

# Solihull Green Prospectus: delivering a sustainable low carbon Solihull - Review of Progress March 2019



Greening the Economy

Action - Ensure continued engagement in the HS2 Environmental Prospectus via representation on the HS2 Environmental and Landscape Workstream and Technical Group.

We continue to engage with the HS2 Environment and Landscape Workstream Board. A key emerging project is the proposed Cole Valley Landscape Vision which aims to facilitate physical change within the catchment for people and wildlife.



Action - Deliver activity to support the green skills agenda such as Your Green Future and Life Ready.

Twenty two secondary and 20 primary schools are signed up to [Life Ready](#). In Nov 18 we delivered our 2nd climate change conference, attended by 6 secondary schools. We are looking at how we can work with partners to deliver a green skills event in autumn 2019.



Action - Continue to support Solihull Sustainability Visioning Group and the delivery of it's Action Plan.

We continue to support the group. JLR looking to hand over chair responsibilities to another organisation to provide new focus and energy. Additional local stakeholders have been identified for future meetings. SVG to be consulted on the upcoming EV Strategy, the Walking and Cycling Strategy and engaged in the Low Emissions Strategy. A Carbon Trust energy efficiency workshop is planned for April 2019.



Action - Submission of Local Plan Review.

Local Development Scheme revised and the timeline for the Local Plan Review amended.

- ◆ Publication of Submission Draft (for consultation) – summer 2019
- ◆ Submission to Secretary of State – autumn 2019
- ◆ Examination of plan – winter 2019/2020
- ◆ Adoption of the Local Plan Review – spring/summer 2020



**Overall rating**  
The HS2 Env. Prospectus continues to support projects that aim to deliver GI at a strategic, landscape scale. Clean energy provision is rightly being seen as vital to the borough's economic prosperity as demonstrated by it being a focus at key growth sites including The Hub and Solihull Town Centre.

The updated Hub Growth and Infrastructure Plan will have a dedicated section on how the UGC workstreams directly support the council's sustainability agenda.

Action - Develop a detailed Sustainability Vision and Plan for UKC Zone 1 - The Hub. Informed by relevant studies including the proposed Utilities Strategy and the Heat Network Feasibility Study and the proposed Energy Innovation Zone activity.

Utilities – a new Grid Supply Point is being investigated which will not only meet stakeholders future energy needs but also support the predicted rise in electric vehicles across The Hub, support local generation of electricity and also the creation of a local smart grid – all of which are key to the implementation of the Energy Innovation Zone. Public Transport – UGC is progressing the redesign of Birmingham International Station into a true multi-modal hub which will dramatically improve public transport in The Hub by integrating classic rail, high speed rail, bus, Metro, car, Sprint and cycling.



Action - Develop a Clean Growth Framework to inform future activity.

The Framework which is currently being scoped will pull together into one place the various pieces of work being undertaken on energy, infrastructure and industrial strategy, both locally and at a West Midlands level, to ensure plans and projects are aligned.



**Overall rating**  
We are continuing to access funding to undertake the necessary studies to ensure opportunities for low carbon energy generation are understood and where feasible, business cases developed. Funding is secured to develop an Energy Framework which will not only support Solihull's clean energy ambitions but contribute to wider regional aspirations as expressed in the Regional Energy Strategy.

Action - Continue to deliver the Waste Strategy Action Plan.

Central Government published its updated Resources and Waste Strategy in December 2018 and therefore as part of the council's Waste Strategy Review officers will need to consider the points highlighted and any new requirements which have come from the national changes, however many of these will be subject to further consultation. As well as continuing to work towards the objectives in the current strategy a new strategy document will need to be drafted as the current strategy end date is 2020. Work has begun on a draft Single-use Plastic Strategy to support the council becoming single-use plastic free by the end of 2020 where feasible.



Action - Support and develop Solihull's proposed Energy Innovation Zone in partnership with WMCA Energy Capital.

We are working closely with Energy Capital to scope opportunities and to ensure alignment with the recently approved Regional Energy Strategy for the West Midlands and our proposed Energy Framework.



Energy and Resources

Action - Have in place a detailed understanding of Solihull's key opportunities for decentralised energy.

Solihull Town Centre Low Carbon Heat Network - Funding has been secured from BEIS and WMCA to complete detailed project development which will support the development of an outline business case. A simple web page has been created to support communication. UKC - The Hub Heat Network - an options assessment has now been completed.



Action - Have in place a detailed understanding of Solihull's energy consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, current planned energy projects, future investment requirements, delivery vehicles and opportunities.

WMCA funding has been secured to develop an Energy Framework which will inform the development and subsequent delivery of the measures required to ensure a resilient, reliable, low carbon energy system for Solihull. We are currently assessing available energy planning models and tools which could support the framework production. This activity is being undertaken in partnership with Energy Capital and aligned to the Regional Energy Strategy for the West Midlands. It will also be informed by the more specific, energy related pieces of work being undertaken, such as the heat network feasibility studies.



Action - Deliver short and medium term actions of the [Home Energy Efficiency and Affordable Warmth Strategy](#) (HEEAWs), including submission of the [HECA](#) report.

**Heating solution high rise blocks** - Initial options involving renewable technologies have been reviewed by SCH - in particular ground source heat pumps. Further technical analysis is still required to ensure suitability of proposed systems. Potential funding streams to support the project are also being investigated. **Solar PV & Battery Storage** - Funding less attractive than previously for this type of work resulting in greater cost implications. SCH has met with providers to try and implement a trial battery installation project linked to PV. Currently awaiting further technical proposals and associated costs. Since October 2015 we have delivered 7 collective switching schemes (**Solihull Switch 'n' Save**) designed to make switching gas and electricity provider easier. So far, over 2,200 households have switched supplier – saving over £619,000 and delivering over £20k income for the council. **Warm Homes** project which secured up to £743k external funding is progressing with 27 installs completed. Further installs pending and further marketing of project to owner occupiers in place. Plan to consider offer to private landlords with fuel poor tenants being considered. The annual **Winter Warmth Campaign** is completing its 11th successful year, providing vital emergency and 1-2-1 support to vulnerable residents over the winter months from our 27 partner agencies. All residents over 85 years contacted to offer support this winter. The **HECA** report was published March 2017. The format, developed by us, has been adopted by other LA's. Further submission to BEIS likely to be May 2019. Details of energy efficiency activity is now published in the form of a [quarterly update](#) on the council's website.



Action - Deliver short - term carbon emission reduction targets for key council emitters. Progress business cases to support investment and achievement of longer-term carbon reduction targets.

Quarter 2 progress shows that: corporate buildings and schools are down on last years emissions, and the Strategic Environment Contract and Street Lighting reductions are in line with their targets. A range of practical, management and behavioural actions are being put in place to support further reductions including the Council House initiative to reduce energy use through behavioural science, LED projects in car parks and carbon management becoming a standing item on key school estate strategic review meetings. To further drive emission reduction and demonstrate leadership the council has signed up to the principles of the voluntary Emissions Reduction Pledge (ERP 2020) and adopted a 45% CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction target by 2021 (based on 2009/10 emissions). We continue to publish the annual [Carbon Report](#) which is made available online.



**Overall rating**  
The council's carbon emissions continue to fall as a result of investment in energy efficiency and a co-ordinated approach to carbon management. The adoption of the ERP 2020 further demonstrates the council's commitment. On a wider borough level we continue to promote energy efficiency through a range of established partnerships eg. the current Warm Homes funded project. This activity contributes to Solihull having the lowest level of fuel poverty in the West Midlands.



On track/completed



Progressing but ....



Not progressing



Partnership working



Grant funding/inward investment



Innovative Activity



## Transport and Mobility

Action - Growth and Development Programme - sustainability impacts and opportunities assessed. Ensure opportunities to support sustainability objectives are exploited to deliver effective place making - a focus to be placed where the council has a high degree of influence.

Sustainability is embedded within the UKC Project Management Framework which is applied to all Growth and Development projects.

Action - Develop a Low Emission Strategy to improve air quality in Solihull. Continue monitoring of Nitrogen Dioxide and commence monitoring for levels of particulate matter.

Solihull's first Clean Air Strategy (2019 – 2024) was approved in Feb 19. It sets out our clear commitment to improving air quality and the actions we will take to reduce exposure to the pollutants known to be the most harmful to human health. It includes short, medium and long term measures for the 6 themes of Education; Planning; Transport; Environment; Public Messaging & Procurement. Action plans for each of these themes were developed following consultation workshops with elected members.

Action - Support delivery of the InclusiveEV electric vehicle car share trail.

The pilot E-Car Club is currently under review.

**Overall rating**  
The promotion and delivery of more sustainable modes of transport remains a key priority and is being progressed through a number of major schemes and associated studies at a local and regional level.

Improving air quality continues to be a key priority of the council as demonstrated by the development of the borough-wide Clean Air Strategy.

Action - Develop a strategy to test bed new models of electric vehicle charging in Solihull - leading to a delivery programme from 2019 onwards.

Following research and consultation with leading LA's we have identified best-practice approaches to encouraging EV adoption. A draft of the strategy has been developed which is currently being circulated internally, before wider consultation both internally and externally.

Action - Deliver UKC Infrastructure Package—key projects include:- Strategic Cycle Network, Walking and Cycling Strategy and Bike Share

Specialist resource seconded into the council to develop the Cycling and Walking Strategy, project manage a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, commission and to represent the council in Bike Share matters. Development of the Cycling and Walking Strategy has started and a brief developed for the LCWIP. Bike Share to be launched in Wolverhampton in February, with discussions remaining on-going regarding potential locations to provide cycles in Solihull.

**Overall rating**

The ambition to secure more 'Bigger Better and Joined GI' is being realised on the ground via large scale programmes such as Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvement Project and Wildlife Ways. Both projects, and the draft Urban Forestry Strategy deliver on our objectives of valuing natural capital and investing in the borough's natural environment. We are also working at a regional level - acknowledging the importance of collaboration and scale for this agenda.



## Natural Capital and Adaptation

Action - Pilot the Natural Capital Planning Tool as a tool to inform Local Plan site allocations and the Local Plan Review.

On track - currently assessing the most appropriate sites to apply the tool to and aligning with the Local Plan Review schedule.

Action - Natural Capital and Wellbeing embedded into infrastructure, development and community projects.

Green Infrastructure is an integral part of sustainable development and is embedded within our Local Plan Review - underpinned by the National Planning Policy Framework (now amended to include environmental net - gain).

Action - Develop Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) - particularly around UKC /HS2.

SuDS requested on all development sites. Local Plan policy on water management reviewed to ensure it delivers benefits associated with SuDS (water quantity/quality and biodiversity). Partnership working with EA and seeking to secure external income from the Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to fund business cases.

Action - Work with stakeholders to develop the 'More Bigger Better and Joined GI' Delivery Plan - to include Greening the Grey, the Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvement Project and the Tame Valley Wetland NIA

Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvement Project on - going, all measured outputs being met. Greening the Grey/Wildlife Ways has commenced. SMBC is leading the GBSLEP wide Small Habitats Grant Scheme which has received 6 full applications which have the potential to improve the habitat value of 141 hectares. We are also working with the Environment Agency and neighbouring authorities to deliver the proposed River Cole Landscape Vision. To inform the management and protection of Solihull's vital tree stock the council has revised its Urban Forestry Strategy (currently draft).

Action - Work with partners to develop Ecosystem Services /Natural Capital Accounting approach and 25 Year Natural Capital Plan.

As a council we value natural capital and continue to use the biodiversity offsetting approach in Planning. We are also supporting the Regional Natural Capital Roundtable which is successfully embedding the natural capital approach within the WMCA. For example, the draft Local Industrial Strategy refers to Natural Capital being embedded into investment strategies.

Action - Prepare and promote a concept framework for development sites to support mental wellbeing and place making.

Internal workshop on Health SPD took place on 29/01/19 to scope out Policy P18 'Health and Wellbeing' in Local Plan Review and supplementary guidance in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document.

Action - Continue to support schools to become more sustainable.

Over 30 schools have taken part in the Ashden Less CO<sub>2</sub> programme since it started in Dec 15. The 2018 phase started in November with another 11 schools. The first workshop has been completed. A best practice/sharing event open to all schools was held in Oct 18, alongside this event, was the inaugural Greener Solihull Schools Award celebration. Schools continue to be supported through programmes including Eco-Schools, Love Solihull, Modeshift and events such as Oaks and Shires. A successful schools Climate Change conference was also delivered in Nov 2018.

Action - Apply the principles of behavioural science to allow greater understanding of and engagement in sustainability related activity.

Carbon Management - Pilot phase in implementation, with a mixed method trial in place. Monitoring of performance (both is quantitative and qualitative) in place to measure impact of project. Energy efficiency webpage on the intranet in development to support poster/labelling pilot.

Action - Deliver the Green Prospectus Communications Plan. Produce the Themes Reports and 6 monthly /Annual Reports.

We published the 17/18 Annual Report and Theme Reports. In Oct 2018 we produced a special 'Green Great Britain' Theme Report. More recently we published a Green Prospectus Update Jan 19. See [Greener Solihull for Success](#) for more information.

Action - Promote and engage in the Government's proposed Green Great Britain Week.

A Green Great Britain Week Special Theme Report was published online, rounding up the activities in the run up, during and after the week, including news items, with contributions from both council teams and organisations/businesses across the borough.

Action - Deliver the 2018/19 Ashden 'Less CO<sub>2</sub>' programme for schools and consider longer term approach to carbon reduction in schools.

Delivery of the Ashden Less CO<sub>2</sub> project continues as previous years. This year 11 schools are participating and have taken part in the first workshop.

Action - Increase the number of communities and businesses engaged in meaningful environmental improvement activities through programmes such as [Love Solihull](#).

Between April and Dec 18, 55 partners have engaged with Love Solihull including 15 business groups (315 employees) and 27 community groups. Businesses contributed over £20,500 in business investments through financial and in-kind donations to Love Solihull projects.

Action - Deliver the Fairtrade Action Plan - including renewal of Fairtrade Borough Status, host the Midlands Fairtrade Supporters conference and support Fairtrade Fortnight 2018.

The Fairtrade Borough Status was renewed in August 2018. The West Midlands Regional Fairtrade Supporters Conference was successfully hosted in partnership with the Fairtrade Foundation. From the success of the conference, the Solihull Fairtrade Steering Group was reinvigorated with a number of new members joining. The borough celebrated Fairtrade Fortnight 2019 with a number of events including the Solihull Bake Off and Fairtrade Art trail.

**Overall rating**

The Council continues to support environmental engagement via programmes such as Love Solihull, Modeshift and our Education for Sustainable Development activity. Of particular note is the co-ordinated approach to engagement in sustainability issues that is taken in Solihull. This approach enables collaborative events such as the Schools Model Climate Change Climate conference and the Greener Solihull Schools event to take place.



## Communication Education and Engagement



On track/completed



Progressing but ....



Not progressing



Partnership working



Grant funding/inward investment



Innovative Activity