**Agenda item: Environmental sustainability plans**

As part of the contract retender, we were required to describe how our organisation will contribute to the city’s accessible, clean and sustainable environment goals. A timed action plan was also required.

We have already started work in this area, having produced our first plan to become a net zero organisation, after attending a [Council-funded sustainability course](https://www.clean-growth.uk/events/net-zero-360-free-sustainability-course-for-businesses-in-brighton-and-hove/). This is already helping us to calculate our current carbon impact and inform our plans.

Our environmental targets will be achieved by:

* Delivering on our [published plans](https://www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/sites/healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/files/Net%20Zero%20Policy.pdf) to become carbon neutral by 2030.
* Delivering financial security. As an asset-locked organisation, our actions to reduce our environmental impact will save us money.
* Contributing to the local circular economy.
* Having SMART targets, deliverable within our finite resources.

**Our targets & milestones**

Our ambitions and the steps we will take to achieve these are described in our action plan. HWBH’s plans link to BHCC’s [Orbis](https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/business-and-trade/contracts-and-tenders/orbis-environmentally-sustainable-procurement-policy#tab--introduction) policy and [carbon neutral 2030 programme](https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/climate-action/climate-action-what-were-doing/carbon-neutral-2030-programme) as follows. In summary:

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| **Council priorities** | **HWBH’s actions** |
| **Emissions** | * **We will need to define our emissions, and by 2028-30 have a carbon reduction plan** and a confirmed approach to carbon offsetting, having first identified our carbon baseline (2026/7). |
| **Travel and transport** | * **By March 2026**, **we will need to have explored how we can extend financial support** offered to staff to encourage more environmentally sustainable options. This builds on our actions that have already supported staff to claim back some costs related to travel into the office (‘Benefits in Kind’) that have encouraged the use of public transport. |
| **Energy and water** | * **By 2025/26**, **we will need to start sharing free** [**energy saving advice**](https://bhesco.co.uk/domestic/fuel-poverty-energy-bills-brighton-hove), help with bills, links to community support and offers from [utility companies](https://www.southernwater.co.uk/help-and-support/how-to-save-water-in-your-home/), via our website and newsletters. * **By 2026/27**, **we will need to have sourced potential funding opportunities** to support energy efficient actions. For example, our offices use 100% green electricity (following a building heating system upgrade) but we have identified that fans used to cool the office are not energy efficient. * **By 2026/27, we will need to have reduced our waste by:** * Increasing the use of office recycling facilities amongst staff and volunteers by 25%. * prioritising digital communication to reduce paper usage. * **By 2028, we will need to prioritise the use of local supply chains** and develop a sustainable purchasing & procurement policy to support the circular economy, building on our focus to ‘reuse, recycle’ |
| **The built environment** | * **By 2028, we will need to have reviewed our office space.** Our existing landlords are committed to minimising the building’s adverse environmental impact, but we will determine whether our offices optimise delivery of our green targets. |
| **Nature and environment** | * **By 2026, we will need to have revised our policies to deliver environmental volunteering** (e.g. opportunities via the [green space forum](https://bhgreenspaceforum.org.uk/friends-of-groups/)). |

**Methods for involving stakeholders**

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| **Internally:**   1. We will identify staff members and volunteers to form a new Environmental Champions sub-group to spearhead our work. It will publicly report progress against our plans to our Board. 2. We will describe our progress in our public annual report, and via performance reporting to BHCC. 3. We will collaborate with our landlord to gather data to realise our plans and with local Healthwatch to share resources. |
| **Within Brighton and Hove**   1. We will work with BHCC to discuss our plans and finalise reporting targets. 2. We will work with Community Works to utilise their [Investors in the Environment Bronze Award](https://www.communityworks.org.uk/whats-new/investing-in-the-environment/) to obtain good practice to improve our own plans. 3. We will work with our supply chain to confirm their carbon plans and share our learning to help them produce their own. 4. With agreed funding, we will be partnering with the [Trust for Developing Communities](https://www.trustdevcom.org.uk/) and 20 other local VCSE to deliver a [Lottery-funded Climate for Communities Project](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/climate-action-fund-our-shared-future). The work will empower local people to take climate action and support understanding of how this can address people’s priorities around cost of living and health inequalities. |
| **At Sussex/nationally**   1. We will continue to scrutinise progress of the ICS’s environmental ambitions to improve the health and wellbeing of local people (which forms of the ‘Improving Lives Strategy’). 2. We will link with the [Nature Save Trust](https://naturesave.co.uk/naturesave-trust/making-business-greener/) to obtain free sustainability advice. |