

COOL

STEPS

WIRRAL CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2014-2019

4th Annual Progress report - July 2018



Background

This report provides an update about local action in the face of climate change in Wirral.

The stability of our climate matters. Our way of life, the fabric of our communities and the places we cherish are shaped by the climate. If the climate changes drastically all these things are under threat too.

Climate change is a global issue. It is one of the biggest challenges facing humanity in the 21st Century and beyond. Human activities, principally the burning of fossil fuels for heat, power and travel, are polluting our atmosphere. This so called 'green-house' pollution is driving a rise in global average temperatures. This unnatural global warming is disrupting climatic patterns and contributing to rising sea levels. To avert potential catastrophe we need to cut greenhouse pollution drastically and fast.

Cool is Wirral's climate change strategy (2014-19). It seeks to encourage and co-ordinate climate change-related action and investment by people and organisations with an interest in Wirral. It seeks to cut local pollution and to adapt Wirral to unavoidable changes in the climate. In doing so it aims to ensure we play our part in the global effort to limit climate change and are better prepared for the consequences of changes locally.

COOL - the climate change strategy for Wirral promotes action at home, at work and in our communities. It's goals are to:

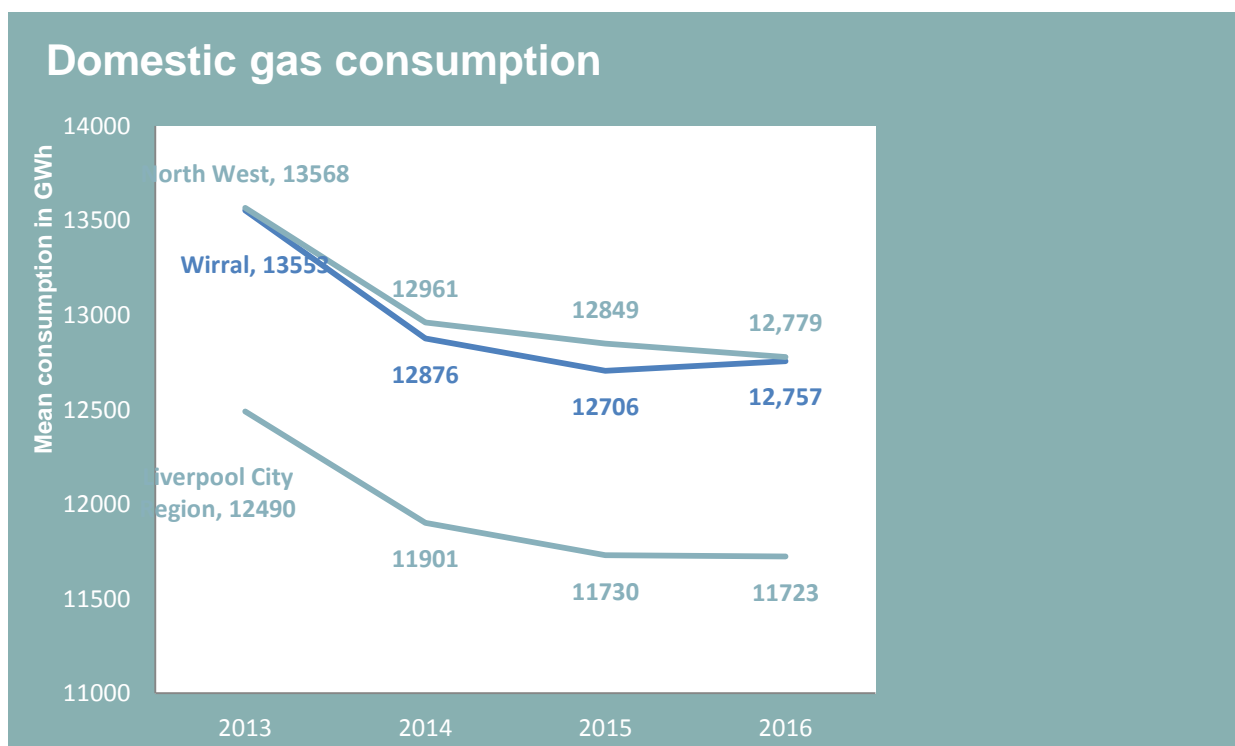
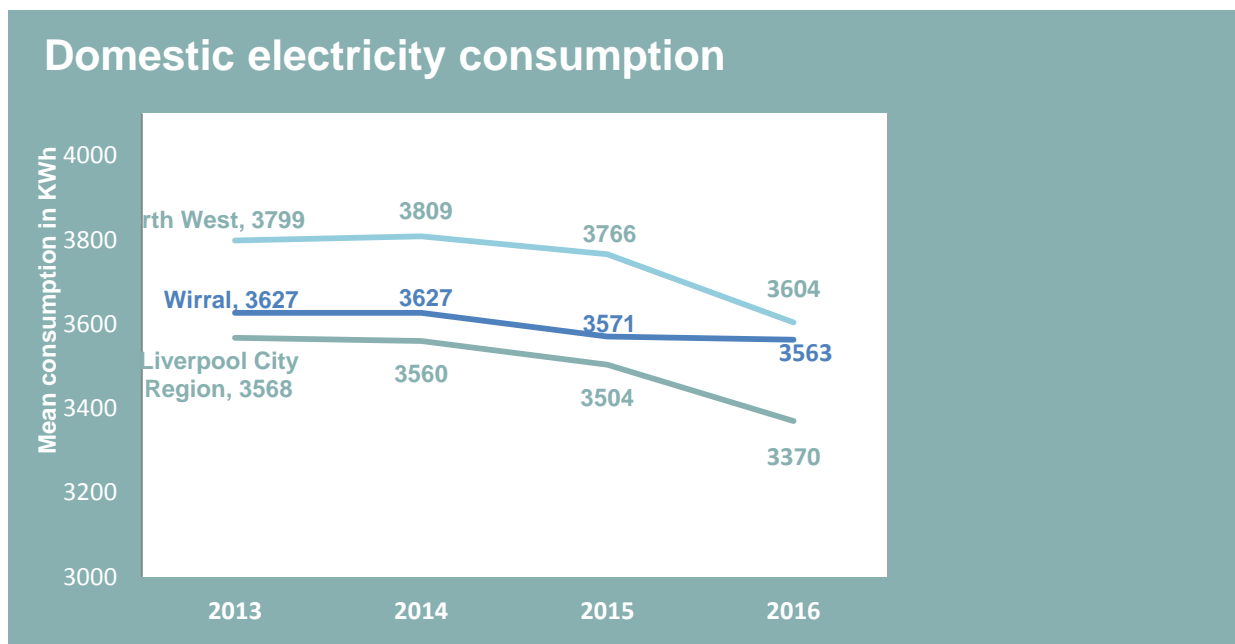


This is the fourth in a series of annual progress reports about Cool. The report sets out steps taken since the last update under each of the strategy's six aims. It presents some data to indicate impact. The report also flags up where there have been changes in context that have had an impact on progress or that present new opportunities.

The actions highlighted in this report have been advanced largely, though not exclusively, by organisations directly involved in the Cool Wirral Partnership (formerly known as the Wirral Climate Change Group). This partnership is tasked with championing and co-ordinating local climate-related action. The actions of the partnership are just part of the picture. For success, there needs to be widespread action from all quarters. As you read this report ask yourself: *Am I doing all that I can do to help at home, at work and in my community? What are the best ways I can help going forward? What can I do to help ensure Wirral plays its part taking action on climate change?*

Aim 1: Reducing demand for energy and making Wirral more energy efficient

Local energy consumption in focus ...



Recent steps...

- 1492 LED street lights were installed as part of the replacement of life expired /condemned street lighting equipment and a £4.3 loan million loan secured to finance the upgrade of the remaining 27,000 street lights to LED.
- Energy Projects Plus through their Save Energy Advice Line provided telephone advice to over 1,600 Wirral households in the period September 2017 to July 2018. The majority of

these were applications for the Warm Home Discount however EPP ensure energy efficiency advice and signposting is provided to all callers when required.

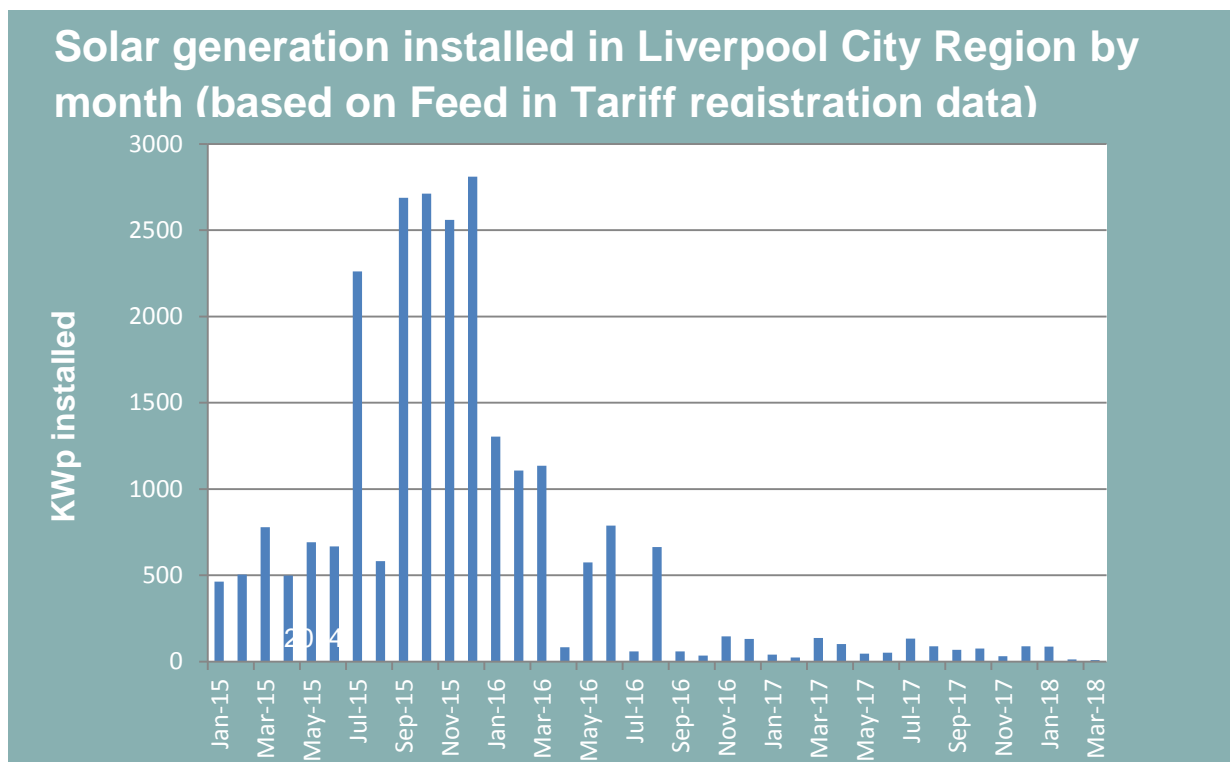
- The Cosy Loans scheme has provided 62 interest-free loans for replacement boilers in Wirral in 2017/18.
- 101 council-funded Cosy Homes Heating Grants were completed in 2017/18, providing a range of heating improvements to low-income households.
- Wirral Met College began implementing the extreme low energy hybrid Combined Heat and Power (CHP) project at its 12 Quays Campus in Birkenhead



The number of new energy efficiency improvements being installed in homes continues to be below that anticipated when the strategy was developed. This follows changes in national funding mechanisms to support home insulation measures. Local partners will continue to seek ways to maximise funding opportunities including that through the new Energy Company Obligation (ECO3) beginning in October 2018.

Aim 2: Meeting more of our energy needs from renewable sources

Local solar installations in focus ...



Recent steps...

- 513 kWp of solar photo voltaic (PV) panels were installed (registered for Feed in Tariff (FiT)) in 2017/18, bringing the total installed capacity to 9038 kWp. (DECC, Sub-regional Feed-in Tariffs statistics, April 2018).
- Wirral Community Renewables completed its Urban Community Energy Fund supported feasibility investigation looking at local sites for solar generation. The investigation also contributed to a wider study for national charity 10:10 looking into the feasibility of community owned solar powered rail traction.
- Ørsted (previously DONG Energy) opened a new £6m offshore wind farm operations base at Kings Wharf, Seacombe in August 2017 to host around 45 permanent staff to service the Burbo Bank and Burbo Bank Extension offshore windfarms.

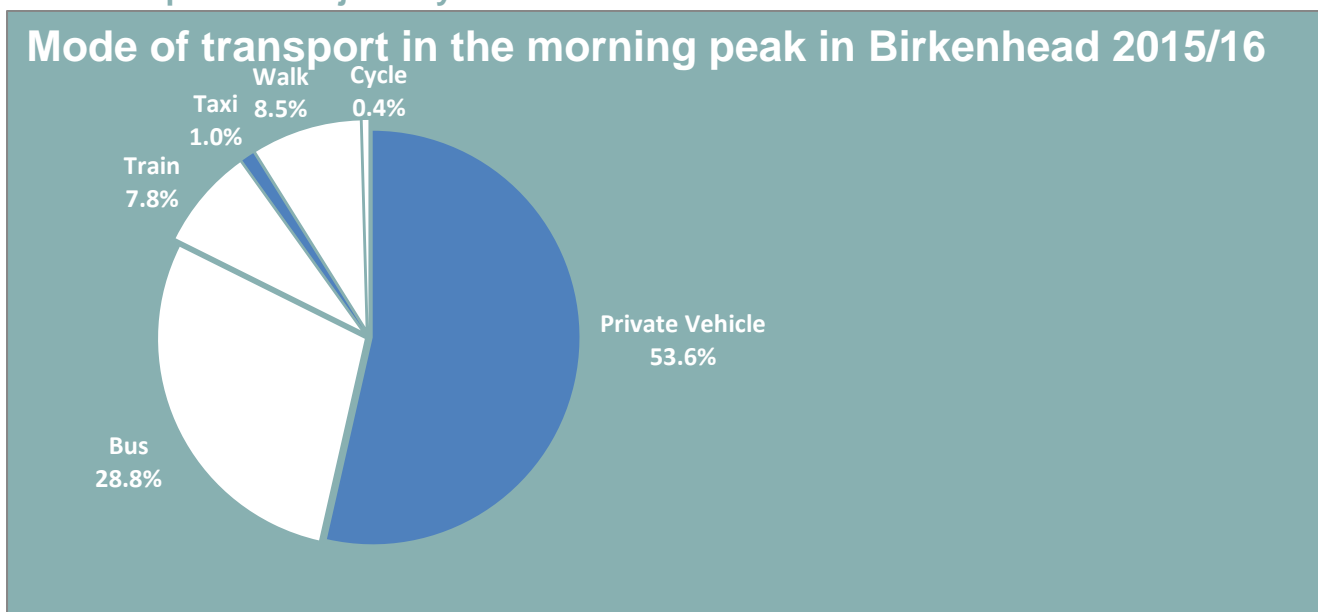


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The solar generation capacity installed in Wirral increased by double the previous year, although remains less than a 10th of the capacity installed in the year prior to reductions in incentives under the Government's Feed in Tariff (FiTs) scheme. The FiTs incentive to support small scale renewable generation is due to be phased out completely by April 2019. The opportunity is now closing to get local solar schemes developed in time to benefit from the incentive.

Aim 3: Making use of more sustainable means for transport

Local composition of journeys in focus...



Recent steps...

- An e-vehicle show case event was held in Birkenhead featuring local suppliers of electric vehicles and vehicle charging points as part of events to mark Clean Air Day 2018

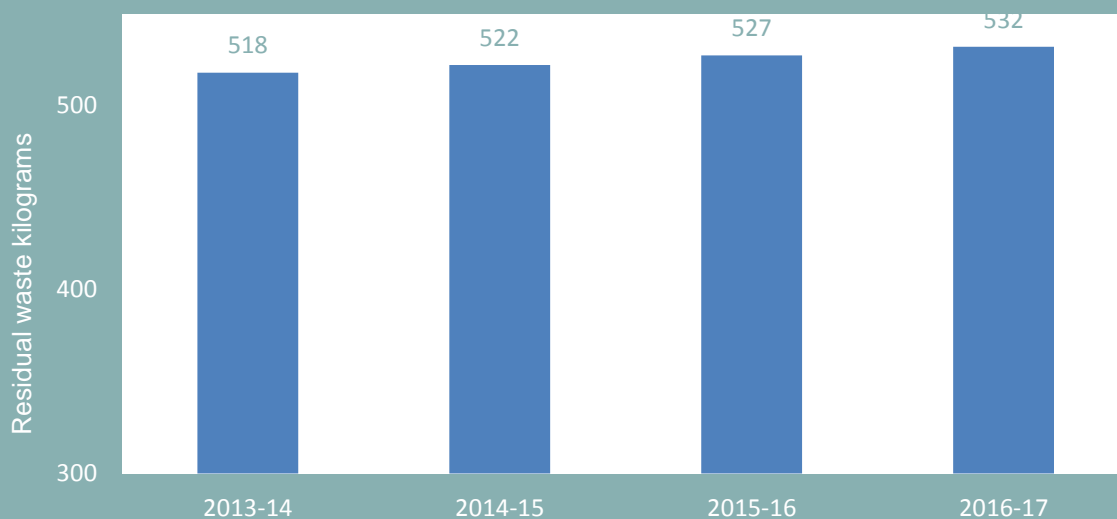


- The 'Mind your Business' travel safety programme won a national award
- An audit of cycle parking within the main town centres within the borough has been undertaken which has produced a list of recommendations.
- Cycling infrastructure for the Wirral Waters site has been completed on Duke Street, Rendel Street and Dock Road. Whilst on the A41, a scheme at Campbelltown Road has been completed.
- The Cycling and Walking to Work Fund was secured to support newly employed residents access work, the fund also supports working with employers to develop travel plans.

Aim 4: Reducing indirect climate pollution

Local household waste in focus...

Residual household waste in Wirral



Recent steps...

- Meetings have taken place to discuss prospects for a local 'circular economy' initiative.
- Wirral Council and its partners have established an improvement plan to address recycling performance
- Wirral Council has updated its domestic refuse collection policy and adopted a resolution to create a Single Use Plastics Free Wirral Policy

The climate strategy seeks to minimise waste and encourage re-use of materials. However residual household waste continues to rise in spite to local efforts to the contrary. Several new actions are set out in the improvement plan in order to address the rise in residual household waste. The problem of plastic waste has gained recent prominence. Heightened awareness has created some public pressure to eliminate single use plastics and thereby create an opportunity to reduce plastic in the waste stream.

The strategy seeks to promote the climate benefits of local and seasonal food and reduced consumption of meat. Locally, the contract to promote the 'Better Food Wirral' programme ended in March 2018. There has since been a pause in awareness raising material promoted via Better Food Wirral as alternative arrangements are made. The absence of the programme has subsequently limited opportunities to highlight the impacts of food choices on climate change.

Aim 5: Adapting to unavoidable changes in Wirral's climate

Recent steps...

- A bid has been developed for funding to support a sustainable drainage scheme at Coronation Park car park in order to help implement some ideas identified through the earlier 'resilient parks' project

There continues to be limited local progress in relation to adapting to climate change. This situation is unlikely to be unique to Wirral. The House of Commons Environment Select Committee recently highlighted the very limited response it had had from local authorities to its investigation into 'Heatwaves: Adapting to Climate Change'. The committee highlighted the withdrawal of funding programmes to support local authority climate change adaptation which has resulted in the closure of numerous regional climate change partnerships.

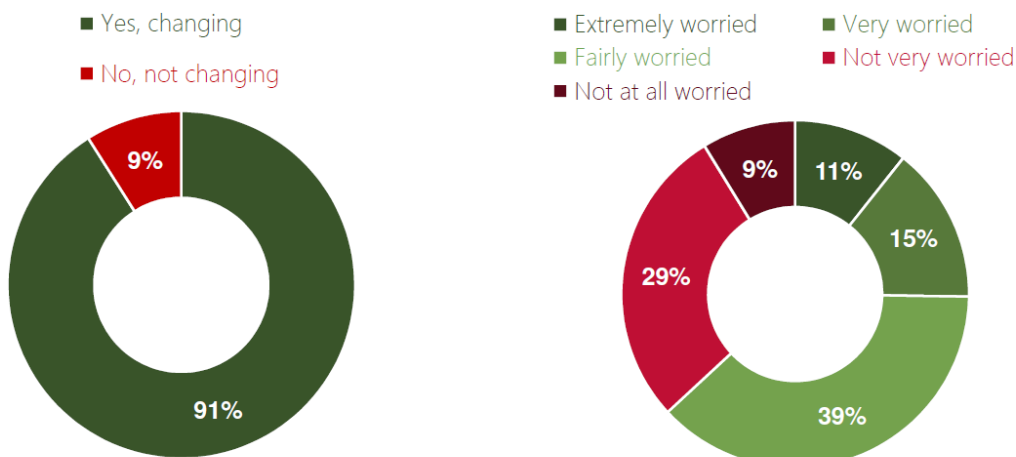
Aim 6: Building capacity for action

Wirral residents acknowledge climate change

Nine in ten Wirral residents believe the world's climate is changing (91%). This is a higher proportion than the national average according to Ipsos MORI's 'European Perceptions of Climate Change.' This is a nationally representative survey conducted in 2016, that finds 86% of the UK population believe in climate change.* Two thirds of residents are worried by climate change (65%) – again higher than the UK average (60%). Females are significantly more likely to acknowledge climate change (96% vs. 86% of males) and be worried about it (71% vs. 58%), whereas older residents aged 75+ are most likely to not be concerned by climate change (43% vs. 35%).

Q 30. As far as you know, do you think the world's climate is changing or not?

Q 31. How worried, if at all, are you about climate change?



*European Perceptions of Climate Change is based on 1,033 people in the UK aged 15+

Base: Q30. All responding (1157); Q31. All responding (1212); Fieldwork dates: 18th September - 8th November 2017

Source: Ipsos MORI **WIRRAL**

Recent steps

- Transition Town West Kirby and partners held a successful Wirral Earth Fest event in September 2017.



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- The Wirral Climate Change Group became the Cool Wirral Partnership after adopting new terms of reference in line with the role anticipated for it in the climate change strategy.

- Wirral Chamber launched the new Wirral Energy & Environment Forum which has met three times
- Questions about climate change were included in the 2017 Wirral Residents' Survey. The survey found nine in ten Wirral residents believe in climate change (higher than the national average) and that over half of Wirral residents are prepared to make fundamental changes to their lifestyle (55%).
- There have been regular updates for the @CoolWirral twitter feed. There were 623 tweets during 2017/18 financial year with 112,756 tweet impressions recorded.
- Four climate change e-bulletins were sent - two via the Cool Wirral network mailing list and two via a merged Cool Wirral and Wirral environmental news mailing list.
- Five stories were posted on the Cool Wirral page on the projectdirt.com website
- Faiths4Change organised a climate change event as part of Interfaith Week in November 2017. Members from different faith communities from across the region took part.



- A school 'Cool Climate Challenge' event was held in June 2018 with nine schools taking part.

The bigger picture

Cool is not an isolated strategy. It is one of many being pursued around the world at a local level in support of national and international action on climate change. These initiatives from global to local seek to reduce climate pollution and to ensure we adapt to limit impacts.

The UN's Paris Agreement formally came into force in November 2016 and seeks to keep the average global temperature rise this century to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C. The agreement relies on countries submitting plans for their 'nationally determined contribution' to achieve this. Actions committed via the various national plans developed so far are not enough. We are still on course to overshoot global targets and without further progress are heading towards dangerous territory. A lot has been done, but a lot more needs to be done.

The UK has played a leading role promoting climate action. The pioneering Climate Change Act, adopted with cross party support in 2008, obliges the government to identify actions to ensure it stays within a series of five year 'carbon budgets'. These 'budgets' set the path towards the longer term emission reduction target. So far reductions in greenhouse gases are already over half-way towards the 80% reduction envisaged by 2050 (compared to 1990 levels). In October 2017, following concerns raised by the UK's independent Climate Change Committee, the Government published a Clean Growth Strategy. This sets out the broad approach to meet future carbon budgets up to 2032. It sets out a series of interventions designed to: accelerate clean growth; improve business and industry efficiency; improve the energy efficiency of our homes and roll out low carbon heating; accelerate the shift to low carbon transport; deliver clean power; and enhance the benefits of our natural resources. The Climate Change Act also requires government to set out its plans for adapting to changes in the climate. In July 2018 the Government outlined the second national adaptation programme setting out plans up to 2023. This covers actions to address flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure; risks to health, well-being and productivity from high temperatures; risks of shortages in the public water supply for agriculture, energy generation and industry; risks to natural capital- including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity and risks to domestic and international food production and trade.

Next steps

Locally, the Cool Wirral Partnership has reviewed progress implementing the climate change strategy and has identified 13 priorities to focus on in the final year of the strategy period:

- A communications programme
- An event programme
- A climate faith network and hubs
- A green map of Heswall
- Developing a 'Sustainability Central' programme to showcase the transition to a low carbon, climate-ready place to be focused on Wirral Waters and surrounding areas
- Cycle parking at rail stations
- Solar generation opportunities
- An e-vehicle on-street residential charging pilot
- A circular economy initiative
- Promoting climate adaptation risk assessments
- Developing climate and health tools
- Liverpool City Region strategic ask
- Promoting sustainability appraisal tools

Work to develop a new strategy will commence shortly to ensure that co-ordinated action continues without delay beyond the life of the present strategy.

A 'snap shot' of the rolling plan of action in support of the present climate strategy is reported to Wirral Council each year. This is available publicly.

Success will ultimately depend on a combination of the implementation of this plan and wider support and action beyond. To get involved and find out how you can help put Cool into practice, at home in your community and in your workplace:

- Read the strategy available at: www.wirral.gov.uk/climatestrategy
- Join the free mailing list to keep in touch via www.wirral.gov.uk/coolwirral
 - Follow @CoolWirral on twitter.
- Connect with others via our Cool Wirral group at www.projectdirt.com.

