



Waltham Forest

Climate Action Plan

This is an interactive document

Vision Why we must act What we will do How we will do it

We need to accelerate commitment for climate action to reach net zero by 2030

How does Waltham Forest reach net zero emissions by 2030? To understand the level of commitment and intervention that is needed, we developed three scenarios. Each of the three scenarios shows the estimated emissions reduction that could be achieved at varying levels of action.

These pathways highlight the need for all stakeholders across the borough to take significant climate action. Meeting the target of becoming net zero by 2030 can only be achieved through acting upon the highest level of ambition and commitment.

[+ What if we only implemented already committed policies?](#)

[+ What if the Council took strong leadership to directly influence emissions through new policy?](#)

[+ What if Waltham Forest pursued its maximum ambition for climate action?](#)

What if we only implemented already committed policies?

At the national level, across the Greater London Authority (GLA) and within Waltham Forest, a range of climate policies have already been committed to, such as national plans to decarbonise the electricity grid through renewable energy. These already committed policies will only reduce Waltham Forest's emissions by about 20%, in 2030 leaving a significant gap to bridge.

Year	Committed Policy	Strong Council Leadership	Maximum ambition
2020	700	700	700
2025	650	550	450
2030	550	350	250
2035	500	300	200
2040	450	250	150

Graph showing the amount of carbon emissions if the council only implemented committed policies.

¹ EPA (2022). Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator.

Click these to navigate to different sections

Click these to switch between subsections

Interactivity

Throughout the report, look out for the icons below to navigate and explore more content.



Open

Click the icons to skip to each section



Underlined text

Click these to explore different content

“As is so often the case, Climate Change is hitting hardest for those on lowest incomes and in the most vulnerable position. Our Climate Plan is about taking bold action but it is also about fairness. Our plan means lower bills and warmer homes for all, but we will work hardest for those most in need.”

Cllr Grace Williams
Leader



“Our Climate Action Plan is about lower carbon emissions and better lives for our residents. Not one or the other. We have always been clear that we cannot do this alone – so we will give residents, businesses, employers and community groups the tools and support they need to help us all tackle the Climate Emergency together.”

Cllr Clyde Loakes
Deputy Leader and Climate and Air Quality



Summary

This Climate Action Plan sets out 20 actions, across four areas, which we will take to make this happen.

This is a huge challenge, and one that will need disruption, but we need disruption that is fair. Therefore, in each of the four areas, we also highlight a key disruption which will tackle the Climate Emergency, whilst improving the lives of our residents most in need. But more than that, our climate plan will change the life of residents and the look of the borough for the better.

The four action areas and the key disruption in each area are summarised below.

We, as a Council, are also committed to **Leading and Inspiring Collective Action**. Across each theme, we will take action to reduce our emissions from our own operations. Most importantly, we commit to placing climate action at the heart of everything we buy and undergo a culture shift in our procurement.

But we will also need your help. This is a huge challenge, and one we can only do together. Our aim is for Waltham Forest to be the UK's leading borough for collective climate action.

Click the icons on the right to skip to each section





Climate change is happening now and is happening locally

The need to act now

We are facing a Climate and Environmental Emergency.

Climate change is happening now and is happening locally. We have already started to see the local cost of climate change but, more than ever before, with the energy crisis we also see the local benefits of taking climate action. We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last who can do something about it.

Emissions from human activities have increased dramatically over the last several decades. These emissions, primarily the burning of fossil fuels for electricity, heating, and transportation, are accelerating climate change, and have increased climate risks in the UK, more locally in London and Waltham Forest¹.

Waltham Forest is in the top 30 worst affected Local Authorities from heatwaves in England². The unprecedented heatwaves of summer 2022 led to fires across London, including in Epping Forest and Bushwood, Leytonstone. The heat also threatened lives. A spike in 999 calls put extra pressure on the NHS. Care services supporting the elderly and vulnerable were particularly put under increased stress.

Besides heatwaves, Waltham Forest has also been hit by flash floods in Brooke Road, Higham Hill and in the Highams Park district, on local roads like Waterhall Lane. The floods inundated homes and businesses all over London, and submerged several London Underground Stations, including Earl's Court, Kentish Town and Turnpike Lane Tube.

The following maps created by the Greater London Authority (GLA) in partnership with Bloomberg Associates show the heat and flood risks across the whole borough³.

¹ UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022

² London World

³ Greater London Authority and Bloomberg Associates: Climate Risk Mapping

⁴ London Councils: Air pollution and the effect on our health

High levels of air pollution affect our residents' health, causing serious respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses. In London, 9,400 premature deaths are attributed to poor air quality.⁴

Sadly, these disastrous effects are just the beginning, but each of these effects is the result of our human choices: how we heat our homes; how we travel; what we buy and what we eat, highlighting the importance of acting now to tackle climate change.

National governments cannot tackle climate change alone. Local Authorities have a vital role to play. Our local area is the place where many people live, work, rest, and play. We can tackle the sources of our carbon emissions in a way that works for the local strengths and challenges of the borough. As a borough, we must work hard to both adapt to and become more resilient to these climate impacts, while reducing our emissions to avoid the worst of them.

Waltham Forest has created this Action Plan to set out how we can all play our part in reducing emissions and improving climate resilience across the borough.

[Click here to toggle between maps](#)



Benefits of taking local climate action

Taking action to tackle climate change also has real benefits, and many of those benefits are local. The energy crisis that has taken hold in 2022 has exacerbated fuel poverty which is likely to disproportionately impact lower income households,⁵ with an alarming two-thirds of UK households potentially being pushed into fuel poverty by January 2023 because of rising bills.⁶ The climate crisis and the energy crisis are connected. The same solutions to tackle the rising energy crisis are also key solutions to tackle the climate crisis, such as insulating homes to reduce the demand for energy and generating more energy from local and renewable sources.

Local climate actions will not only help with the energy crisis - they have a wider range of benefits, which will improve the health and prosperity of Waltham Forest residents, enabling a better quality of life for all. From green jobs and growth of the local economy to more active and happy lives, and cleaner air and water, climate actions have an immediate tangible impact on residents' lives⁷.

Click the boxes to find out more!



⁵ [Office for National Statistics](#)

⁶ [CarbonBrief](#)

⁷ [C40Cities: Benefits of urban climate action](#)

To act on climate, we need to disrupt – but ensure that it is done in a fair and equitable way.

Creating a net zero future will require a substantial change in many of the ways we live our lives and will require action by all. Waltham Forest is proudly taking the bold actions set out in this Climate Action Plan. To reduce the disastrous consequences of climate change, we need action to be taken by all residents, central government, and businesses alike to radically reduce carbon emissions over the next decade.

Social justice and climate justice are interlinked; disadvantaged residents are both more vulnerable to the impact of climate change and have the least resource available to deal with its impact. This means that any solutions to tackle climate change should consider the needs of communities and contribute to tackling inequalities. We need to disrupt to achieve this change, but we need to disrupt in a fair way, to ensure that we support those most in need. We see this Climate Action Plan as a unique and important opportunity to ensure that our net zero future can work for all residents, creating new social value, and improving health, safety, wellbeing, and resilience across the borough.

While this is a single document that lays out our plan, it's important to see our climate action as an evolving, living and breathing journey. Together we can shape our path to a thriving net zero future.



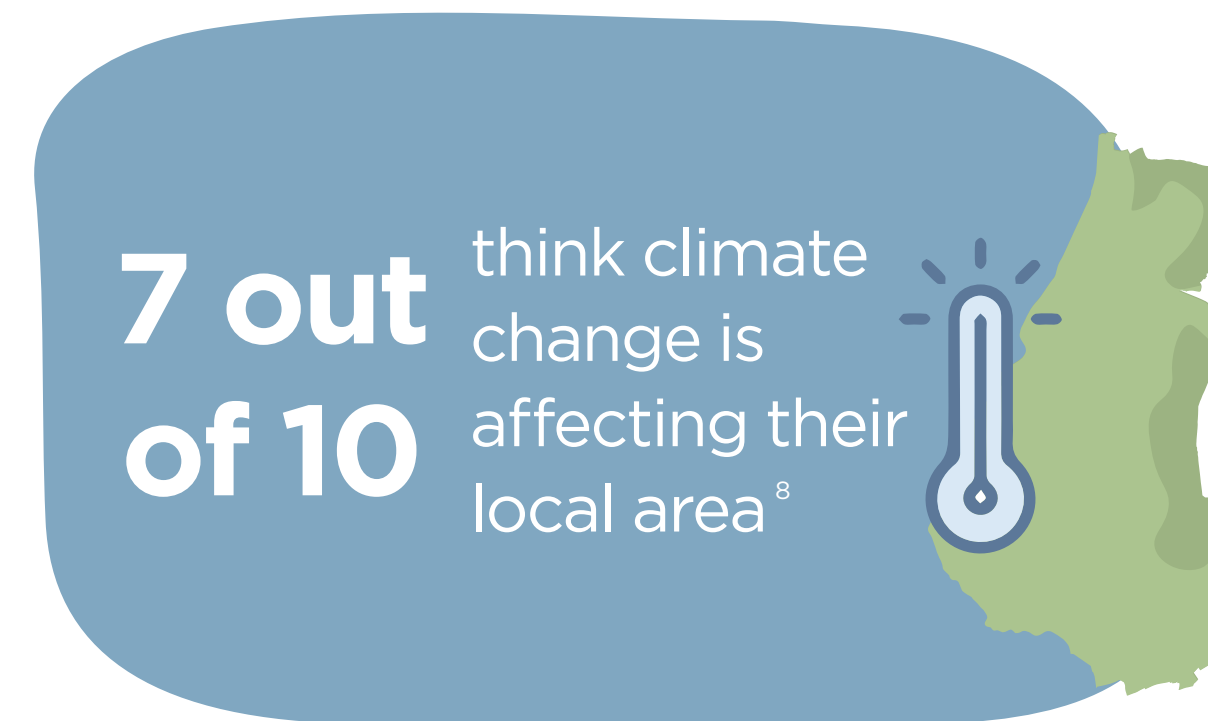


**We cannot do this without the engagement of
all Waltham Forest residents**

What you think

We cannot do this without the engagement of all Waltham Forest residents. We have built this plan based on what you have told us. This is what we have heard.

From your views, one thing is clear: we must do more to act on climate change. To achieve this requires continued forms of collaboration and engagement with diverse groups that call Waltham Forest their home. We'll speak more about future collaboration and engagement in Part 3 of this Climate Action Plan. Importantly, we see this Climate Action Plan as a continuation of working together: we needed your input to make the plan and we will need more of your input to make it a reality.



⁸ Online survey conducted between November and December 2019 engaged 3,090 Waltham Forest residents. LBWF Climate Emergency Research Report.

⁹ An engagement with over 1,400 children and young people carried out across November and December 2019. Kaizen Report Waltham Forest Climate Emergency Youth Consultation.

Timeline with Progress to Date¹⁰

Waltham Forest strives to be an ambitious and innovative Council when it comes to acting on climate change. While we have taken important steps along our transition to become a net zero and thriving borough, our journey is not yet over. We see this climate action plan as a key bridging point to continue our pathway as a borough. It lays out the actions that will be built upon over the coming years.



These initiatives are a start but reaching net zero by 2030 is ambitious and there is a lot more to be done if we are to be successful. This Climate Action Plan sets a vision for Waltham Forest and presents some of the climate actions required to achieve net zero by 2030.

¹⁰ [Waltham Forest website: Climate Change](#)

¹¹ [Department for Transport - Gear Change: One Year On, 2021](#)



Where do our emissions come from?

To reduce our carbon emissions, it is important to understand where they come from. As part of this Climate Action Plan, we analysed the key sources of carbon emissions that are generated across the borough. In 2020, activities in Waltham Forest generated a total of 692 kilo tonnes (kt) of carbon (CO₂e).

*Click below to visualise
data in different graphs*



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¹² EPA (2022). Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator.



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Energy Efficient Buildings

2030 Vision: All buildings in Waltham Forest are energy efficient, making them affordable, comfortable and adaptable to the changing climate.

Key target: 80% of homes in Waltham Forest have achieved an EPC level of B (or equivalent) or higher by 2030.

▶ [Climate Actions](#)

▶ [Council Leadership](#)

▶ [Examples](#)

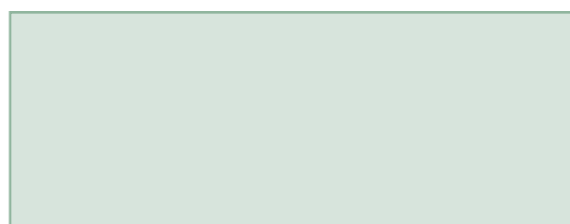




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A Place for People not Cars

2030 Vision: The safe streets and great pedestrian and cycling infrastructure means that most resident journeys are made by walking, cycling or taking zero emissions public transport that is accessible to all. Waltham Forest is a great place to live, with less traffic, less noise, and less pollution. Creating places for people rather than cars will support and strengthen the communities who need it the most.

Key target: At least 80% of journeys in Waltham Forest are made by walking, cycling or other public transport modes.

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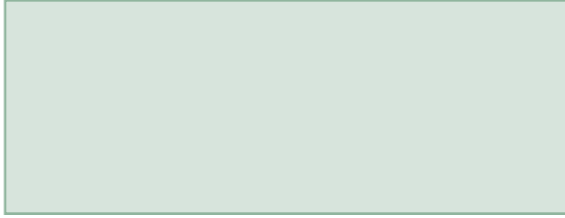




Consuming Less, Recycling More

2030 Vision: Waltham Forest is a zero-waste borough, following the “reduce, reuse, recycle” approach. Our residents make sustainable choices about what they buy, and businesses support repair and refurbishment. All residents have access to fresh healthy and sustainable food which is affordable.

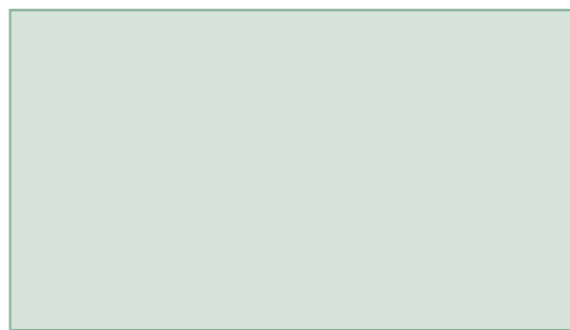
Key target: Increase recycling rates to 50% and reduce food waste by 50% per person by 2030.



A Greener, More Resilient Borough

2030 Vision: Waltham Forest is one of the greenest boroughs in London. Residents have access to high-quality green space within 15 minutes of their homes to support their mental and physical well-being. The air is clean, and the local wildlife thrives.

Key target: 40% of the total area of the borough will consist of open spaces (such as natural and semi-natural greenspace, green corridors, allotments, civic spaces, playgrounds and sports facilities).





This Climate Action Plan is just the beginning

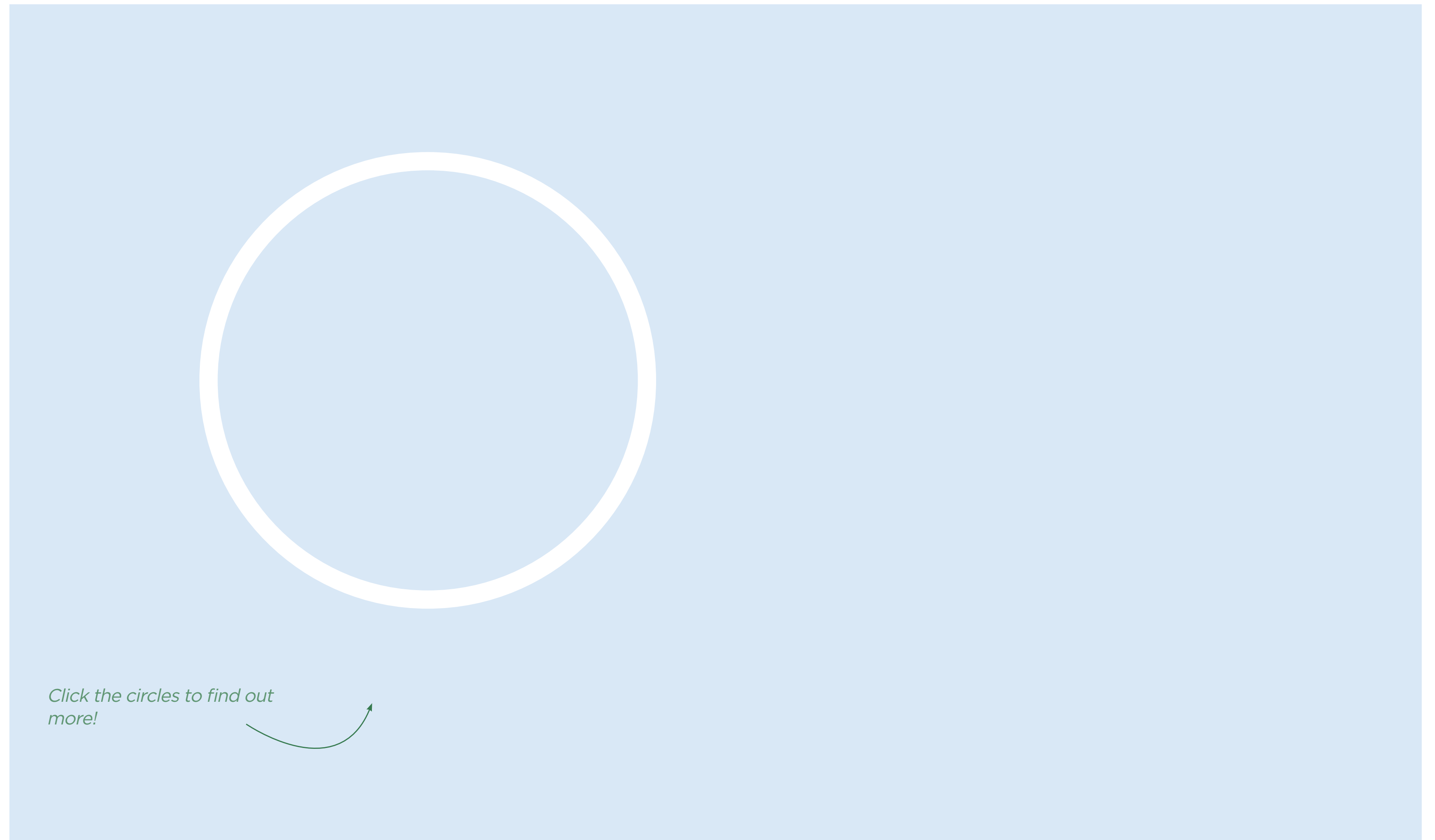
How do we make this plan a reality?

We need to dramatically reduce our carbon emissions in the next 8 years.

But we also need to ensure Waltham Forest is a great place to live, for all residents. This will be difficult. We will need a huge amount of collective energy and commitment. This will involve collaboration between all of us here in Waltham Forest, from community groups, the Council, households, schools, and businesses big and small.

We have outlined some of the key actions that we will take as a borough in the coming years to reduce our environmental impact and adapt to our changing climate. But how can we make this Plan a reality? We see this plan as a starting point to accelerate action. We must test these actions and learn from our successes and challenges, helping us to scale up actions across the borough over time.

We will work across four key areas to propel climate action in Waltham Forest.



What can I do now?

This is just the beginning.

Achieving net zero by 2030 is extremely ambitious and we will need everyone in the borough to play their part. Many of the actions presented here that can achieve the greatest impact on reducing our carbon emissions are in the hands of the residents of Waltham Forest, the businesses and other public sector institutions. Tackling the Climate and Environmental Emergencies will be a collective effort.

Over the coming years, we will work hard to further develop the supporting advice, tools and finance for delivering this plan, including a detailed financial analysis for funding the climate actions necessary to reach net zero by 2030 and a resident engagement plan.

In the meantime, we need your help to get started. We need your help to create the fair, thriving but low-carbon future for Waltham Forest. Below are 3 things you can do right now:

Spreading the word and influencing others to join in is just as important. Every little help and every person joining the movement can make a difference. We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last who can do something about it.



Click the boxes to explore resources!

What do we mean by Net Zero?

Net Zero means our borough makes no overall contribution to climate change.

This means dramatically reducing our carbon emissions – from how we heat our buildings to how we move around. Any remaining carbon emissions will then be matched, or ‘offset’, by absorbing carbon, for example through trees, or reducing carbon emissions elsewhere, for example selling clean energy outside the borough.



What do we mean by Remaining Emissions?

Net zero means that the carbon emissions generated in Waltham Forest will equal the amount taken out of the atmosphere by trees and other carbon sinks. So net zero does not mean zero emissions – the small amount of carbon emissions remaining in 2030 are called residual emissions.



What do we mean by Resilience?

Resilience is the capacity of our infrastructure, services, businesses, and communities to prepare for, absorb and recover quickly from shocks and stresses, including (for example) incremental changes in average temperature or sudden severe flood events.



What do we mean by Fuel Poverty?

A household is classed as being in fuel poverty if the home energy efficiency rating is Band D or below and their disposable income (after housing and fuel costs) is below the poverty line*.



*BEIS, 2020

Why ‘retrofit’?

Homes are the biggest source of emissions in Waltham Forest. As 80% of the houses we will live in in 2050 already exist, we need to make them more energy efficient. Improving the energy efficiency of our homes requires better access to financial support and suitable suppliers.



ARUP