



## Climate City Contract

# One City Climate Neutrality Commitments

## 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments of Bristol



**BRISTOL**  
CLIMATE ACTION

*The content of this document reflects only the author's view. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.*





## Table of contents

Table of contents .....	2
1 Introduction .....	3
2 Goal: Climate neutrality by 2030 .....	6
3 Strategic priorities .....	7
4 Process and principles .....	9
5 Signatories .....	10
6 Contract with signatures .....	11



# 1 Introduction

## Introduction

Bristol has long been an innovator in the field of climate action. Bristol City Council was the first UK local authority to develop a climate strategy 20 years ago and Bristol was recognised as the European Green Capital in 2015. In November 2018, Bristol was the first UK local authority to declare a Climate Emergency, along with many city partners; this signalled clear local support for city level action to address the climate crisis collectively. Following this declaration, the city produced a One City Climate Strategy commissioned by the One City Environment Board with the aim to become a carbon neutral and resilient city by 2030. Bristol's current carbon neutrality ambition covers all scopes of emissions. The One City model involves city partners from public, private and voluntary sectors bringing them together to tackle issues affecting the city, recognising that problems cannot be solved from City Hall alone. Bristol also made a declaration of Ecological Emergency in 2020 and produced a parallel One City Ecological Emergency Strategy. Both strategies have served to increase the urgency of action by city partners on these twin crises.

As a Core City (a network of the 11 largest UK cities outside London), Bristol was sharing good practice with other UK Local Authorities and holds the climate portfolio for the network. Bristol City Council also participates in Eurocities and ICLEI and Bristol has participated in successive UN Climate COP meetings to emphasise the importance of city level action and that this should be adequately funded.

Bristol also benefits from the Bristol Advisory Committee on Climate Change who provide technical advice to help the city to understand and accelerate progress towards its 2030 ambition and provide critical commentary on the climate consequences of plans, policies and strategies affecting the city. Furthermore, Bristol benefits from the advice of a Community Leadership Panel on Climate and Just Transition and an advisory group to the Pilot City Project the Net Zero Investment Co-innovation Lab who can offer expert financial advice to this project on how best to fund the decarbonisation of the city.

As well as establishing these structures to advise the city, operationally Bristol was preparing to launch the Bristol City Leap partnership. This is a twenty-year joint venture partnership between Bristol City Council, Ameresco and Vattenfall Heat UK which will enable the delivery of over £1 billion of investment into Bristol's energy system. During the first six years of the partnership, investment of nearly 1 billion euros is planned, in a range of large infrastructure projects including the significant expansion of Bristol's Heat Network; making the council's social housing more energy efficient; installation of solar panels and low carbon heating systems in council-owned buildings including offices, homes and schools plus investment in community-owned renewable energy projects.

European Union funding had been an essential part of the process of achieving Bristol City Leap. The European Local Energy Assistance (ELENA) funding was the start of the journey enabling the Bristol City Council to increase its capacity and capability. This led to the capacity to deliver over €100m of investment in sustainable energy projects. This was the platform for the successful achievement of Bristol City Leap. The City Council assets developed included the Castle Park Energy Centre – the UK's largest single water source heat pump - which saw Bristol named Heat Pump City of the Year at the 2022 European Heat Pump Association Awards.

It is also clear that how to pay for climate action is a critical consideration which city partners must address. This was reflected by some of the recommendations of the Citizens Assembly held in Bristol in 2021. The Assembly considered the questions of How do we rapidly reduce the impact of our homes on climate change? What changes should we make to our neighbourhoods to make how we travel easier, healthier and better for the environment? and How should we tackle health inequalities in Bristol? Many of the recommendations made by the Assembly need substantial, additional amounts of money to achieve for example, *Recommendation 3: Create innovative financing options including grants, and/or loans to support homeowners and landlords to improve the energy efficiency of every home in Bristol and Recommendation 9: By 2030, make Bristol the best city internationally to travel*



*around, by prioritising sustainable, safe, healthy, accessible alternatives to the car for all. Some other recommendations are being actioned and some others require funding to be taken forward.*

Further work centred on citizens' views was made possible through a project funded by The National Lottery Community Fund. Bristol Climate and Nature Partnership (previously known as Bristol Green Capital Partnership) leads the Community Climate Action Project which supports communities to lead their response to the climate crisis. A key element of the project is the coproduction of community climate action plans which respond to both social and climate priorities – improving quality of life at the same time as responding to climate change. Bristol's first community climate action plans were developed in neighbourhoods experiencing inequality and disadvantage, along with the communities of Disabled people and refugees in the city. Further community climate action plans have followed with a total of 11 plans now published.

As part of the Horizon Europe programme, the European Union launched a Mission "100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030". The objectives of the Mission are to achieve 100 climate-neutral and smart European cities by 2030 and to ensure that these cities act as experimentation and innovation hubs to enable all European cities to follow suit by 2050. As part of the Mission additional cities from countries outside the EU but associated to Horizon Europe were eligible to apply to join.

This sparked interest in Bristol as a chance to work with and learn from other cities who shared the ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030. It represented another chance to develop capacity - through the support of the NetZeroCities consortium of consultants assigned to Mission cities – and capability through learning from current practice in other cities and using the methods recommended by the Mission including the process of creating a Climate City Contract and a Transition Team to orchestrate the decarbonisation of the city. The Climate City Contract includes an action plan for carbon neutrality across all sectors such as energy, buildings and transport, together with a related investment plan. This offered an opportunity to build on the framework of the One City Climate Strategy. The Transition Team approach reflected Bristol's One City approach bringing together actors beyond City Hall to work together to progress action on the One City Climate Strategy. Becoming a Mission City was also a significant chance to focus on the question of how to pay for the action that is needed to achieve decarbonisation.

In April 2022, 100 cities in the EU and 12 cities in countries associated to Horizon Europe, were selected to participate in the Mission. Bristol and Glasgow were the only UK cities selected to join the Mission.

Following selection as a Mission City, Bristol City Council and partners Abundance, Bristol and Bath Regional Capital and Bristol Climate and Nature Partnership applied for associated Pilot City Project funding to support a project focused on innovative ways of financing climate action. Bristol's project the Net Zero Investment Co-innovation Lab is developing new ways to fund climate action in the city.

In 2023, Bristol City Council and a wide partnership was awarded national research funding from Innovate UK to carry out a new project - Mission Net Zero. This project directly builds upon the ideas and approach of the Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission. The partners include all local authorities in the region, the West of England Combined Authority, Bristol and Bath Regional Capital, Bristol Climate and Nature Partnership, Bristol City Leap, Bristol Energy Network, Centre for Sustainable Energy, Living Places and National Grid Electricity Distribution. Mission Net Zero aims to speed up Bristol and the West of England's transition to net zero by working with local people to address some of the barriers to progress such as finding money for improvements and having the skilled professionals to do them. Funding will be used to support three communities in Bristol to plan the climate action projects that they want in their neighbourhoods and help them secure money to take them forward; this could include improving the energy efficiency of homes, generating more renewable energy or other actions. It will also build support for climate action through a strategic climate investment plan for Bristol and the West of England, to help direct investment into projects that will help reduce carbon emissions. In addition, it will support small businesses and people wanting to work on these climate projects, creating jobs and providing training for local people. This project complements the Climate City Contract process by developing parallel climate investment plans in the three areas and at the regional level. It builds on the Community Climate Action Project by moving towards creating an investment plan at the local community level.



More recently, Bristol authors formulated a Just Transition Declaration to accompany the Climate and Ecological Emergency declarations again emphasising the urgency of action required on all three interlinked areas. In 2024, it was adopted by Bristol City Council and other city partners. It is set of 10 principles that all climate and ecological work in the city can use in making plans to make them as just as possible. The 10 principles (in no particular order of importance) are:

1. Centring the expertise of disadvantaged communities at every step of the journey
2. Good future-proof jobs for everyone
3. Empowering disadvantaged communities to take climate and ecological action
4. Supporting individual change through system change
5. Fair distribution of costs and benefit
6. Prioritising accessible communication
7. Standing in solidarity with those experiencing the worst climate and ecological impacts across the globe
8. Building inclusive resilience
9. Infrastructure for all
10. Embedding the process internally and at the beginning

The **current opportunities** now available to Bristol via participation in the Mission are:

- to extend and build upon the **partnership working** begun in the city to support the delivery of the One City Climate Strategy through the formation of a Transition Team and production of an initial Climate City Contract
- to work with the Transition Team to compile a **plan of actions** which build on the One City Climate Strategy to set out in more detail a suggested portfolio of linked interventions which together if implemented would achieve the necessary emissions reductions by 2030 (as defined by the Mission) in the context of Just Transition and taking into account the recommendations of the Citizens Assembly and the actions communities have stated as important in their Community Climate Action Plans
- to focus on how to **finance** climate action through compiling a plan of how to match investment to the actions suggested
- to integrate the city plans with community and regional plans being developed in the Mission Net Zero Project.

The Transition Team intend this 2024 Climate City Contract for Bristol to be **an initial view of:**

- **a potential plan of action** which could be developed and revised in 2026
- **investment planning** which could be developed further with the support of specialist advice in this area. Noting that the non-confidential parts of the plan are published whereas the investment planning is confidential.

The **future opportunities** available to Bristol via participation in the Mission are to:

- further develop these initial plans with the benefit of more **community involvement** particularly with regard to the principles of the recent Just Transition Declaration
- offer Bristol's experience to and receive feedback from other Mission Cities through **sensemaking** opportunities.



## 2 Goal: Climate neutrality by 2030

### Goal

In 2020, Bristol published a [One City Climate Strategy](#) with the aim to become a carbon neutral and climate resilient city by 2030. Within the strategy Bristol's climate vision is expressed as follows:

*In 2030, Bristol is carbon neutral and climate resilient. We have collectively achieved a fair and inclusive transition; capturing the opportunities of new jobs and investment, improved health, wellbeing and education, and a better environment for local people. We have helped lead the way to a safer global climate.*

This remains the current carbon neutrality ambition covering all greenhouse gases (expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent), all scopes of emissions and the whole territory of the City of Bristol with no exclusions. It is therefore fully aligned to and surpasses the Mission ambition as it includes all scopes of emissions. No Emissions Trading Scheme facilities are excluded from the target.

Within this Climate City Contract the Transition Team has focused on the actions associated with emissions reductions from territorial emissions in line with the climate neutrality definition used by the Mission.

As stated in the One City Climate Strategy, there are many associated benefits to taking action on climate change. These include improved economic outcomes for people through provision of more cost-effective new services, community energy investment and the provision of green jobs from new services, low carbon construction projects and major projects such as retrofit programmes; improved effectiveness of public transport, public realm and air quality; release of land for other uses, freeing up road space easing congestion and providing space for those whose mobility needs are more acute; addressing fuel poverty; improved health outcomes through active travel, better indoor environments and improved air quality.



## 3 Strategic priorities

### Strategic priorities

The 10 strategic priorities identified in the One City Climate Strategy are:

1. Transport
2. Buildings
3. Heat decarbonisation
4. Electricity
5. Consumption and waste
6. Business and the economy
7. Public services
8. Natural environment
9. Food
10. Infrastructure interdependencies

Of these, the majority of emissions (related to the Mission definition) are associated with these priorities:

1. Transport
2. Buildings
3. Heat decarbonisation
4. Electricity

Emerging areas to take forward drawn from the action plan reflect these priority themes.

#### Transport:

1. Implement programme to significantly reduce car miles
2. Implement programme to encourage modal shift to active transport
3. Implement programme to encourage modal shift to public transport
4. Implement policy changes and provide innovation funding to encourage freight consolidation and low carbon deliveries
5. Implement programme to support accelerated shift from internal combustion engine vehicles to battery electric vehicles

#### Buildings:

1. Implement a city-wide programme for housing retrofit to reduce demand and integrate renewable generation.
2. Implement a city-wide programme for non-domestic building retrofit to reduce demand and integrate renewable generation.
3. Implement an inclusive training and skills programme for retrofit and renewable energy generation.

#### Heat decarbonisation:

1. Implement a programme to install or encourage/incentivise installation of heat pumps in homes in the city.
2. Implement a programme to install or encourage/incentivise installation of heat pumps in non-domestic buildings in the city.
3. Expand the network and connect more buildings to the heat network
4. Reduce carbon intensity of the existing gas network
5. Put in place an inclusive training and skills programme for heat pump installation and heat network construction

#### Electricity:

1. Implement programme to maximise renewable energy generation (esp. solar)
2. Reinforce local energy network and manage smartly

Bristol's strategy also identifies significant enabling conditions required for the priority areas to be actioned. These are:

- Data
- Funding



- National action
- Skills
- Engagement
- Infrastructure

Now the plans are completed, the focus of the Transition Team will be on the enabling conditions required to progress these priorities and on the process for prioritisation of actions on which to focus in order to obtain funding for these actions where this is identified in the investment planning assessment.

The critical stakeholders needed to bring about these changes quickly are:

- the Transition Team members
- in consultation with the people of Bristol with a particular focus on the Just Transition principles of centring the expertise of disadvantaged communities and with the aim of creating infrastructure for all and supported by
- the expertise of financial experts and
- the investor community with an interest in decarbonisation and/or specific asset classes relevant to the decarbonisation actions and the related enabling conditions

For this reason, the Transition Team is particularly interested in demonstrating the quality of our Climate City Contract sufficient to obtain the Cities Mission Label as we aim to be better connected with the expertise and investors associated with the European [Climate City Capital Hub](#) to facilitate capital flows to ensure we maximise the use of this to help implement our action plan.

Our next steps working as a Transition Team are to:

- deepen teamworking
- prioritise actions
- focus on where the Transition Team can help to develop partnerships to bring forward the priority actions and
- work towards obtaining the related funding required to implement actions





## 4 Process and principles

### Process and principles

The process and key principles to guide the implementation of the Climate City Contract would follow those set out in the One City Climate Strategy.

The One City Climate Strategy is based on principles of being Fair (achieving a Just Transition); Collaborative; Transformative (as a city leading the way); Learning (with other cities and regions and adapting our approach) and Evidence-based. The Climate City Contract would also follow these principles. The Impact Pathways for the Climate City Contract also demonstrated a clear need for co-creation in the development of the proposed actions in order for them to be successfully implemented.

Bristol City Council volunteered to be responsible for the overall coordination of the One City Climate Strategy and has employed the role of One City Climate Strategy Coordinator. The role is currently held as a job share. The two One City Climate Strategy Coordinators have coordinated the Transition Team in the production of the City Climate Contract and will continue to coordinate the Transition Team's work.

The process of monitoring progress on the Climate City Contract will be the same as the process for monitoring progress of the One City Climate Strategy. The One City Environment Board will continue to provide leadership and oversight of the delivery, supported by all five other Boards, who all came together to support the development of the One City Climate Strategy. The Bristol Advisory Committee on Climate Change will continue to provide evidence and advice to city partners including the Transition Team and to regularly produce an assessment of the city's progress to carbon neutrality. The monitoring, evaluation and learning framework for the Climate City Contract

The Climate City Contract will be treated as a dynamic document but with a scheduled update every two years.



## 5 Signatories

This table lists the signatories who are committing to this Climate City Contract and thereby to help the city achieve its goal to reach climate neutrality by 2030.

<b>Name of the signatory (organisation)</b>	<b>Sector / Domain / Level of operation</b>	<b>Legal form</b>	<b>Name of the responsible person</b>	<b>Position of the responsible person</b>
Bristol City Council	Local Government / Local	Local Authority	Councillor Tony Dyer	Leader, Bristol City Council
One City Environment Board	Cross-Sector / Local	City partnership organisation	Councillor Martin Fodor, Ann Cousins	Co-Chairs of the Board



## 6 Contract with signatures

### One City Environment Board

This Climate City Contract is endorsed by the One City Environment Board as the city of Bristol's climate action and investment plans to contribute to the achievement of the One City Climate Strategy. The Board commits to working with the Transition Team and other partners to help realise the plans' objectives.

Date of signature	Name	Signature
-------------------	------	-----------

(to be dated to Env Committee meeting date) Councillor Martin Fodor, Ann Cousins

---

One City Environment Board Co-Chairs

### Transition Team

We, the undersigned, commit to remaining part of the Transition Team. We are part of the Transition Team because we are taking actions to help make Bristol carbon neutral by 2030. We have together co-created a plan of actions (building on the One City Climate Strategy) which forms a suggested portfolio of linked interventions which together if implemented would achieve the necessary emissions reductions (as defined by the Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission). We agree on the ambition expressed in these actions. We agree to remain part of the Transition Team as it continues its work to:

- deepen teamworking
- prioritise actions from the Climate City Contract for development with a view to implementation
- focus on where the Transition Team can help to develop partnerships to bring forward the priority actions and
- work towards obtaining the related funding required to implement actions

Date of signature	Name	Signature
-------------------	------	-----------

(to be dated to Env Committee meeting date) Councillor Tony Dyer

---

Leader of Bristol City Council

(Further Transition Team signatories to be added when agreed by each organisation)