporate Projects, Policy and Performance)	To provide an update on the Council's Mid-Year (Q2 2024/25) performance against the Corporate Plan 2024-27 KPIs.		
Green Fleet Strategy	Kay Boasman (Head of Waste and Markets)	To provide an update on the initial draft of the Green Fleet Strategy.		
Waste Policy Update	Kay Boasman (Head of Waste and Markets)	To provide an update on the Waste Policy document.		
Air Quality Annual Report and AQMA Update	Ayeisha Kirkham (Head of Service - Public Protection)			
Options available to combat flooding in the future	Graham Watts, Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer Ayeisha Kirkham (Head of Service - Public Protection)	To consider and investigate options available to combat flooding in the future	Action from the Joint Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 March	
EPC's				

Unscheduled future items				
National Hedge Laying Association				
Quality of the District's Rivers and Canals				

The Committee's Remit

66 The remit of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be to work alongside Cabinet Members to assist with the development of policy and to scrutinise decisions in respect of, but not limited to:

- Air quality
- Animal welfare licensing (Policy)
- Commercial, industrial, and clinical waste collection and management
- Dog breeding and control orders
- Domestic waste and recycling management
- Energy efficiency
- Environment SK Ltd
- Environment SK Commercial Services Ltd
- Estate and grounds maintenance
- Flooding
- Food hygiene and safety
- Health and safety
- Noise
- Renewable energy
- Scrap metal dealers
- Green open space management

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