



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Climate Change and Environmental Strategy

23rd SEPTEMBER 2021

(Proposed to be updated 26th September 2024)

DATE ADOPTED	23 rd September 2021	FREQUENCY OF REVIEW	3 years or legislative changes
REVISED DATE/S	26 th September 2024		

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Climate Change and Environmental Strategy

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1. FOREWORD

From the Leader of Braunstone Town Council

Human influence on climate has been the dominant cause of observed warming since the mid-20th century. Global temperatures have already increased by 1° Celsius from pre-industrial levels. Atmospheric CO₂ levels are above 400 parts per million (ppm). This far exceeds the 350 ppm deemed to be a safe level for humanity.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in 2018, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared to a 1.5°C rise. The report informs us that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector and local communities.

The UK has, at international level, signed into the Paris Accord 2015 and to the commitments agreed in 2018 at the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24) which amongst other things recognise the need to limit by 2030 temperature rises to between 1.5° C and 2° C above the internationally recognised preindustrial baseline. As a consequence, the UK has set targets into law under the Climate Change Act 2008.

Braunstone Town and the surrounding area have experienced the impact of climate change, such as increased flooding, in recent years. Individuals cannot be expected to make the required changes on their own. Nations and society need to change their sources of energy, laws, taxation policies and infrastructure to make low carbon living easier and the new norm.

A 'Climate Emergency' has been declared and we all have a part to play.

This Climate Change and Environmental Strategy sets out the framework for Braunstone Town Council to deliver its pledge to make its activities carbon neutral and embed climate and environmental awareness in its decision making.

The Strategy also provides the framework for the Town Council to:

- promote and encourage awareness and action on climate change, environmental protection and recycling by local residents, businesses and community organisations;
- put climate change at the heart of its procurement policies including moving to the use of renewable energy sources for its activities and encourage its customers and suppliers to do likewise; and
- protect and enhance the town's Green spaces, promote and encourage tree planting, and seek to increase and enrich biodiversity.

Councillor Nick Brown
Leader of Braunstone Town Council

2. THE JOURNEY TO DATE

Due to the nature of the Climate crisis, it is vitally important that the Town Council focuses its efforts and has a clear deliverable plan to respond. This Strategy provides that focus, recognising the Council already has a track record of delivering on the environment and therefore is able to build upon our achievements to date.

1. Rainwater harvesting reducing surface water run-off and reducing demand for treated clean water; used at:
 - Thorpe Astley Community Centre to supply water to the toilets, and
 - Shakespeare Park Pavilion to supply water to the toilets and irrigation for the bowling green.
2. LED Lighting use 70 to 80% less energy compared to traditional incandescents; the Town Council has installed LED lighting at:
 - Braunstone Civic Centre (including car park)
 - Thorpe Astley Community Centre (including car park)
 - Shakespeare Park Pavilion (including car park)
 - Mossdale Meadows Parks Depot
 - Thorpe Astley Park
 - Franklin Park
3. The Council commissioned a carbon audit of our activities in 2021 to provide both data on the Council's carbon footprint along with recommended actions to reduce our carbon footprint. As a result, the Council adopted its first Action Plan in June 2022 by installing solar panels, electric vehicle charging points and an air source heat pump during 2023, the Council has reduced its carbon footprint by 40%. At Thorpe Astley Community Centre the initiatives reduce the carbon footprint of the building by approximately 90%.
4. Photovoltaic (PV) Panels harness the sun's natural power and convert it into electricity reducing the amount of electricity needed from the national grid; PV Panels have been installed at:
 - Braunstone Civic Centre (2023)
 - Braunstone Town Library (2023)
 - Shakespeare Park Pavilion (2021)
 - Thorpe Astley Community Centre (2023)
5. Bonded rubber mulch is a durable long lasting playground safety surface that is made from recycled rubber; Braunstone Town Council has installed these surfaces at:
 - Holmfield Park (2015)
 - Franklin Park (2017)
 - Shakespeare Park (2023)

~~the proposals for the refurbishment of Shakespeare Park Play area also include all safety surfaces being bonded rubber mulch;~~ and as existing wet pour surfaces wear out, they are replaced with bonded rubber mulch.

6. Air source heat pumps (sometimes referred to as an air-to-water heat pumps) transfers heat from the outside air to water. This in turn heats rooms in buildings via radiators or underfloor heating. It can also heat water stored in a hot water cylinder for hot taps and showers. Braunstone Town Council has installed an Air Source Heat Pump at Thorpe Astley Community Centre.
7. With current legislation providing for a ban on sales of new petrol and diesel cars nationally by 2035, the uptake of electric vehicles is forecast to rapidly increase over the next decade. The UK Government's electric vehicle infrastructure strategy, published in March 2022, predicts that a minimum of 300,000 public charging points will be needed nationally by 2030 to meet the expected demand - currently there are around 50,000. In 2023 Braunstone Town Council installed:
 - 4 Electric Vehicle Charging Points at Braunstone Civic Centre overflow car park;
 - 4 Electric Vehicle Charging Points at Thorpe Astley Community Centre and Park car park.
8. Bike2Work Scheme is a free employee benefit approved by the UK Government, designed to get more people cycling to work, reducing their carbon footprint and living healthier lives. Braunstone Town Council joined the Bike2Work Scheme in 2022 and to date two employees have purchased bikes through the scheme.
9. In 2024, the Council adopted a Working Time Policy & Procedure, setting out how staff can submit flexible working (including home working) requests, alongside flexible arrangements for working time and annualised hours. Not only do the arrangements foster a positive, healthy, productive and flexible working environment built upon employees' work-life balance and equal opportunities, but they provide for both less journeys to be made and for journeys to be made when there is less congestion, reducing the Council's travel to work carbon footprint.
10. Consumers in the UK can purchase electricity from a specialist green energy company, or can ask their current supplier to increase the amount of energy from green sources by switching to a green tariff. These tariffs guarantee that the company source the equivalent of the energy the consumers on the tariff use from ecologically-friendly sources. However, green energy tariffs typically cost more. When renewing the Council's contracts for electricity in 2023, the Council switched to renewable energy tariffs.
11. From April 2023, the Council implemented Sustainable Procurement Objectives for considering all new contracts and suppliers with a value of £5,000 or more. The objectives will take effect for existing and ongoing contracts from April 2025.
12. Action on the climate and the environment is everyone's responsibility; however, it is important to ensure that as a Council we provide for both leadership and delivery:
 - the Council's Resources and Facilities Manager acts as the Council's Officer Energy Champion and raises awareness of energy efficiency and sustainable energy issues; and ensures we work towards increasing the Council's organisational energy performance and reducing our consumption of energy;

- the Council's Communications and Events Officer is responsible for setting up, delivering and administering community initiatives in accordance with the Council's priorities and objectives.

Consultation Draft

3. CORPORATE ACTIVITIES OF BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

OBJECTIVE: To make the activities of Braunstone Town Council carbon neutral by 2030 by embedding climate and environmental awareness in all our decision making.

Being "carbon neutral" means that through its activities, the Council will emit no more than the same amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere that it removes by some other means.

The Council's activities are all its services, operations and corporate governance; and includes the people whose role it is undertake those activities, be they Councillors, staff or volunteers. The baseline footprint encompasses the entire value chain, including purchased goods and services, commuter mileage and leased assets.

To ensure that the Council becomes carbon neutral by **the end of 2030**, we will:

- (a) ~~commission a carbon audit of our activities to provide both data on the Council's carbon footprint along with recommended actions to reduce our carbon footprint;~~
- (b) prioritise Capital Plan Projects, which wholly or significantly deliver towards achieving this objective;
- (c) recommission **a carbon audit of our activities** in ~~2024~~**2025** and 2027 **to provide both data on the Council's carbon footprint along with recommended actions to reduce our carbon footprint** ~~the audit to~~ **ensuring** that all possible actions are being taken and that new and emerging technologies and approaches are utilised;
- (d) ensure that our resources (finance and people) are prioritised to delivering actions identified by the **carbon** audit;
- (e) undertake an annual review of progress;
- (f) prioritise emission reduction initiatives, where emission reduction is not practical then removal, and then offsetting, will be considered as alternatives;
- (g) identifying **further** measures to increase opportunities and the effectiveness of remote working for both staff and councillors;
- (h) continue to reduce our waste and recycle more;
- (i) **future proof our buildings to ensure they are fit for purpose and resilient to the effects of climate change**
- (j) developing an on-going programme of investment in energy efficiency, carbon reduction, removal and offset initiatives beyond 2030.

The ultimate aim of Braunstone Town Council will be to reach "net-zero" by 2050. "Net-zero" means that through our activities, the Council will emit no carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This is an ambitious target, but it is critical to ensuring that we protect our environment for future generations.

4. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE: Promote and encourage awareness and action on climate change, environmental protection and recycling by local residents, businesses and community organisations.

Braunstone Town Council actively supports the objective of Blaby District Council and Leicestershire County Council for the Town, District and County to become carbon neutral no later than 2050.

Being "carbon neutral" means that the carbon dioxide emitted by all the activities in the community, be they individual, domestic, commercial, industrial or transport related, are removed by some other means.

The Council will seek to provide leadership at a local level, including in partnership with the principal Councils (including the City Council) and other organisations, to support our community to respond to the climate change agenda; this includes:

- (a) raising awareness of and promoting "local"; be it local businesses and retail or local producers;
- (b) raising awareness of existing cycling and walking routes around the Town, particularly to community facilities, leisure facilities, employment locations, schools and neighbourhood parades;
- (c) supporting and facilitating initiatives to improve cycling and walking routes in order to provide sustainable transport connections between the various communities, facilities and services in our Town and also between the Town and the City Centre, Fosse Park, railway stations, bus stations and other surrounding retail and employment areas;
- (d) support and promote initiatives to improve air quality, recognising the importance of also preventing a deterioration in air quality in the context of the new developments at Lubbethorpe and in and around the Motorway Retail and Employment Area;
- (e) supporting and promoting initiatives which help residents make sustainable life style choices, such as using low or zero carbon energy and transport;
- (f) **support the community to be resilient to the effects of climate change;**
- (g) support and promote efforts by the principal Councils for the Town to reduce its waste and recycle more; and
- (h) provide opportunities for residents to recycle more of their waste when visiting the Town's parks & open spaces and community facilities and work with the District Council to increase provision across the Town.

The long term aim will be for Braunstone Town to reach "net-zero". "Net-zero" means that all activities in the Town emit no carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

In the medium term the Town Council will need to assess where and how its residents access services, employment and education. The Town Council will need to work with the District and County Council's, as well as with the City Council, to either ensure this can be accessed by sustainable transport or alternatively can be provided for in the community.

5. PROCUREMENT

OBJECTIVE: Put climate change at the heart of our procurement policies including moving to the use of renewable energy sources for its activities and encourage its customers and suppliers to do likewise.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) background paper “The Role of Public Procurement in Low-carbon Innovation” for the 33rd Round Table on Sustainable Development (12-13 April 2016) identifies that public procurement expenditures amount to 13% of OECD countries’ gross domestic products. The report states that “no occasion should be missed to guide public procurement expenditures towards efficient low-carbon choices in products, services and public works”. The report sets out how government spending decisions are important for the emergence and diffusion of new products and services.

The Council’s aim will be to reduce dependence on resources; then to source low carbon and environmentally sustainable resources.

The Council’s Sustainable Procurement Objectives will be to:

- (a) initially prioritise implementation for new contracts and suppliers;
- (b) reduce our energy use and increase our energy efficiency;
- (c) reduce dependence on chemicals;
- (d) reduce dependence on carbon technology;
- (e) both minimise and reuse waste and maximise recycling;**
- (f) meet more of our own energy needs, for example through installation of new technologies such as PV Panels, reducing dependence upon the national grid;
- (g) obtain best value in terms of all costs when sourcing energy suppliers; this means balancing financial cost with the cost to the environment and the planet;
- (h) critically assess the short term, medium term and long term benefits of procuring new technologies;
- (i) source the provision of goods, services and works “locally” where possible;
- (j) use suppliers who source their products or goods “locally”;
- (k) source materials, which are durable and long lasting, made from sustainable sources and compliments the natural environment;**
- (l) use suppliers who have obtained either government or independent industry accreditation and recognition for sustainable practices;**
- (m) use “fairly” traded products; and
- (n) require the submission of an environmental statement when inviting tenders for the provision of goods, services and works in order to assess the overall impact on the environment in terms of carbon and waste.

The Council ~~will commission a through either a carbon audit or other form of audit/review will examine of our activities to provide both data on the Council’s carbon footprint, including that of its supply chains, along with recommended actions to reduce our carbon footprint.~~ This report will inform the Council’s procurement action plan, which will prioritise the products, services and works to be procured, based on the medium and long term impact of reducing the Council’s carbon footprint and protecting the environment.

6. PROTECTING AND ENHANCING GREEN SPACES

OBJECTIVE: To protect and enhance the town's Green spaces, promote and encourage tree planting, and seek to increase and enrich biodiversity.

The Town Council is responsible for most of the Town's Parks and Open Spaces. These urban green spaces not only provide for sport, recreation and play but also for an enriched natural environment protecting the Town from and mitigating the effects of climate change and air pollution.

The Council will:

- (a) help fight pollution and climate change by planting trees on our parks;
- (b) produce an Environment and Biodiversity Strategy for our Parks and Open Spaces, which will set out the Council's approach to tree planting and maintenance, along with the Council's commitment to enhancing and enriching biodiversity;
- (c) reuse more of the waste generated from the maintenance of our parks and open spaces (e.g. tree and hedge clippings and grass cuttings) to enhance the biodiversity and environmental aspects of our parks and open spaces;
- (d) where we cannot reuse the waste ourselves, develop arrangements where the waste could be reused by others, composted or recycled;
- (e) identify measures for the management of our land and assets, which reduce the likelihood of flooding and provide for a rolling programme of water course maintenance as part of the annual winter works programme;
- (f) **take measures to future proof our parks facilities to ensure they remain fit for purpose and resilient to the effects of climate change;**
- (g) encourage the involvement of local residents, particularly young people and schools, in projects and initiatives to enhance the natural environment; and
- (h) source materials, including play equipment, which is durable and long lasting, made from sustainable sources and compliments the natural environment.

In the medium term the Council will consider reviewing access to and provision of green space across the Town. In the long term the Council, in partnership with the District and County Councils, will need to develop plans to enhance the built environment across the Town, including tree planting, protecting hedgerows and encouraging wild flower and biodiversity.

7. ACTION PLANNING

Underpinning this strategy is the need to take action. The Council will need to consider the deliverability of each identified action and its impact, along with available resources, when deciding which actions will be a priority.

~~Upon adoption of this Strategy,~~ Policy & Resources Committee will develop and approve an annual action plan to deliver the Strategy's Objectives.

The Policy & Resources Committee will seek the input of the Council's Community Development Committee, Planning & Environment Committee and Citizens' Advisory Panel, particularly in respect of

- (a) Supporting the Local Community
- (b) Protecting and Enhancing Green Spaces.

In approving the annual action plan, Policy & Resources Committee may delegate responsibility for delivering and monitoring particular actions to either the Community Development Committee or the Planning & Environment Committee where the identified action falls within that Committee's Terms of Reference and delegated responsibility.

The Action Plan will set out:

- Nature of Action to be delivered;
- Reason for inclusion, i.e. why is it needed;
- Benefits to the Council and the Community;
- Resources Required;
- Potential Barriers to Delivery;
- Summary of steps and sub-actions required to deliver;
- Timescales for Delivery; short-term, medium-term, long-term; and
- Priority Level.

The Council's Management Team will allocate responsibility for delivery of the individual actions to the appropriate Manager, depending upon which Service will be primarily responsible for implementation.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Policy & Resources Committee is responsible for the development **and review** of this Climate Change and Environmental Strategy and ensuring adequate input from Councillors, Staff, Partners, Stakeholders and Residents.

The Strategy **will-forms** part of the Council's Strategic Policy approach alongside the Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning process, informing the budget, Capital Plan and Council Priorities and Objectives; therefore, the Strategy will **need-to** be adopted by the Full Council.

Most of the Council's policies are reviewed at least every three years with reviews earlier if there are legislative or other significant changes. **Following its adoption in 2021 and its review in 2024**, it is intended that this Strategy will be **adopted-in-2021 and** reviewed by Policy & Resources Committee at least every three years, which includes in **2024**, 2027 and 2030. This is particularly important to ensure that the Council is on track to deliver its commitment for all its activities to be "carbon neutral" by **the end of** 2030. Any proposed changes to the Strategy will be submitted to Full Council for consideration and adoption.

The Strategy is supported by an annual action planning process, which will include appropriate timescales for monitoring and review, depending upon the size and scale of the actions to be delivered.

APPENDIX 1 – Policy and Strategy Links

This Strategy forms part of and compliments the Council's Strategic Policy Framework as a whole.

In particular, the Strategy will form the basis for delivering Aim 1 of the Council's Mission: *"to ensure that local services and the environment reach the highest possible standards within the resources available for citizens, visitors and those who work in Braunstone Town"*.

The Strategy sets the overarching approach to deliver **Strategic Aim 4 of the Council's Business Plan – Respond to Climate Change and champion sustainable development.** The aim being "To embed climate and environmental awareness in our decision making and actions and play our part in supporting the community to do the same". ~~key priority 10, Responding to Climate Change: "In recent years the impact of climate change has become increasingly visible and public awareness more widespread. During 2021/22, the Town Council will develop a Strategy and an Action Plan in order to address the impact of its own activities on the climate. In addition, the Town Council will seek to provide leadership, including in partnership with the principal Councils and other organisations, to support the community to respond to the climate change agenda"~~.

~~The Strategy also compliments part of key priority 3 on Quality of Life Services "The Town Council continues to provide and support important quality of life initiatives..... The Town Council also seeks to play its part on tackling climate change and poor air quality, recognising the importance of air quality in the context of the new Lubbethorpe development, which could result in an increase in air pollution in Blaby District....."~~

In addition, the Strategy will shape the delivery of the following Service Objectives:

Planning and Environment Objectives

1. To ensure sustainable development, which meets the needs of the present generation without prejudicing the **existing built environment and** the needs of future generations.
2. To improve the environment, in pursuit of which, objectives 3 to 7 below are contributors.
3. To seek high standards of design and construction within planning applications and to ensure all developments are consistent with environmental objectives.
5. To work with others to minimise the impact from:
 - (a) traffic; and
 - (b) air and light pollution.
8. To monitor the New Lubbethorpe development and to respond to any implications of that development for the environment of the Town.

Open Spaces & Parks Objectives

1. To provide and maintain parks and open spaces to a high standard
4. To help fight pollution and climate change by planting trees on our parks

APPENDIX 2 – Parish Carbon Calculator

Nottingham City Council and The Midlands Energy Hub have developed a carbon calculator specifically designed for Parish and Town Councils.

The Carbon Calculator can be found at: <https://impact-tool.org.uk/>

The Carbon Calculator has been designed for small communities so that parish and town councils can understand their main 'collective' sources of carbon emissions, which would then give the community a better idea of where to target their climate response efforts for the greatest impact.

Figure A – Territorial Footprint 2021

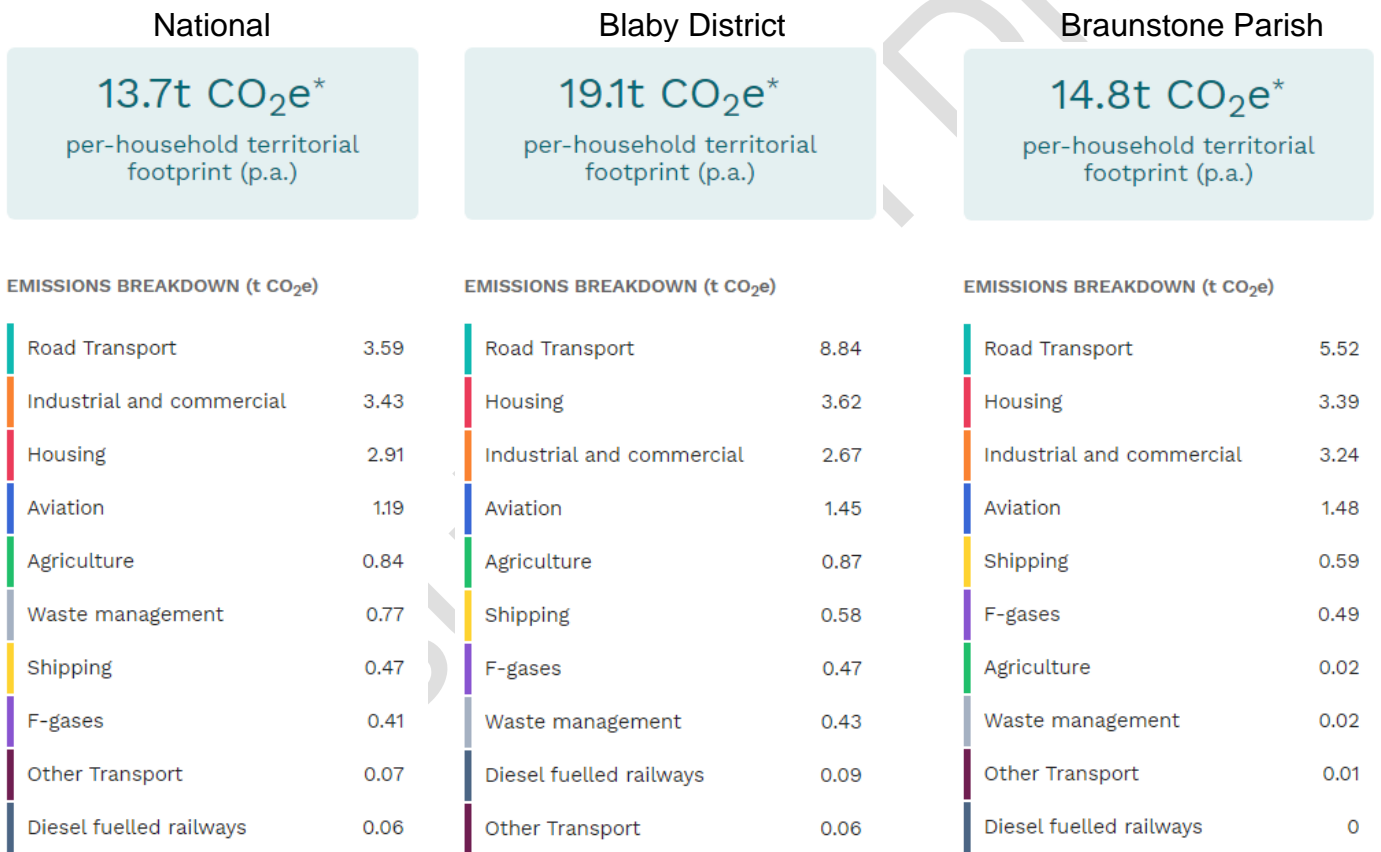


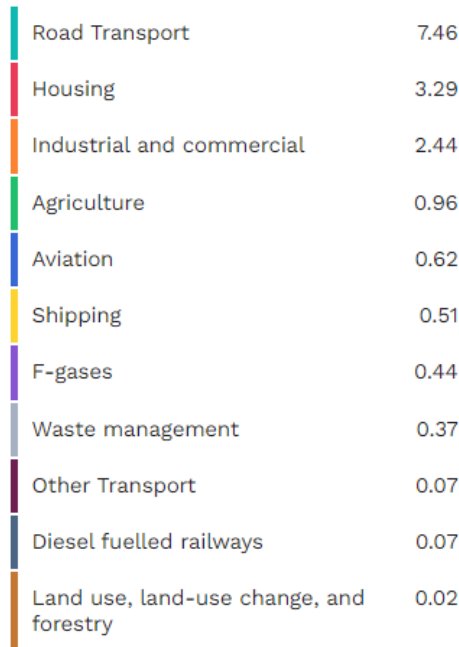
Figure B – Territorial Footprint 2024

Note the National Figures were not available (producing an error message). These will be included once obtained.

Blaby



EMISSIONS BREAKDOWN (t CO₂e)



Braunstone



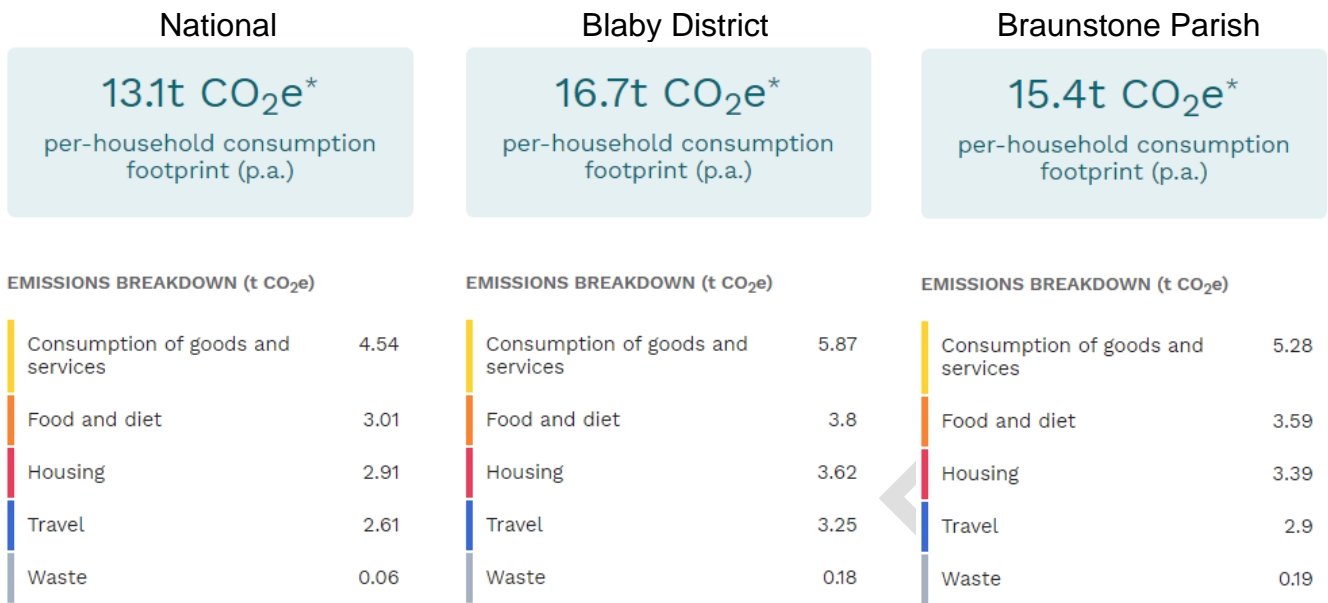
EMISSIONS BREAKDOWN (t CO₂e)



8285% of the Town's carbon emissions are made up from Road Transport (3738%), Housing (23%) and Industrial and commercial (2224%).

Consulting

Figure BC – Consumption Footprint 2021



*CO₂e stands for "carbon dioxide equivalent" and is a standard unit of measurement in carbon accounting. It expresses the impact of a number of different gases collectively as a common unit.

Figure D – Consumption Footprint 2024



7998% of the Town's carbon consumption emissions are made up from Consumption of goods and services (**3430%**), Food and diet (**2321%**), Travel (**23%**) and Housing (**2223%**).