



Milton Keynes
City Council

Five Year Plan - Pathway to Net Zero 2030

**Delivering Net Zero for Milton
Keynes City Council by 2030**

**April 2025
Version 1**

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Net Zero Ambitions

In order to drive Climate Change Leadership, Milton Keynes City Council must be an exemplar of change. From changing the way we do things to changing the way we think.

In the Milton Keynes Sustainability Strategy 2019-2050 and accompanying Action Plan, we set ambitious aims for Milton Keynes as a Council and as a City; to be carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050. These are challenging targets, and ones on which the City Council must lead by example, to encourage change from the City's citizens and businesses.

Milton Keynes City Council wants to go further than this and has outlined ambitions to be a Net Zero Authority and City by 2030. This Five-Year Plan outlines the Council's Pathway to Net Zero 2030 for its own emissions, demonstrating the key themes and programme deliverables that we will undertake to deliver this aim and ambition. A separate Milton Keynes City Sustainability Strategy will follow, highlighting how the Council will support the city to reach Net Zero.



By delivering the transition of our own estates and activities to Net Zero by 2030 we will be best placed to progress how we interface with businesses, residential and industrial sectors across a series of programmes to decarbonise the city.

This plan also embeds how our climate change principles interface with other Council policy positions such as biodiversity, urban tree planting and procurement.

By Milton Keynes City Council achieving Net Zero status by 2030 we will be best placed to drive Climate Leadership for the city working with business, residents and industry.

Climate Change, Carbon & Net Zero

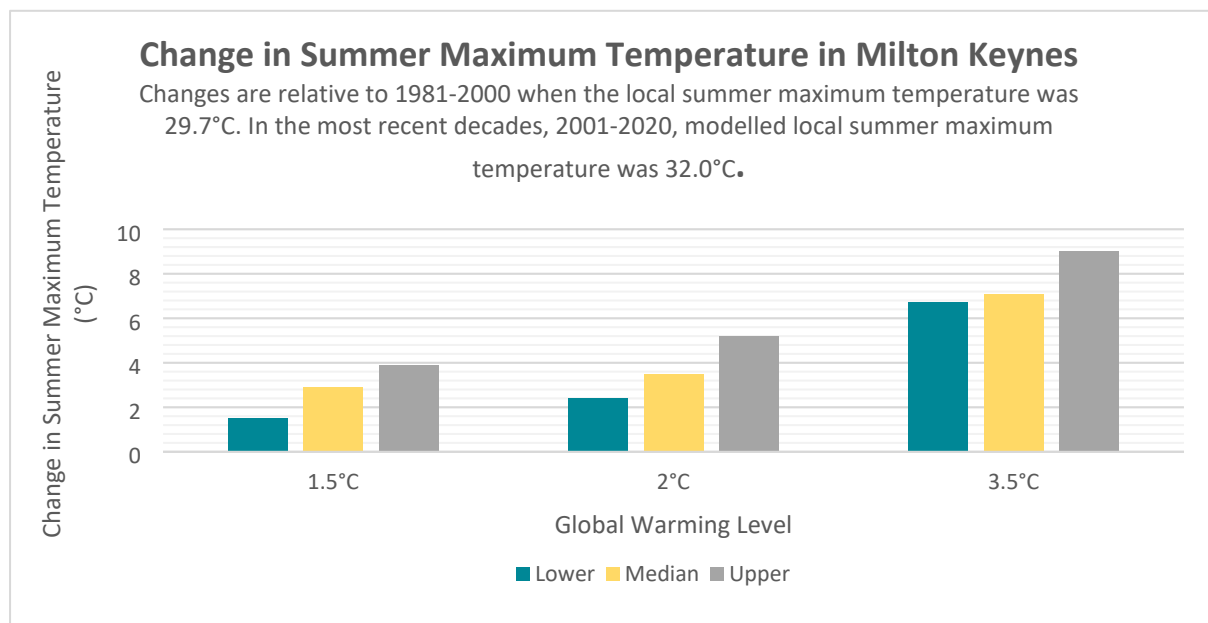
As an Authority it is crucial that we outline what it is we intend to do and how it is that we intend to do it. Our Sustainability and Climate Change ambitions need to be clear and interpretable so our residents can support and support actions and why we do them.

What is a Greenhouse Gas?

Greenhouse gases (also known as GHGs) are gases in the earth's atmosphere that trap heat. During the day, the sun shines through the atmosphere, warming the earth's surface. At night the earth's surface cools, releasing heat back into the air. But some of the heat is trapped by the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The most common GHG is Carbon Dioxide but Methane and Carbon Fluorocarbons are also GHGs.

What is Climate Change?

Milton Keynes is already feeling the impacts of climate change, from the heatwave in July 2022 to more recent widespread surface water and fluvial flooding across the city. Local climate projections shown in the graph below from the Met Office show how our summer temperatures are likely to increase. We are experiencing now the extremes that are projected to be normalised by 2050.



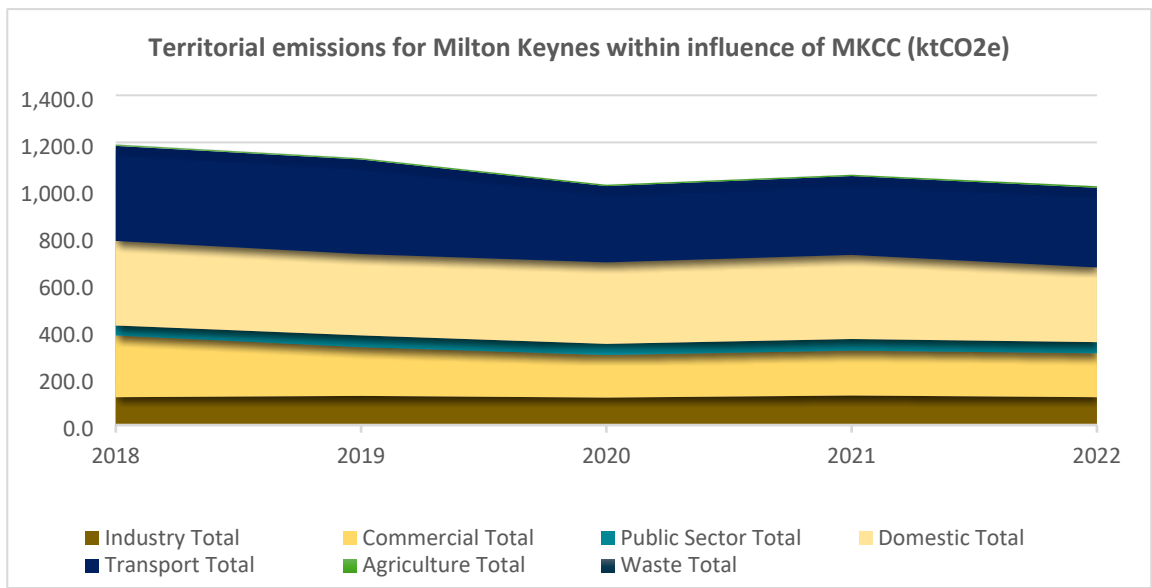
Source: Met Office Local Authority Climate Service

What is Net Zero?

Net Zero is a concept and target of completely negating the amount of greenhouse gases produced by activities, achieved by reducing these emissions and by implementing methods of absorbing the emissions from the atmosphere.

What are the GHG Emissions for Milton Keynes?

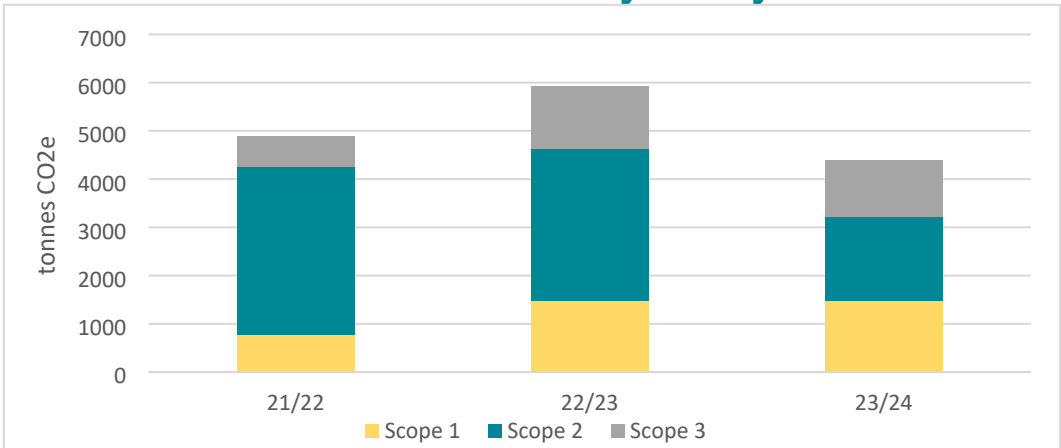
The majority of GHG emissions in Milton Keynes are from domestic housing and transport emissions at 28% and 30% respectively. The commercial and industrial sectors account for another 25% with waste and the public sector accounting for the remaining 15%.



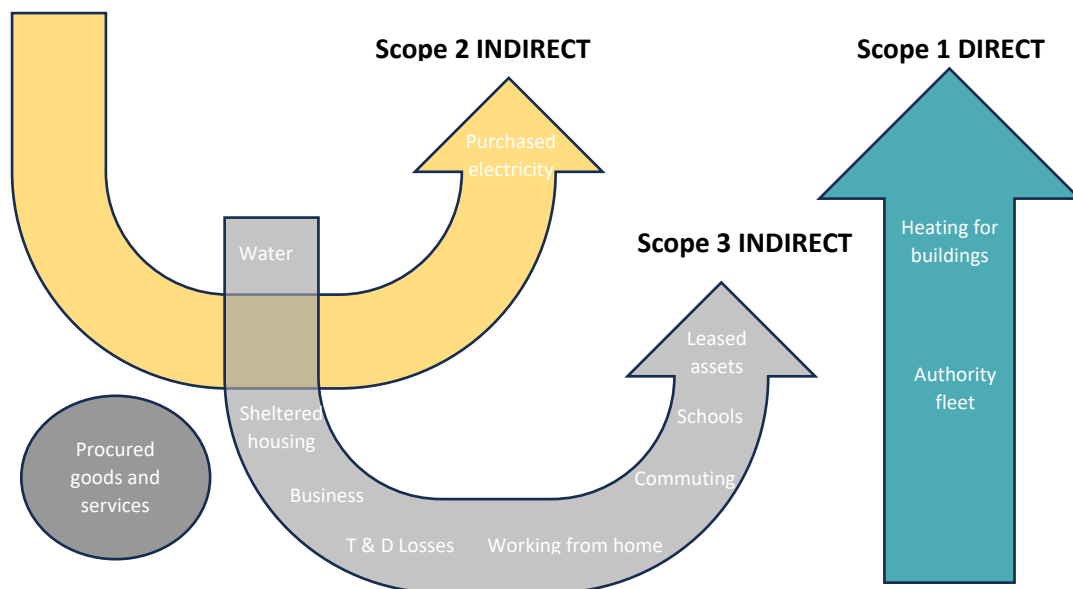
Public sector emissions represent a small proportion of the total emissions in the city and include emissions from the hospital and emergency services alongside the Council.

This Five-Year Plan only accounts for the delivery of the programme of measures to address the Council’s GHG emissions. It is important that the Council demonstrate leadership and best practice by becoming a net zero council such that it be best placed to accelerate city wide activity.

What are the GHG Emissions for Milton Keynes City Council?



The Net Zero ambition for the Council's operations applies to the Scope 1 and 2 emissions from our buildings, vehicles and street lighting. Scope 3 emissions include employees working from home, business mileage, water, leased assets and sheltered housing. Scope 3 emissions from the Council supply chain (procured goods and services) are not included in our ambitions for Net Zero, but the Council has included in this plan the intention to work to reduce these emissions. The Council will influence to reduce emissions working with and supporting its partners and supply chain to deliver low carbon outcomes.

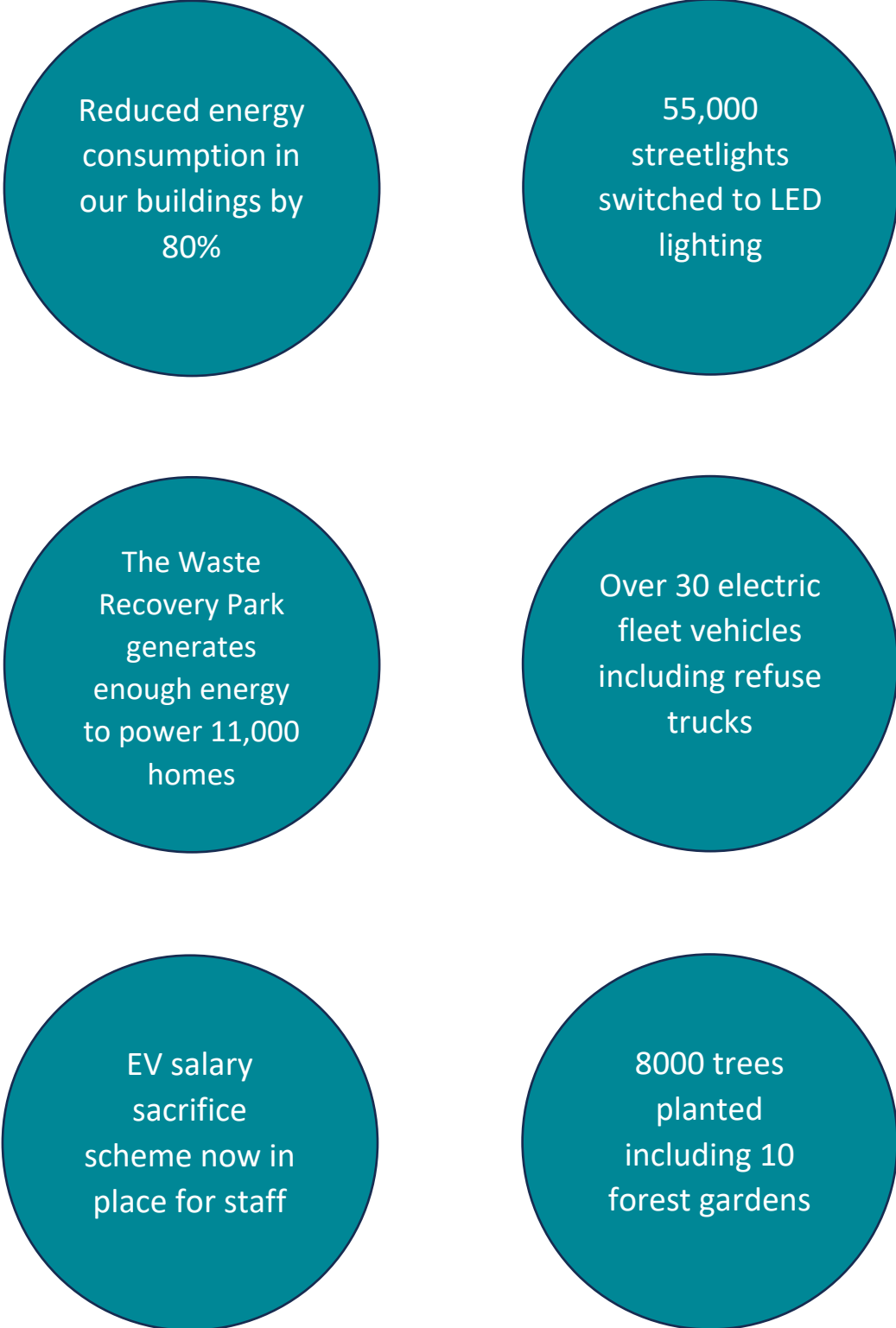


Ways can the Council reduce GHG:

- **Adaptation:** Adaptation refers to adjustments in our activities in response to actual or expected climatic effects. The Council may change its practices and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change. Where we pursue adaptation – we will demonstrate how this maintains existing GHG baseline or reduces emissions.
- **Mitigation:** This involves shifting the way we deliver services that are not as carbon intensive thereby reducing or removing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Offsetting:** Carbon offsetting is a carbon trading mechanism that enables the Council to compensate for offset greenhouse gas emissions by investing in projects that reduce, avoid, or remove emissions elsewhere.
- **Sequestration:** This is the process of capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide. It is one method of reducing the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere from our greenhouse gas emissions.

Milton Keynes City Council will deliver actions to reduce Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions to net zero. We will reduce Procured Goods and Services emissions with partners.

Five Year Achievements 2019-2024



Reduced energy consumption in our buildings by 80%

55,000 streetlights switched to LED lighting

The Waste Recovery Park generates enough energy to power 11,000 homes

Over 30 electric fleet vehicles including refuse trucks

EV salary sacrifice scheme now in place for staff

8000 trees planted including 10 forest gardens

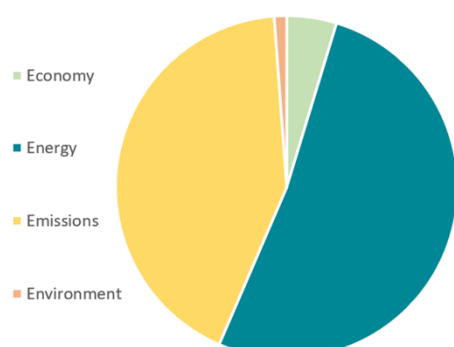
Our Net Zero Themes

All of our actions must look to demonstrably drive down our Scope 1, 2, 3 and supply chain emissions. All of our actions to reduce GHG emissions will be framed around four main themes; economy, energy, emissions, and environment.



Our Themes will work to drive down Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions across the Council. It is important to mitigate the impacts of climate change as much as possible as we are already seeing the impacts here in Milton Keynes. We will aim to do this through a deliverable plan of actions (see Appendix) to reach Net Zero emissions by 2030. Upon nearing our 2030 target, we will consider the use of carbon offsets for our residual emission once all available opportunities for mitigation have been exhausted.

As we accelerate our programme of activity to deliver net zero, the Council must also assess climate risks to service delivery and adapt its services and assets to ensure resilience to increased temperatures and flood risk. Delivering adaptation alongside and embedded into our net zero priorities is essential to capture co-benefits from projects and avoid maladaptation.



How much can each theme reduce our GHG emissions?

Focusing on the Energy we use and how it is sourced and the Emissions we create as a result of our activities will be the core drivers behind reducing our GHG emissions and a fundamental principle to ensure we achieve our Net Zero target by 2030.

We will focus on core flagship projects across four themes within our programme to reduce to Net Zero by 2030

What are the flagship actions across our themes:



Economy

- Procurement changes to drive suppliers to channel shift / mitigate / adapt
- Use of Net Zero Procurement Playbook in contract management



Energy

- Channel shift to green and renewable energy production / use
- Improve efficiency in buildings to reduce demand for energy



Emissions

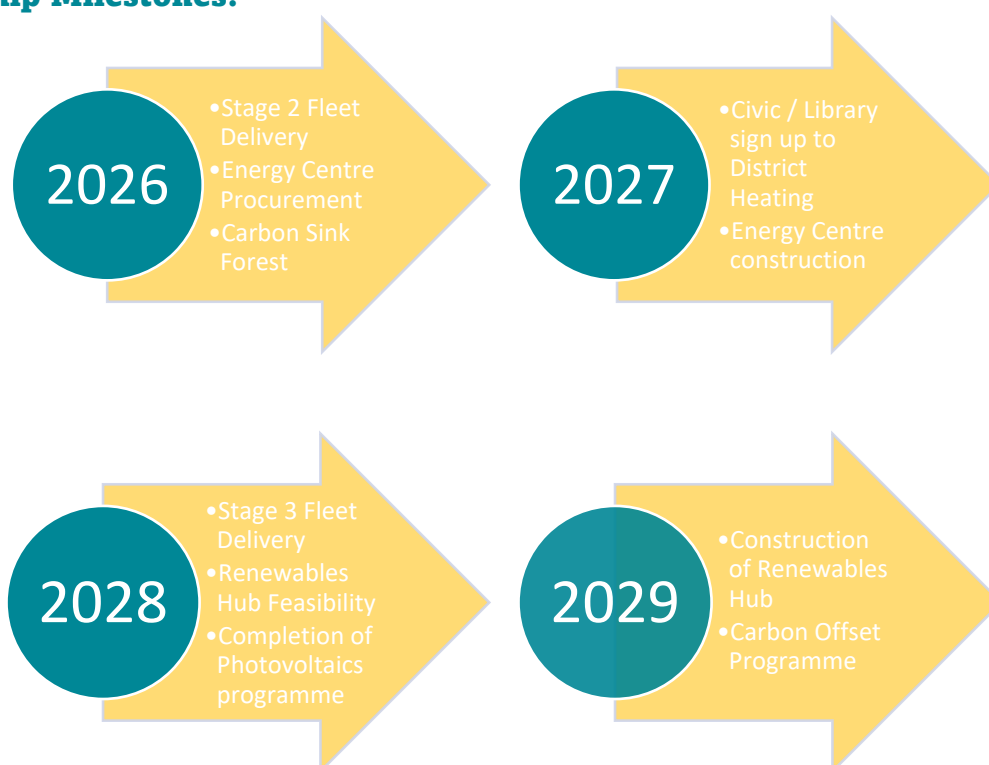
- Transition to decarbonised heat / electricity sources
- Decarbonise Council vehicles and grey fleet
- Improve energy efficiency and decarbonise buildings to reduce emissions



Environment

- Enhance carbon sequestration
- Blue / green infrastructure to drive resilience
- Service resilience to current and future climate change impacts

Flagship Milestones:



This plan will deliver Net Zero for Milton Keynes City Council 2030. We will publicly report on our progress.

Appendix - Glossary

Term	Definitions
Adaptation	Adjustments that help to reduce the actual or expected impacts of climate change
Carbon neutral	Carbon neutrality is defined as achieving a balance between emitting carbon dioxide and absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
Climate change	Climate change refers to a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures.
Carbon Offsetting	A carbon trading mechanism that enables entities to compensate for offset greenhouse gas emissions by investing in projects that reduce, avoid, or remove emissions elsewhere
Carbon sequestration	a natural or artificial process by which carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere and stored in solid or liquid form.
Greenhouse gases	Greenhouse gases (also known as GHGs) are gases in the earth's atmosphere that trap heat.
GHG protocol	The Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol) is a globally recognised standard for measuring and managing greenhouse gas emissions.
Net zero	Net zero (with reference to net zero commitment) means implementing net zero strategies to reduce all greenhouse gas emissions as much as humanly possible, and offsetting only the essential emissions that remain.
Maladaptation	Action or investment that enhances vulnerability to climate change impacts rather than reducing them.
Mitigation	Actions to reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions from human activities

