



Climate Change Annual Report 2025/26



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Foreword

Thank you for taking the time to read Chesterfield Borough Council's Climate Change Annual Report 2025 - 2026.

Since we published our climate change strategy in 2023, we have continued to deliver and monitor climate-related activities, and this is now the fourth annual report detailing our progress across key services.

With significant council investment and additional external funding through the UK Government's Warm Homes Plan, we have continued to improve our existing housing stock with energy efficiency upgrades which have provided our tenants with more comfortable, energy efficient homes and the opportunity to save money on energy bills. Our newly built sustainable council homes include a mix of low-carbon heating, solar panels and accessible electric vehicle charge points which have helped to reduce our environmental impact and provide our tenants with sustainable homes fit for the future.

The council began its transition to an electric fleet in 2024/25, with a total of 34 electric vehicles in use throughout the past year, which has contributed to improved air quality across the borough, lowered our running costs and improved the council's energy security through reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. Additional investment committed in 2026 will now finance an estimated 30 more electric vehicles to be on the road in the coming year.

We have continued to manage visible changes to our green spaces by the way we maintain and protect parks and open spaces. Current practices support our resilience to climate change, and provide many benefits to residents, visitors and wildlife. An improved approach to grass cutting and an increase in wildflowers have enhanced the appeal of our many parks and vital open spaces and longer term we hope to build on this work by supporting the development of nature-based solutions and additional green infrastructure across our borough which would provide shared benefits for the environment, nature, communities and businesses.

We all recognise that the weather patterns across England, the UK and globally, are changing year on year, and building our resilience to extreme weather events must continue to remain a priority over the next two-years as we move into a new era of local government.

Councillor Martin Stone

**Cabinet member for climate change,
planning and the environment**
Chesterfield Borough Council



Introduction

Since launching our climate change strategy in 2023 we have been delivering climate-related activities supporting six key themes of work:

-  **1** Building and energy use
-  **2** Travel
-  **3** Green space, land use and offsetting
-  **4** Communications, engagement and training
-  **5** Data, monitoring, and corporate activity
-  **6** Council influence and partnership activity

Our latest climate change annual report provides an overview of our progress during the delivery year 2025/26 with a focus on the key achievements across council services, relationships with local and national partners, and a look ahead to the next two years.



Highlights of activities during 2025/26

Building and energy use.

Multi-year housing decarbonisation programme

During 2025/26, the council secured more than £4 million of funding to deliver a three-year programme of energy-efficiency and low-carbon heating improvements across homes in Chesterfield, supporting warmer homes, reduced energy use and lower carbon emissions.

Funding has been awarded through the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund (Wave 3) and the Warm Homes Local Grant (WHLG), via the Midlands Net Zero Energy Hub consortium. Delivery includes a mix of fabric and systems measures to improve thermal comfort and long-term affordability for residents.

Of the total award, £3.3 million is secured for social housing to support improvements to the council's housing stock. Measures include solar panels, air source heat pumps, loft insulation, upgraded ventilation, and heating controls.

The programme is improving home comfort and supporting residents to reduce fuel consumption and associated emissions. Tenants are contacted directly where works are scheduled and are supported throughout the process, from survey through to installation and aftercare.

In addition, £1.1 million was secured for private homes to support eligible owner-occupiers and private landlords to undertake energy-efficiency improvements. To qualify for grant support, applicants must be an owner-occupier or private landlord, hold a valid EPC rating of between D and G, and meet one of the government's eligibility criteria.

RE:GEN Yorkshire and East Midlands have been appointed to deliver the programme, building on an established partnership and previous delivery experience. The programme supports the council's longer-term ambition to reduce borough-wide emissions and improve housing quality, alongside action to tackle fuel poverty and improve resident wellbeing.

Delivery is being managed end-to-end by RE:GEN, including surveys and eligibility checks, programme planning, installation, resident communications and aftercare.

Building and energy use

A-rated council homes

A programme of new-build, affordable and energy-efficient homes in Middlecroft and Staveley has been completed, expanding the supply of council housing across the borough. This included four homes at Ringwood Avenue and Court Place, and a further nine homes delivered as part of the final phase.

The final phase includes four two-bedroom bungalows at Wensley Way, two two-bedroom houses at Paisley Close, and three two-bedroom houses at Aston Court. All homes are allocated to eligible local households via the council's housing register.

All of the homes have been designed to achieve an A-rated EPC (energy performance certificate) and have been fitted with an air source heat pump to supply hot water and heat the homes via underfloor heating – without the need for a gas boiler.

Solar PV has also been installed at each property and is specified to generate more energy than the homes are expected to use, supporting lower running costs and emissions. Homes are designed for modern living, with open-plan kitchen/dining areas, well-proportioned bedrooms, generous storage, and high levels of insulation and energy-efficient features to support year-round comfort.

Each home includes private outdoor space and dedicated parking for electric vehicle charge points. The bungalows provide level access and are designed to enable future adaptations (including the potential installation of lifts and ceiling hoists), supporting independent living as residents' needs change.



Housing summary of delivery and performance in 2025/26



8,643

Total number of
council homes



1,400

EPC assessments
completed



309

Homes identified as
suitable for retrofit



45

Homes with retrofit
upgrades completed
– loft insulation, solar
panels and ventilation



4,464

Homes now at EPC C
or above



5

Homes with electric
vehicle chargers
(requested by tenants)



11

New build homes
with sustainable
interventions – heat
pumps, solar panels
and electric vehicle
chargers



166,79 kWh

Estimated energy saved from
measures delivered



Building and energy use

Completion of the landmark rail innovation centre

Construction of a state-of-the-art rail innovation and training centre in Barrow Hill, Staveley has been completed. The Derbyshire Rail Industry Innovation Vehicle (DRIIVe) will create high-quality jobs and skills opportunities for local people, and bolster Chesterfield's ambitions to be a leading destination for the rail sector.

Works on the new facility, which is located next to the historic Barrow Hill Roundhouse, were completed by Chesterfield Borough Council's contractor Stepnell. The building has been designed as a flagship destination for the rail industry offering modern classrooms and training areas, specialist research and development facilities including a digital laboratory, and high-quality commercial workshop space all powered by air source heat pumps and a solar array with electric vehicle charge points installed.

"It's fantastic to see work on the construction of DRIIVe now complete. This has been a long standing ambition for our council, and its delivery strengthens Chesterfield's position within the rail sector. DRIIVe is a unique facility that not only provides space for businesses to undertake vital research and development, including cutting edge digital innovation, but also creates new training opportunities for local people. This will help us attract high value employers to the area while ensuring our residents gain the skills and qualifications needed to secure high quality jobs in the industry" – Councillor Tricia Gilby, leader of Chesterfield Borough Council and vice chair of the Staveley Town Deal Board.

DRIIVe is being delivered by Chesterfield Borough Council in collaboration with Barrow Hill Engine Shed Society, which will manage the facility on a day-to-day basis. The centre will support a network of specialist training providers – offering rail-related and sustainability education including from level two through to postgraduate training and research.

Becoming a prominent location for rail technology, DRIIVe will also serve as a base for rail-related supply chain businesses which will have access to the very latest research and innovation. Primarily funded through the Staveley Town Deal, DRIIVe has also received a funding boost from East Midlands Combined County Authority.



Travel

Electrifying our council fleet

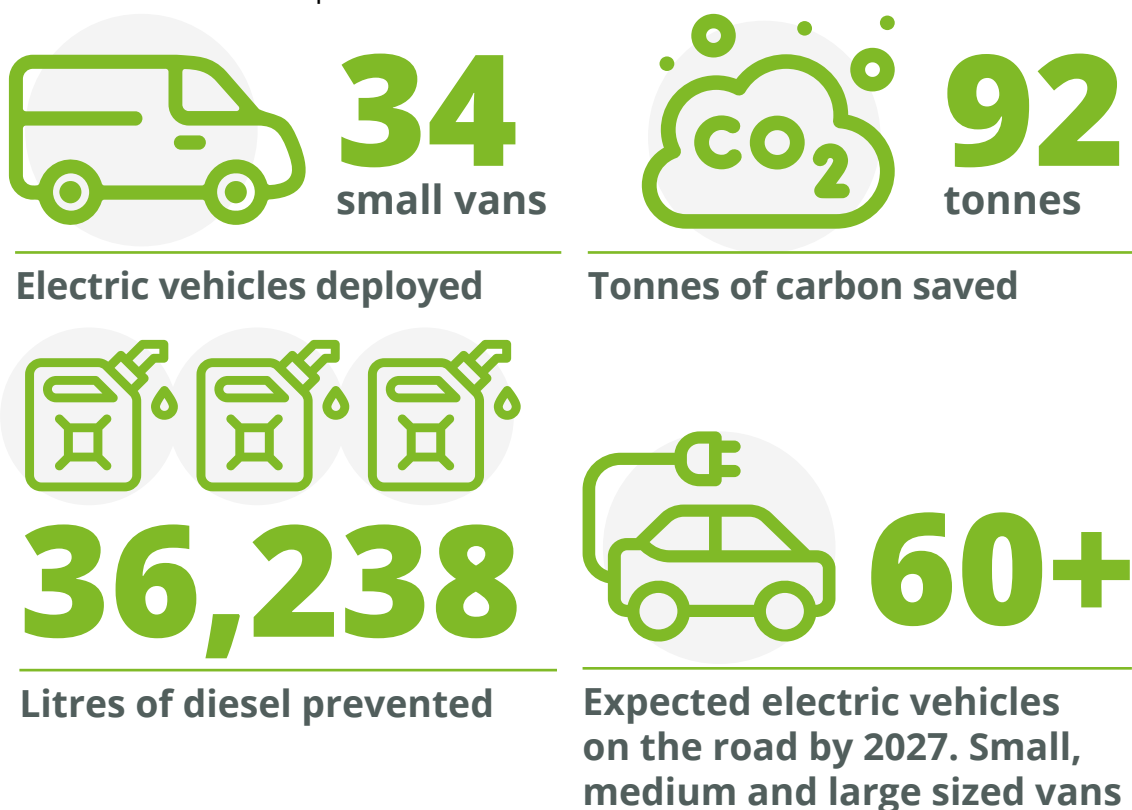
Our council fleet currently consist of 239 vehicles, the majority (86 percent) being fossil-fuelled medium and large sized vans.

We have invested in 34 electric vehicles and the required charging infrastructure at our Stonegravels Depot. This has enabled us to sustain petrol and diesel consumption in the last delivery year despite additional workload to maintain council homes and an increase in staff during this period.

From April 2025 to March 2026, we have prevented using a further 36,238 litres of diesel due to 34 small electric vans being deployed across busy service areas for a full delivery year, which equates to a saving of 92 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e).

The roll out of 34 zero-emission vehicles comes with other bonuses too, including positive feedback from our staff, fewer breakdowns and repairs and a reduction in the amount of carbon per mile.

During 2026/27, our aim is to increase our electric fleet to over 25 percent and introduce an additional 30 or more medium to large-sized electric vans. Plans are currently underway to work with our staff to install home charge points which will provide the required electric vehicle charging infrastructure to deliver phase two of our fleet electrification plan.





Green space, offsetting and land use

A new approach to grass cutting in Chesterfield

In July 2025 the council introduced a new approach to grass cutting to improve biodiversity across the borough, with an interactive map showing how areas are managed.

The approach varies across key types of grassland area, like managed long meadows and 'pollinator pockets' which are cut less often. This is encouraging native species of wildflowers to bloom and providing new habitats for wildlife.

Residents can also access the interactive map which shows the different types of grassland areas near them, so they can understand how often areas will be cut and what the council is trying to achieve in each area.

The council has identified key areas where the number of cuts is reduced to create a managed long meadow and pollinator pockets. Pollinator pockets are areas where commercial wildflower seeds have been sown. These are non-native species but are great for wildlife and create a fantastic display for residents and visitors.

Managed long meadows are otherwise unused areas, where grass is allowed to grow long and only cut on an annual basis to create space for wildlife but also encourage the growth of native species of wildflowers. The edges of managed long meadows are cut to create a clear edge that improves the visual appeal with some areas including cut pathways allowing residents and visitors to walk through the meadow.

"By allowing grass to grow longer we provide much-needed support for wildflowers and wildlife across the borough. We also reduce our carbon emissions because we're using our grass-cutting equipment less, and the natural grassland spaces can store carbon emissions. We want our borough to be welcoming for residents and visitors but also for nature and we think that this new policy strikes the right balance between formal greenspaces and environments where nature can thrive" - Councillor Martin Stone, cabinet member for climate change, planning, and environment.

[Click for interactive map](#)



Green space, offsetting and land use

Wilder Chesterfield

Wilder Chesterfield is an exciting two-year (2025-2027) pilot project, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to aid nature's recovery in our urban spaces, street by street, and help make nature a priority in our communities.

The project, which is being led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, is aiming to transform urban streets into valuable habitats for hedgehogs, bats, swifts, and the Big Five Pollinators: flies, wasps, bees, butterflies and moths. By creating richer, greener urban spaces and empowering local communities, the project is laying the foundations for a wilder, healthier Chesterfield where nature and people can thrive side by side.

The Wilder Chesterfield pilot project focuses on five key areas in Chesterfield: Holme Hall, Barrow Hill, Mastin Moor, Poolsbrook and Duckmanton. The Wilder Chesterfield project includes an exciting range of volunteering and training opportunities, community-based projects, citizen science and art, to share skills, knowledge and experiences to inspire and enable communities to get involved in bringing nature into the Borough's streets.

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust are working with schools and community, nature and wellbeing groups, as well as the Council, developers and housing associations to make nature a crucial part of our urban spaces.

"The Wilder Chesterfield project is in full swing, and it has been exciting to see the range of wildlife being spotted in the town. We have so far hosted bumblebee surveying training for enthusiastic bee monitors in Staveley and a hedgehog activity morning at the Duckmanton Miners Welfare Club. Local schools have been enjoying learning about hedgehogs and swifts and helping to build important wildlife habitats in their grounds. With more insects active, mammals appearing after hibernation and birds migrating to the UK for the summer, it's a great time to get outdoors in your garden, allotment or local park and enjoy spending time in nature." – Emily Howes, Community Rewilding Lead, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.



Green space, offsetting and land use

Don Catchment Rivers Trust

The council have continued to work with Don Catchment Rivers Trust (DCRT) throughout the year to increase awareness of simple natural flood management interventions and the many co-benefits they provide for communities, nature and wildlife.

Two new rain garden planters funded by Chesterfield Borough Council have been installed in Stand Road Park, Whittington Moor, as part of efforts being made to create habitats for wildlife and slow the drainage process following rainstorms. Don Catchment Rivers Trust with support from the council led the project to install the rain garden planters, otherwise known as Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) units that are located on the pavilion building. This follows the success of rain garden planters installed at Holmebrook Valley Park previously.

“We are thrilled to have been able to install a couple of rain garden planters at Stand Road Park which will complement the great work the council and Friends of Stand Road Park Group have put into the area, improving it for nature and people alike. The planters will not only provide more wildlife habitat but will help slow the flow of heavy rainfall into the sewer network which can help reduce the risk of flooding and sewer spills into our rivers. The first planters we installed in Holmebrook Valley Park have gone down a treat with visitors who have commented on them being very special, interesting for all ages, and having a clever watering system” – Debbie Coldwell, Natural Flood Management (NFM) Officer at DCRT.

In addition to raingardens, DCRT also secured funding from the council’s Community Grants Fund to commission a short animation explaining what people can do to reduce flood risk in their communities. The two-minute-long animation outlines the risk of flooding to properties and the basic steps we can all do to help slow the flow of rainwater helping to reduce the pressure on our drainage and river networks.

Our ‘Rain it in’ animation on what people can do in and around the home to help reduce flood risk is now ready to be shared and we’re getting the word out in the hope that [residents] might be inspired! – Debbie Coldwell, NFM Officer, DCRT

Click [here](#) to watch the full animation

Communications, engagement and training

Chesterfield's Climate Change Forum

Throughout the year, our Climate Change Forum has met to discuss a number of relevant topics including, nature, climate vulnerability and the Community Grants Fund.

In March 2026, 20 representatives from a range of local community groups gathered at the latest climate change meeting to share progress, ideas and inspiration. The meeting focused on climate change projects being delivered across the borough and how communities are helping to drive the council's climate agenda.

Attendees heard an encouraging overview of climate-related projects that have been awarded funding from the council's Community Grants Fund to date, showcasing a wide range of positive projects already underway. The session included photographs highlighting the impact of the funding and the creativity of groups involved.

The forum welcomed lead volunteers from Hollingwood Sheds outlined exciting plans for a future development featuring solar panels, a green roof, recycled construction materials and wildlife habitats. Although the scheme is still at the planning stage, their detailed models and forward-thinking approach was a key talking point at the forum.



Since its launch in 2023, the Community Grants Fund has been open to applications from local community groups across the borough for projects that provide volunteering opportunities and strengthen communities. The grants fund criteria include a specific section about climate change to support delivery of projects that support the local community to adapt to a changing climate, reduce their carbon footprint and support biodiversity in the local community.

As a result, we have already funded 36 climate change related projects amounting to £179,586 of grants given. Successful applications have been from our local voluntary and community sector groups, charities and non-profit organisations providing activities and support to residents and communities across Chesterfield.

The Climate Change Forum continues to provide a valuable space for local groups to share learning, celebrate success and explore opportunities to work together in support of Chesterfield's climate priorities.



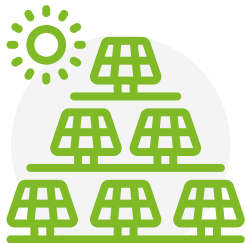
36

Number of
projects funded



29

Number of
non-profit
organisations
funded



4

Solar array
projects



6

Energy efficiency
projects



10

Community
gardens



9

Awareness
activities and
support



4

Active travel
and workshops



3

Upcycling
projects

Council influence and partnership activity

Supporting renewable energy projects in the voluntary sector

Our partnerships and networks are extensive and include local authorities across the UK, charities and non-profits, and large and small businesses all working together to address environmental issues and improve climate change initiatives and sustainable practices.

Two community buildings in Chesterfield have taken steps to reduce their carbon footprint, as well as their energy costs by installing solar panels on their roofs thanks to funding secured from capital funding available through the Community Grants Fund scheme.

Loundsley Green Community Trust and the Cosy Hub in Grangewood are hoping to redirect savings from their energy costs to their community programmes, whilst at the same time reducing their carbon footprint. Loundsley Green Community Trust received £19,035 for solar panels at Loundsley Green Community Centre, and the Cosy Hub received £15,240 to help them to generate clean, renewable electricity throughout the year.

The solar panels will improve energy efficiency and create a warmer, more sustainable environment for residents who use the building and its services. The installation of the solar panels, forms part of the council's ongoing commitment to tackling climate change and supporting local organisations to become more energy efficient. The move also contributes to the wider ambition for the borough to reduce carbon emissions and promote greener ways of living and working.



“I’m delighted that the two community buildings have decided to take this positive environmental action and install solar panels. I understand that the panels are already making a positive difference for the organisations, with both buildings operating more efficiently and sustainably” – Councillor Martin Stone, cabinet member for climate change, planning, and environment.

“Energy costs are one of our biggest overheads at Loundsley Green Community Centre and The Green Enterprise Centre. In addition to that, we are very conscious of the environmental impact that a large building like ours has in terms of its energy consumption. Installation was completed in December, and we have been able to watch the benefits through an online app. Even in these winter months we have watched long periods where the consumption of electricity from the grid has been zero – in those periods we have been generating all our needs” – Ian Birchmore, chair of Loundsley Green Community Trust.

“The savings on our energy bills are allowing us to heat our space more affordably and keep our doors open more often for the people who rely on us. Also, by reducing our overheads we can free up vital funds that can be put straight back into our community by supporting future sessions, improving our equipment and expanding the activities we can offer. This project is not just about energy and saving money it’s about strengthening our hub and creating more opportunities for everyone who comes through our doors” - Danny Henman, CEO Community Development Chesterfield.



Data monitoring and corporate activity

Council emissions to date

The council owns a wide range of commercial and operational buildings with high energy demand. Our aim to reduce our reliance on gas for heating and cooling and generate our own electricity remains a key focus but comes with significant challenges.

In early 2025 we secured £2.4m from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to deliver a heat decarbonisation project at the Healthy Living Centre which will be complete by March 2028, and we have heat decarbonisation roadmaps for an additional eight priority buildings – commercial and operational buildings with high footfall combined with high energy use.

We currently have operational solar panels installed on eight buildings which we estimate have generated at least 164,665.7 kilowatt hours or 3.4% of the council's total electricity consumption from April 2025 to March 2026. The council's newest enterprise centre, Northern Gateway had a solar array installed in 2025 which over the last 12-months has generated approximately 47,668 kilowatt hours of the building's electricity demand.

Work is currently underway to determine the viability of increasing the solar array on Queens Park Sports Centre and introducing a full solar array on our Healthy Living Centre which is hoped will be the next phase of our investment in energy generation technology.

Council emissions from April 2019 to March 2026

Providing transparency in the council's greenhouse gas emissions reporting remains a focus and heavily supports our climate change targets and ambitions. Monitoring and reporting real time energy consumption across our estate continues to be complex, and as the Council continues to improve our methodologies, we are improving the ability to detect inconsistencies.

New software to be introduced in late 2026 and additional smart meter installations providing real time data will enable our internal reporting processes to become more accurate, which may result in the decision to establish a new emissions benchmark (baseline year) to enable us to measure our progress more accurately.

As part of our commitment to improve our monitoring and understanding of the Council's energy use, and to influence day-to-day actions and behaviours that reduce consumption, our delivery plan for 2026-2028 includes an action to establish a premise manager group.

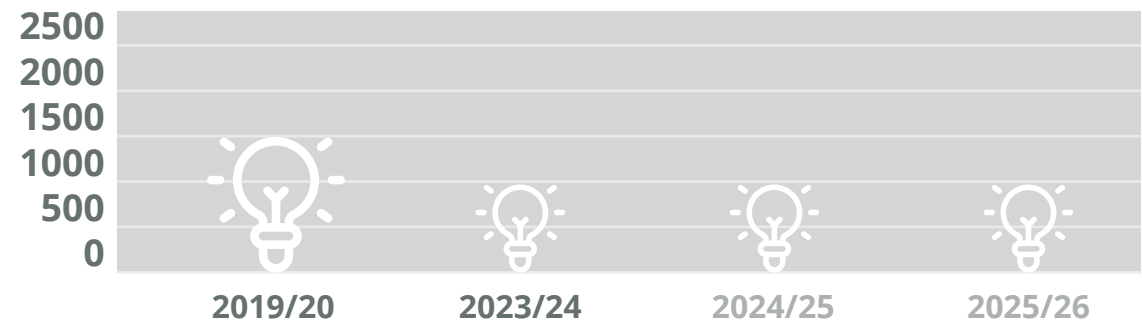
As of 31 March 2026, over the 2025/26 delivery year, our emissions from our electricity have reduced by 2.7 percent from the previous year. Our gas emissions however have risen to 1,829.31 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) which is an increase of 2.3 percent.

With a high workload and additional staff in key service areas, our emissions from road fuels have seen only a slight increase of 0.27 percent, which has been helped by 34 electric vehicles deployed for a full 12-months. The introduction of small electric vans has prevented an additional 36,000 litres of diesel and incurred additional electricity consumption totalling 60,043.45 kilowatt hours.

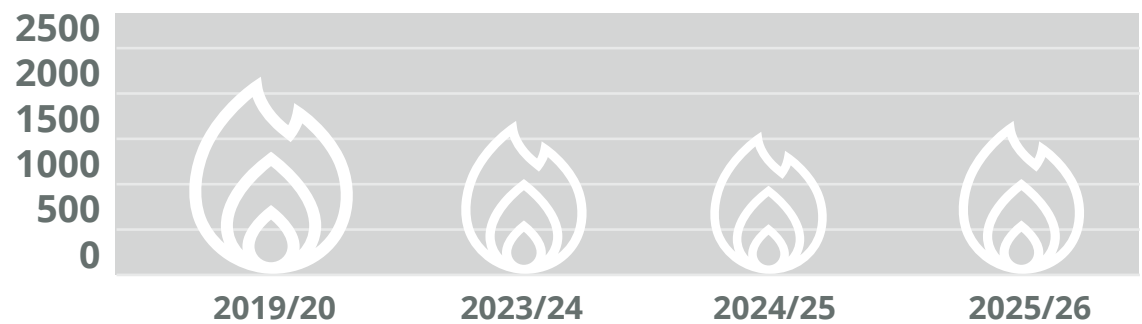
We continue to offset our electricity usage by purchasing REGOs (Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin). Issued by a regulatory body such as Ofgem, REGOs are certificates that verify electricity has been generated from zero-carbon sources and have enabled us to make more informed choices regarding our energy supplier aligning to our commitment to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions across all services.

Chesterfield Borough Council carbon emissions (tCO₂e)

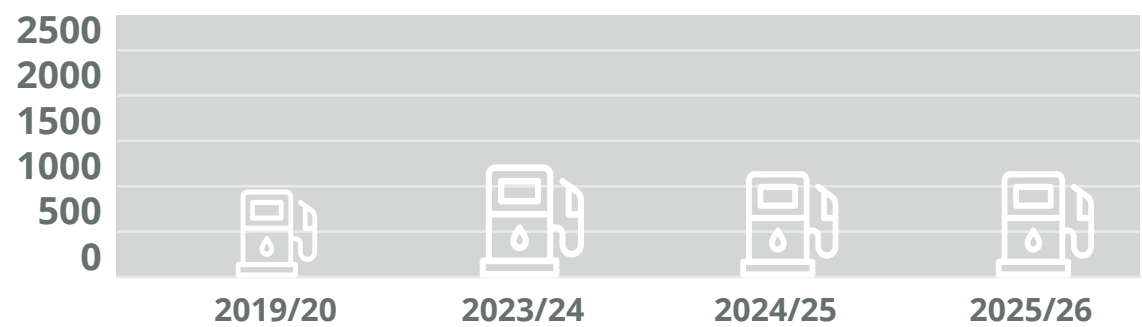
Electricity



Gas



Road fuel





Looking ahead

Building and energy use - new homes for local residents

Works are now underway on a project that will see the delivery of 18 brand-new, energy-efficient homes in Mastin Moor.

This project marks one of the first housing developments to be supported by the East Midlands Combined County Authority's (EMCCA) Brownfield Housing Fund. This initiative, funded by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and delivered in partnership with Homes England, will unlock stalled residential developments and breathe new life into under-used land across the region.

The development will see 13 new council homes built on Miller Avenue, whilst a further five houses will also be constructed on Edale Road. Overall, the development comprises seven four-bedroom homes and eleven two-bedroom homes, all of which will be let to families on the council's housing register.

Henry Boot Construction has been appointed by the council and will be responsible for the delivery of the new homes – all of which will benefit from A-rated energy efficiency measures. All homes will have solar panels and air source heat pumps fitted – helping to keep energy costs down for tenants and reduce carbon emissions across the borough.

Families who move into the new homes will be able to enjoy the outdoor spaces through private gardens and benefit from off-road parking – although the properties are located on bus routes, allowing for easy access to amenities. Bat and bird boxes will also be installed at each of the homes, along with electric vehicle charging points.

“With the cost of living continuing to rise, we know how important it is to our tenants to keep homes warm but energy costs down, so we're really pleased to be delivering new properties with the top energy efficiency rating” – Councillor Jean Innes, Chesterfield Borough Council's cabinet member for housing

“This project is a powerful example of how we're turning our vision for inclusive growth into reality. Through the Brownfield Housing Fund, we're creating high-quality, affordable homes that meet the needs of local families while supporting greener, more sustainable communities” – Claire Ward, Mayor of the East Midlands

“We're proud to be supporting Chesterfield Borough Council in its mission to deliver affordable, energy-efficient homes for families across the borough. It's great for us to be back in Chesterfield after recently working with the council on its largest housing development in decades at Badger Croft, and we're delighted to continue playing our part in increasing the local housing supply” – Mat Clarke, Head of Construction at Henry Boot Construction

Building and energy use

Heat decarbonisation at the Healthy Living Centre

Almost £2.4 million from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and £500,000 investment from the council will fund a heat decarbonisation project at our leisure centre in Staveley.

Funding for a heat decarbonisation project at the Healthy Living Centre, one of our council owned buildings with the highest greenhouse gas emissions, will see the existing worn heating system replaced by modern air source heat pumps and system upgrades, which will reduce our operational emissions by 100 percent.

In addition to heat decarbonisation, the council are working to secure further investment to fund a rooftop solar array to generate electricity at the busy commercial site. Building works on the project are forecast to start in summer 2026 with completion in 2028.



Building and energy use

Brocklehurst Court near to completion

The council's Brocklehurst Court project will reduce carbon emissions by up to 80 percent by replacing the existing gas central heating system and hot water boilers with commercial air source heat pumps. Solar panels and battery storage are also being installed which will help generate electricity to power the new air source heat pump and reduce the reliance on the grid.

To accommodate the increase in electricity demand including the integration of renewable energy, completion of the project has been delayed until essential substation upgrades have been installed by National Grid. The project is now expected to be complete by September 2026.





Council influence and partnership activity

Local community groups and voluntary organisations urged to apply for grant funding

Community groups and voluntary organisations in Chesterfield are being invited to apply for a share of £250,000 in grant funding as applications for the Community Grants Fund Scheme reopen.

Eligible local groups could be awarded funding ranging from £500 to £6,000 – helping them to deliver grassroots projects that will improve life for local people. A portion has also been set aside to help groups deliver larger capital projects of up to £50,000. The Community Grant Fund, delivered by Chesterfield Borough Council, supports local initiatives that strengthen neighbourhoods, promote health and wellbeing, expand volunteering opportunities, and encourage greener choices that help reduce the borough's environmental impact.

During 2026-2028, the Community Grants Fund comprises funds which Chesterfield Borough Council has raised through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Neighbourhoods portion, together with funds from Chesterfield Town Board's Pride in Place programme, which is funded by the UK Government.

Further details and eligibility criteria can be found here:

www.chesterfield.gov.uk/community-grants

For more detailed information on council's planned climate-related activities from April 2026 to March 2028, please refer to our Climate Change Delivery Plan 2026-2028, which is available on the main Chesterfield Borough Council website.

Read our Chesterfield Borough [Council climate change delivery plan 2026-2028](#)



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