

Action guide for residents



CLIMATE
READY →
LEICESTER



2

Climate Ready Leicester

4

Heating your home

5

Powering your home

6

Consumer choices

7

Food choices

8

Waste and recycling

9

Travel

10

Water

11

Outside space

Climate Ready Leicester

Leicester City Council was one of the first councils to declare a climate emergency in 2019. We have an ambition to become a Climate Ready city by 2030 which means reducing our carbon emissions as close as possible to zero.

The city council is developing and delivering its second **climate action plan** for the next 5 years.



Achievements from our first action plan include:



Improving energy efficiency of over 500 homes in fuel poverty and over 200 small businesses.



Installing insulation, solar PV and electric heat pumps at over **90 council buildings**, including **55 schools**.



St Margaret's Bus Station - UK's first net zero bus station.



Planting over **28,000 trees**.



Creating new **cycling and walking infrastructure**.

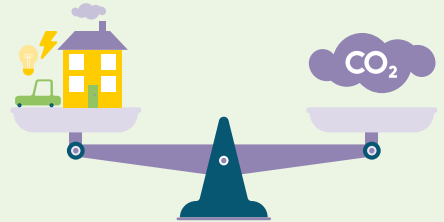


These projects are just the start. From business to residents, we need everyone to play their part to get Climate Ready!

What is net zero carbon?

Net zero

Reducing the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases we emit each year from our homes, travel, etc until it is no more than the amount we remove from the atmosphere.



Climate change affects us all. Our actions here in Leicester have an impact at home and across the globe. We need to work collectively to achieve a Climate Ready Leicester.

From how you heat your home to how you travel, this residents guide provides actions that you and your family can take to reduce your carbon footprint.

Many of the actions are simple to do and will save you money, as well as being good for the planet!



Heating your home

Did you know?

Home energy use accounts for the largest share of Leicester's total carbon emissions at around 32%.

We need to act by reducing demand for heating and move away from using fossil fuels, such as gas, to heat our homes.

Get Climate Ready:



Draught-proof your home, saving around £20 per year.



Add insulation. Help keep the warmth in and reduce your energy bills. For example, it costs around £1200 for cavity wall insulation in an average home with a pay back of about 4 years.



Use timers and thermostats on your central heating system and install thermostatic radiator valves to save up to 20% on your heating bill by only heating rooms in use.



Installing an electric heat pump. See if you're eligible for a grant to help with the cost of upgrading your boiler and check out other government funded schemes.



For further tips and information about heating your home, including details of eligibility criteria for energy efficiency grants, visit the [energy efficiency](#) page on the council's website.

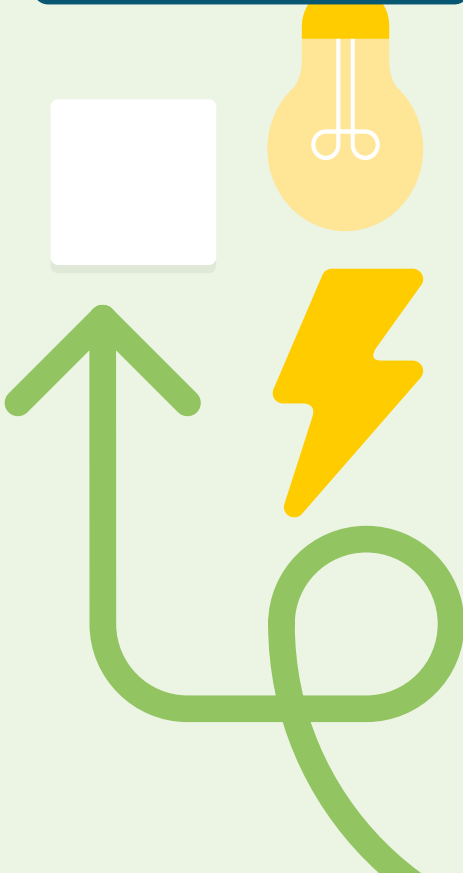
If you're struggling to pay your heating bill, the national fuel poverty charity [National Energy Action](#) may be able to help.










Powering your home

Did you know?

Switch off at the plug!
Leaving appliances and devices on standby uses more energy. Switching off could save you up to £55 per year on your energy bills.



Get Climate Ready:

-  **Turn off the lights** when you leave a room.
-  **Replace lights in your home.** Energy efficient LED bulbs can last around 15 years and save up to £40 a year.
-  **Use the standby setting on laptops** rather than a screensaver to save electricity but remember to power off completely when not in use.
-  **Ask your energy company to install a free smart meter** to show how much energy you're using in the home.
-  **Close curtains and blinds or install window shutters in summer** rather than using energy hungry fans or air conditioning.
-  **Repair rather than replace appliances if possible.**
-  **If buying new appliances - check energy efficiency ratings and look for A ratings where possible. [Guide to choosing home appliances.](#)**

Consumer choices



Did you know?

Everything we buy as consumers has a carbon impact. The fashion industry is responsible for about 10% of global carbon emissions and the consumer electronics industry accounts for nearly 4%. Reduce your carbon footprint by thinking before you buy and only consuming what you need.

Get Climate Ready:



Find out what your carbon footprint is using [WWF's carbon calculator](#).



Buy only what you need and consider the carbon cost of different products. Look for the [Carbon Trust's](#) certified carbon footprint label or the manufacturer's own information on the packaging or the company website.



Buy local or UK products where possible and consider transport distances of imported products.



Keep your mobile phone and other devices for longer, rather than upgrading every year.



Avoid fast fashion and choose clothes that last. It takes 3,781 litres of water and around 33kg of carbon to make a single pair of jeans!



Reuse, repair or upcycle clothing, furniture, and other household items to give them a new lease of life.



Shop around for good quality second-hand or repurposed items that will last.

Food choices

Get Climate Ready:



Shop smart. Use a shopping list and plan your meals in advance so you only buy what food you need for the week. This will avoid wasting food, carbon and cash.



Freeze food to extend its life beyond best before and use-by dates.



Reduce your consumption of meat, dairy and eggs by **introducing more plant-based ingredients into your diet**. For example, having a meat-free day each week.



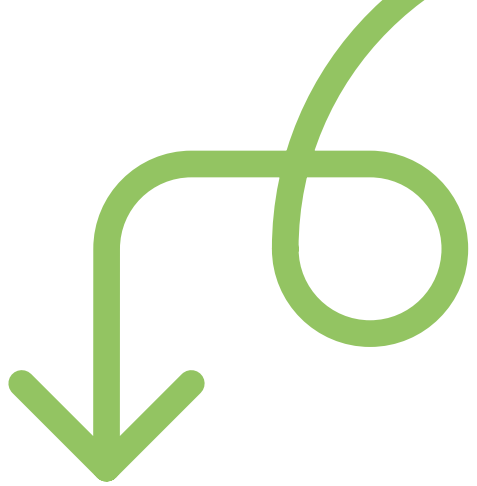
Buy fruit and vegetables when in season whenever possible. Check out [this chart](#) to see what fruit and vegetables are in season throughout the year.



Grow your own fruit and veg at home using peat free compost. If you've not got space, you can **apply for an allotment**.



Find recipes and more ways to adopt good food habits with [Love Food Hate Waste](#).



Did you know?

One of the most effective and healthy ways to reduce your carbon footprint is by reducing consumption of meat and dairy.

Their production accounts for nearly 15% of global carbon emissions.

Waste and recycling



Think before you create waste and consider whether you can avoid or reduce the amount you throw away.

Get Climate Ready:



Avoid buying heavily packaged and pre-packed fruit, vegetables and other food items and choose loose items instead.



Say no to single use items, particularly plastic, throw away items like disposable cutlery.



Shop at a refill store and swap plastic for zero waste.



Reuse cloth nappies instead of disposables. [Leicester nappy library](#) hire out different cloth nappy kits for you to try before you buy.



Compost your food waste to make your own nutrient-rich soil. For tips and advice visit the council's [composting page](#).



Register for the council's [garden waste scheme](#).



Donate preloved furniture to the council's [furniture reuse scheme](#) to help people in need across the city. [British Heart Foundation](#) and local hospice charity [LOROS](#) offer a free collection service from your home for bulky furniture and other large items.



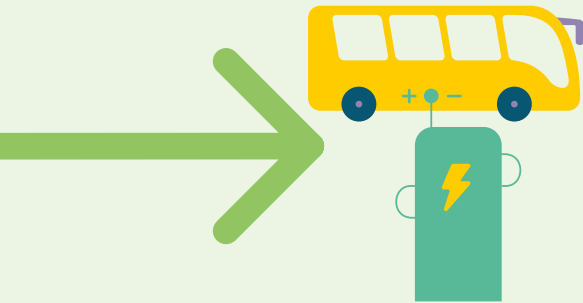
Purchase clothing from charity shops and donate preloved items to avoid 350,000 tonnes of unwanted clothes that go to landfill every year. The council's recycling centre at Gypsum Close has a [reuse shop](#) run by Age UK and sell/accept clothing, furniture and small electricals.



Recycle as much of your remaining waste as possible using the council's recycling service. [Find out more about reducing waste and recycling in Leicester](#)



Travel



Did you know?

In Leicester, 70% of emissions from road transport are from petrol and diesel cars.

Around 30% of these emissions come from short journeys.

For local journeys, try to walk or cycle, or use the bus.

Get Climate Ready:



Leicester's Active Travel Fund programme is creating new, safe and permanent spaces around the city for walking and cycling. Find out more about these and public transport options on the [Choose How You Move](#) website.



Take a cycling course to improve your skills. Check out the [Ultimate Guide to Cycling](#) for more advice and tips.



Try out an **e-bike** or ask your employer if they run a cycle to work scheme to spread the costs of buying an electric bike tax free.



Get rewards for walking, running and cycling which you can redeem for high street vouchers or donate to charity. Download the free [BetterPoints](#) app.



Travel around the city by bus, with most routes being all electric by summer 2024. Find out more and [plan your journey](#).



Change to an electric vehicle and find out where you can [charge them in Leicester](#).



Use the train for longer journeys or car share with friends, family and work colleagues. Register [here](#) for the council's free online car sharing service.



Avoid plane journeys, especially short haul flights. If air travel is unavoidable choose an airline with higher occupancy rates and more efficient aircraft.

Water










Did you know?

Water and energy use are connected. The average person in the UK uses around 150 litres of water every day.

Reduce your water use by installing a water meter, reusing water, and using water efficient appliances.

Get Climate Ready:

-  Save water around the home using Severn Trent Water's free [Get Water Fit](#) calculator and water saving devices. You can also apply to Severn Trent for a free [water meter](#) and only pay for the water you use.
-  **Don't overfill your kettle.** This wastes water and carbon by heating up to 500 litres of surplus water every year in the average home.
-  **Rinse fruit and vegetables in a basin of cold water and use to water your plants.**
-  **Turn off the tap to use 6 litres per minute less water when brushing your teeth or washing dishes.**
-  **Fit an aerator to your existing tap to save water without lessening the flow,** saving around £30 a year.
-  **Wait for a full load before running your washing machine or dishwasher, and use a low temperature setting.** Washing clothes at 30 degrees and cutting out one wash per week saves around £34 per year.
-  **Limit your shower time to four minutes to save around £165 per year, plus an additional £100 if you're on a water meter.** Use an aerated shower head could save a family of four an extra £75 per year or £120 with a water meter.
-  **Collect rainwater in water butts to save and reuse in the garden.**
-  **Keep water from paddling pools to use on plants or to wash the car.**
-  **Avoid using hosepipes.** Using a bucket to wash the car or your dog instead of a hose can save around 220 litres of water. For more tips and advice visit [Water's Worth Saving](#).

Outside space



Urban gardens are critical spaces for biodiversity. Intensive farming in the wider countryside has eroded wildlife habitats and depleted the carbon stored in soils, trees, and water bodies.

Even in a small garden you can make a difference by leaving areas of grass unmown or by creating a wildlife pond.

Get Climate Ready:



From a window box to a garden, use what space you have to grow wildlife friendly plants, providing a variety of food sources for bees, butterflies and other insects. For advice about planet-friendly gardening visit [Royal Horticultural Society](#).



Build birdboxes, bug hotels and hedgehog hides to provide much needed protection for breeding and resting animals, as well as overgrown areas for hibernating wildlife. Visit [Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust](#) for advice about how to turn your garden into a mini nature reserve.



Provide water for birds and other wildlife particularly during the hotter, drier summer months.



Reduce hard landscaping and replace areas of concrete and decking with grass and plants to slow down rainwater run-off. Visit the council's [flood risk management](#) page for more information.








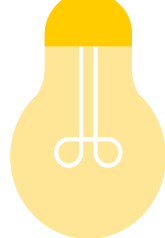
Plant trees and shrubs as these are vital for absorbing carbon from the atmosphere and play a part in combatting climate change.



Add a green roof to sheds and outbuildings to reduce rainwater run-off and provide insulation. Grow climbing plants up the walls of your house to keep it cooler during hot summers.

You can access other resources and information about how to get Climate Ready from your local library.

-  **Free WiFi, computers and scanners at all city libraries.**
-  **Recycle your reading – borrow a book! Try our [Climate Action Books](#) reading list.**
-  **Go paperless – try our eBooks, eAudio, eMagazines and eNewspapers.**
-  **All of our libraries are [warm spaces](#) with [local events, activities](#) and [volunteer opportunities](#).**
-  **It's free and easy to [join the library](#).**



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Sign up to be a Leicester Environmental Volunteer and help maintain Leicester's parks and green spaces.