

Alcester

Local Climate & Nature Action Plan

2024-2027



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Introduction

Alcester Town Council has recognized the urgency of the Climate and Nature Emergency and the need to take action to protect our local biodiversity and reduce the impact of climate change. With support from volunteers, the Town Council has created this 3-year Local Climate and Nature Action Plan for the town.

Human influence on our planet has resulted in a warming atmosphere, ocean and land. There is clear scientific evidence for human impact contributing to climate change, which is already resulting in heatwaves, flooding, and droughts (gov.uk, 2019). By collaborative working, investigation and promotion of green energy sources and green travel, the Town Council hopes to minimise its carbon footprint as well as that of Alcester as a whole.

Species decline and habitat loss are closely linked to the climate emergency, and therefore Alcester Town Council is working on this joint Local Climate and Nature Action Plan. Since the 1970s, species have declined by 41% across the UK (State of Nature Report, 2019). This is due to many causes, including but not limited to, habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, impacts of climate change and road casualties.

There is so much information about climate change and the decline in our biodiversity that it can feel overwhelming. However, with the help and support of individuals, families, businesses, organisations, landowners, Warwickshire County Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council and community groups, we can make the town a place for wildlife to thrive and green spaces to flourish. We need everyone's help and support to make this happen.

Aims and Objectives

Alcester Town Council has created this Local Climate and Nature Action Plan with the aims to **protect and enhance nature and our environment** through the following objectives:

- Reduce our local carbon footprint and promote waste reduction
- Increase connectivity through the creation of wildlife corridors and habitats
- Facilitate stronger collaborative working with stakeholders
- Understand the current species and habitats across the town
- Increase community engagement and communication
- Ensure climate and nature issues are incorporated into the Town Council decision making process



Partnerships and Stakeholders

PARTNERSHIPS & CONTACTS INVOLVED IN CREATING PLAN

Organisation	Role	Contact
Alcester Town Council	Lead	Email: dgordon1.atc@gmail.com
Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Local Councils	Support	Email: claudine@walc.org.uk
Warwickshire County Council	Support	
Stratford-on-Avon District Council	Support	
Alcester Climate Change Working Group	Community	

STAKEHOLDERS

Community groups and clubs	Local Schools/pre schools	Churches	Local organisations	Doctor surgeries	Local businesses
Local police	Environment organisations	Neighbouring Town & Parish Councils	Alcester Residents	County and District Council officers	Local landowners
Allotment holders	Housing developers	Local MP	Town Council land management contractors	Town Council staff	Site users

Stakeholder Communications Plan

STAKEHOLDER	ACTION	MESSAGE CONTENT	DELIVERY METHOD	TIMELINE
Residents	Regular updates on climate nature projects	Proposed projects, feedback requests, actions taken	Social media, newsletter, Council website, noticeboards, meetings, events.	Monthly updates.
Community Groups	Involve and collaborate on projects	Update on projects that connect to their group, impact, involvement, collaboration potential.	Email.	Before start of relevant projects.
Warwickshire County Council	Keep informed of action taken	Updates on nature projects	Email.	Every 6 months
Stratford on Avon District Council	Keep informed of action taken	Updates on nature projects	Email.	Every 6 months
Local businesses	Support businesses in making eco friendly changes	Examples of changes that could be made e.g. creating long grass margins, reducing single use plastic.	Email, leaflets in person or social media.	Annually/project specific contact.
Volunteers	Keep informed of opportunities	Upcoming climate and nature projects	Email existing volunteers. Information at events.	As and when opportunities arise.
Local services & organisations	Keep informed of relevant projects	News on projects they can support, help with or inform on.	Email	Before new relevant projects begin.

Mapping Alcester

Mapping of Alcester's features can be found on the Google My Maps :

{map to be completed}

Mapping features include:

- Habitat map
- Climate map
- Town Council owned/leased land
- Opportunities for climate and nature

By mapping the above features, we can understand what assets we already have and what can be improved upon to help protect and enhance nature and our environment.

Alcester Town Council owned/leased land includes:

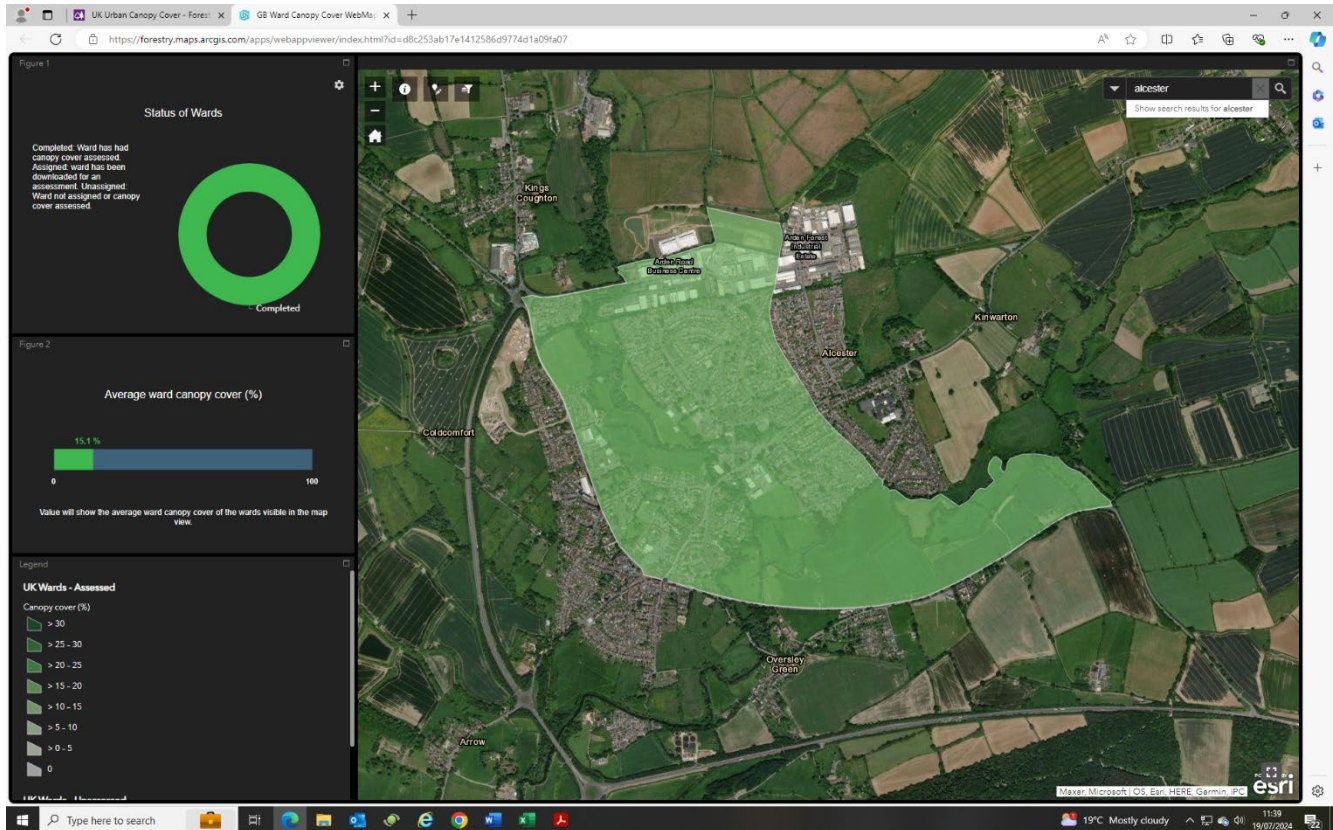
- First floor offices - Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester B49 5DZ
- Eric Payne Community Centre, off St Faiths Road, Alcester B49 6AG
- The Greig Hall, Kinwarton Road, Alcester B49 6AD
- Jubilee Fields and Weir Fields off St Faiths Road, Alcester, B49 6AG
- Moorfields Play area
- Collins Way Play area
- Bleachfield Street North allotments, Bleachfield Street, Alcester
- Bleachfield Street South allotments, Bleachfield Street, Alcester
- Bleachfield Street play area, Bleachfield Street, Alcester
- Cemetery, Birmingham Road, Alcester
- Priory Meadow, at rear of Cemetery, Birmingham Road, Alcester
- School Road allotments, School Road, Alcester
- Disused railway land
- Centenary Field and adjoining open land, Stratford Road, Alcester
- Land at Fairwater Crescent
- Alcester Town Football ground, Stratford Road, Alcester
- Westbury Park

TREE DISTRIBUTION MAP

Urban trees are being increasingly recognised for the many benefits they provide, such as removing carbon dioxide and pollutants from the air, providing habitats for wildlife, and making our urban areas more attractive, enjoyable and healthy places to live and spend time in.

Using the [i-Tree Canopy tool](#), the canopy cover for 283 towns and cities in England was assessed in 2016 as part of a baseline study. Canopy cover was assessed at the town or city level, and an average canopy cover of 15.8% was estimated.

The tree canopy cover for the most built up part of Alcester was included in the study and confirmed that the canopy cover was 15.1%, slightly below the average. It is however likely that over the parish as a whole, the canopy cover is higher due in particular to Oversley Wood.



Ecological Report

As part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan process, the Town Council commissioned an Ecological Report in 2018 which identified important habitats and protected species in the parish

<https://www.alcester-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Alcester-Ecological-Report-Aug-2018.pdf>

Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan was “made” in 2021 following a successful referendum.

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/210567/name/Appendix%201%20Alcester%20NDP%20Made%20Version.pdf>

Section 6.5 of the Plan covers the Natural Environment and includes the following policies:

NE1 – trees, hedges and landscape features

NE2 – biodiversity

NE3 – Local Green Spaces – identifying and protecting 11 sites

NE4 – protecting valued landscapes and important views

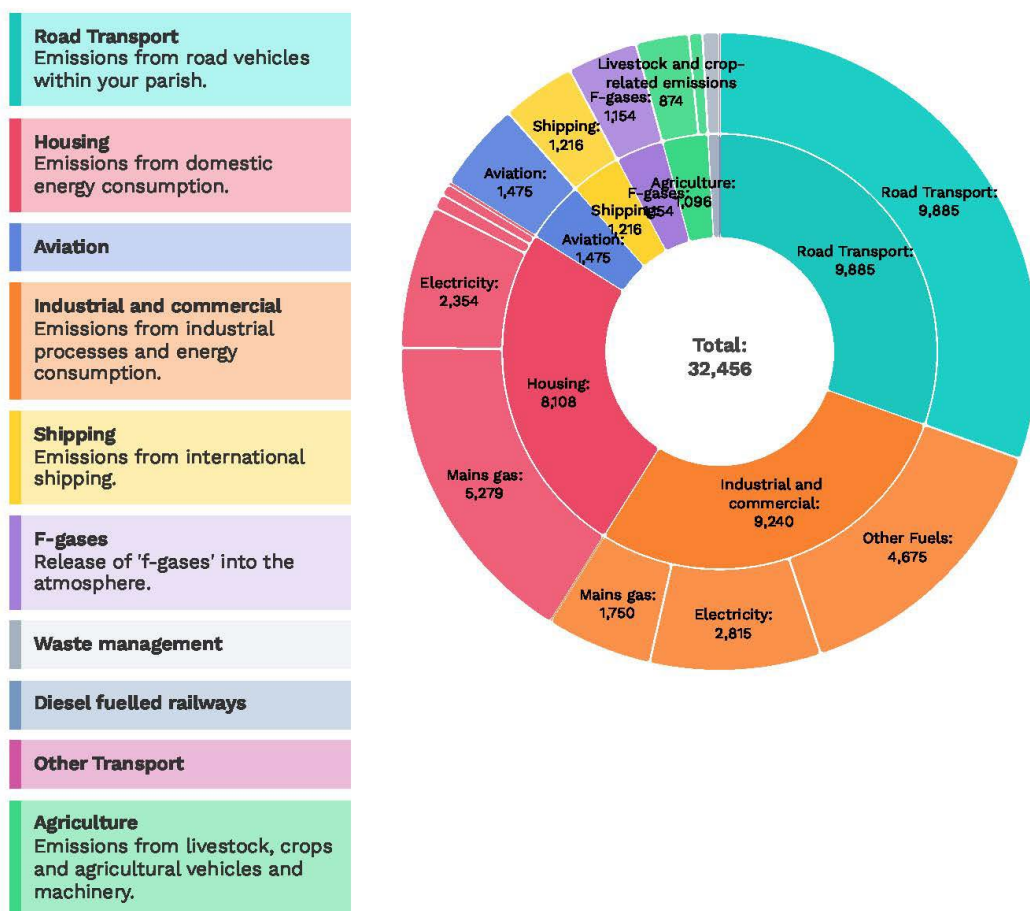
NE5 – managing and preventing increased flood risk.

In addition, a number of future projects were included in the NDP including ones to promote and enhance cycling and pedestrian routes and to create a community allotment.

Carbon Footprint

Centre of Sustainable Energy’s IMPACT carbon footprint estimator provides an approximate calculation of Alcester’s carbon footprint.

The chart below shows that the total approximate total terrestrial carbon footprint is 32,456 tons of CO2. Industrial, housing and transport appear as the top contributors to the town’s footprint. The Town Council aim to work in collaboration with residents, community groups, businesses and more to reduce the overall carbon footprint of the town to move towards zero carbon. As high levels of carbon negatively impact nature and our environment, this action plan aims to both reduce the town’s carbon footprint long term and mitigate the current impacts of CO2 on the environment.



Previous Town Council Projects

The Town Council have worked on climate and nature projects for many years. Many previous projects fall within some of the aims and objectives within this action plan to protect & enhance nature and the environment. Below are some of the Council's previous projects:

Reduce Carbon Footprint and promote waste reduction

- LED lighting installed at the Eric Payne Community Centre
- Allotment renewals now done by email rather than paper.
- Greig Hall renovated with high quality internal insulation and air source heat pumps.
- Bikeability courses arranged to promote active travel
- Event arranged with Act On Energy to offer households energy efficiency advice and improvements
- Financial support for the Alcester Community Fridge
- Repair Café
- Member of the Two Shires Greenway project seeking to establish cycle path between Eversham and Alcester.
- Promoted composting at allotments

Increase connectivity through the creation of wildlife corridors and habitats

- Purchase of Abbey Fields as part of the “green corridor”
- Community orchard at Jubilee Fields.
- Installation of bat boxes at the Cemetery.
- Creation of “nature corner” at Abbey Fields
- Installation of “bug hotel” at Abbey Fields
- Slow worm relocation project at Abbey Fields

Facilitate stronger collaborative working with stakeholders

- Climate Change Working Group
- Climate Café event in June 2023
- Town Clerk is member of joint SDC/WDC climate engagement steering group

- Working with Alcester in Bloom to support and fund the hanging baskets and planters.

Understand current species and habitats across the town

- Ecological Report commissioned in 2018.
- Guided bat walk arranged with Warwickshire Bat Group

To increase community engagement and communication.

- Alcester Climate Café June 2023
- Regular social media posts
- Promotion of Clean Air Day
- Ran stall at Street Market promoting saving water and energy
- Community allotment project

Ensure climate and nature issues are incorporated into the Town Council decision making process.

- Planning Committee considers climate change implications of new planning applications.



Three Year Plan 2024-2027

The Town Council is proud of the previous projects that have aimed to tackle climate and nature issues. However, much more can still be done.

Following consultation via the Alcester Climate CAFÉ and the Climate Change Working Group, the initial projects in this 3-year plan can be found in the table below. The following project plan is not exhaustive as additional opportunities may arise. The projects may be subject to modification when they are each investigated, costed and discussed.

Projects shall be impact assessed before moving forward to ensure the positive impacts outweigh the negative impacts.

AIM: Reduce our local carbon footprint and promote waste reduction

Project	Details	Timeline	Monitoring
Reduce food waste	Promote allotment produce share to reduce waste	Autumn 2024	
Promote use of active travel	Install additional cycle racks Improve signage for cycle paths	Autumn 2024 2025	
Complete the renovation of the Alcester Community Shed	Install air source heat pumps, insulation and solar panels to reduce energy consumption	Autumn 2024	
Look for additional opportunities for recycling	Promote recycling to reduce waste	2024-2027	
Replace Town Council van (petrol)	Replace with electric vehicle	Autumn 2024	

AIM: Increase connectivity through the creation of wildlife corridors and habitats

Prevent spread of ash dieback	To review tree survey undertaken by Town Council and to follow advice received regarding ash trees	Autumn/ Winter 2024/5	
Improve nature corridors for bees	Bee Squared project	Autumn 2024	
Improve biodiversity	Seek funding to commission a report to identify opportunities to improve the biodiversity of Town Council land holdings.	2025	
Abbey Fields Management Plan	Agree a long term maintenance plan for Abbey Fields	2025/2026	
Extend community orchard	Secure funding to extend the community orchard	2025	

AIM: Facilitate stronger collaborative working with stakeholders

Work with landowners	Work with local landowners and farmers to encourage native tree planting and rewilding on their land	2025-2027	
Collaborate on projects with community groups	Work with Food Festival, Court Leet, Alcester in Bloom, Alcester Community Fridge, Arden Foodbank, Litter Free Alcester	Ongoing	
Encourage businesses to be greener	To develop a communications plan to share with local businesses on simple ways to be greener.	2025-2027	Once plan developed and sent out, request feedback from businesses to see if any green switches have been made.
Build relationships and increase participation in projects	Communicate with schools, churches, charities, Youth Club etc to open opportunities for involvement in climate and nature projects.	Ongoing	Record which organisations contacted for which project and monitor partnerships created.
Flood defences	Work with the Environment Agency and others to get the flood defences repaired and upgraded if possible.	2024-2027	
Work with Alcester Youth Project on “nature corner”	Continue to develop nature corner for use by local schools	2024-2027	

AIM: Understand the current species and habitats across the town

Species lists	Monitor species spotted and encourage residents to report via iNaturalist app	Continue to update.	Species list to be regularly updated with species sightings.
Mapping	Continue to update maps with habitats and opportunities for climate & nature.	2024-27	
Guided Walks	Arrange guided walks to encourage residents to engage with nature	2024-2027	



AIM: To increase community engagement and communication

Flooding	To advise residents of the need to prepare for potential flooding and to protect their own properties	2024-2027	
Wildlife Photography Competition	To hold a competition for residents to photograph nature. Eco friendly prize for the winner/s	2025 or 2026	Monitor number of people taking part/engage on social media.
Play Strategy	To produce a play strategy and investigate natural play.	2025	Ensure updates are compatible with promoting nature. Ask expert advice where appropriate and involve stakeholders.
Bioblitz	A Bioblitz is an event where as many people as possible record species across the town using the iNaturalist app. This not only will help us to understand the species in the town, but also engage the community in actively recording data.	2026	Monitor number of participants in recording on iNaturalist. Monitor species recorded and add to the town ecological report/species lists.
Low/No Mow May	Support Low/No Mow May in selected areas of Town Council land	2025-2027	

AIM: Ensure climate and nature issues are incorporated into the Parish Council decision making process

Re- form the Climate Change Working Group		Spring 2025	
Climate & Nature webpage	To create a webpage on the Town Council website with news on all things Climate & Nature	Autumn 2024	
Climate & Nature Policy	To research and create a climate & nature policy to include best practice on energy, hedgerows, land management etc.	2025	
Allotment agreements	To update the allotment tenancy agreements to include practices to protect nature.	2025	
Lead Councillors	Incorporate climate change into Lead Councillor reports where appropriate	2025 - 2027	

Contact and Get Involved

If you have any suggestions, comments or would like to get involved in any of the projects proposed in this plan, contact

References