

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 18 March 2024

Portfolio:	Planning and Development
Subject:	Environment Update
Report of:	Director of Planning and Regeneration
Corporate Priorities:	Respond to Climate Change and Protect the Environment

Purpose:

To present to the Executive the full range of work that the Council has undertaken in recent years to protect and enhance the environment of the Borough, and to seek approval to prepare an Environment Strategy which will provide a co-ordinated programme of environmental work going forward.

Executive summary:

Improving our environment is a key priority for Fareham Borough Council. In 2019 the Council committed to becoming carbon neutral in its operations by 2030. To achieve this a Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was put in place. The CCAP focuses mainly on carbon reduction to help mitigate climate change. However, there are many elements other than carbon reduction which have an environmental impact.

The report also highlights the other project areas that the Council works on which have also helped to protect and enhance the environment.

A Fareham's Greener Future document (Appendix A) is attached to this report, and contains information in a magazine style format on the different projects that the Council has undertaken over the past few years that have had a positive environmental impact.

The report then goes on to set out the need for an Environment Strategy which will bring the different environmental elements together to formulate one cohesive strategy. The strategy will guide decision making going forward and ensure the Council continues to protect and enhance Fareham's environment.

Once this report has been considered by the Executive, the 'Fareham's Greener Future' publication will be shared in late March. Social media and local media

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opportunities will also be used to raise awareness of the progress achieved and next steps on environmental matters.

The report will be presented to the 14 March Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel for pre-scrutiny. Comments from the Panel will be presented to the Executive.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Executive approves:

- (a) the preparation of an Environment Strategy to guide decision making and priority projects going forward;
- (b) requests Officers to undertake a range of actions to publicise the 'Fareham's Greener Future' publication which sets out the delivery progress and next steps.

Reason:

To enable residents to see the work the Council has been doing on protecting and enhancing the environment and to enable the Council to guide decision making going forward.

Cost of proposals:

The costs of the Fareham's Greener Future document (Appendix A) have been met within existing budgets.

Appendices: **A: Fareham's Greener Future**

Background papers: **None**

Reference papers: **Corporate Strategy 2023-2029**
 Climate Change Action Plan (June 2021)

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	18 March 2024
Subject:	Environment Update
Briefing by:	Director of Planning and Regeneration
Portfolio:	Planning and Development

INTRODUCTION

1. Improving our environment is a key corporate priority for Fareham Borough Council. This report first sets out the work that has been taking place focused on reducing our carbon footprint as part of our Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP).
2. However, 'environment' incorporates much more than just carbon management and reduction, so this report brings together all the different strands of work the Council delivers that have had a positive impact on the environment. It sets out a position where the Council will look to formulate an Environment Strategy which will incorporate these strands into one cohesive strategy.

Climate Change Action Plan

3. At the 26 September 2019 Executive meeting the Leader pledged a commitment for the Council to be carbon neutral in its operations by 2030. To achieve this a CCAP was formulated and approved at the June 2021 Executive meeting.
4. Since declaring our commitment to carbon neutrality, the Council has undertaken several projects which have helped see the operational carbon footprint of the Council reduce from 1,926 tCO₂e in 2019/20 to 1,505 tCO₂e in 2022/23 which is a 22% decrease.
5. Carbon reduction is focused on mitigating climate change which in turn has environmental benefits. However, there are also other strands of work which the Council undertakes which also have environmental benefits but through different means than carbon reduction.

Further Environment Projects

6. Alongside carbon reduction there are a further five key areas that the Councils' work impacts which have a positive effect on the environment. These are:

Sustainable Development: Mitigating and managing the impact of the development throughout the Borough is an essential part of protecting our environment and is at the core of Planning Service delivery. However, notably Fareham Housing also has a key

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role in ensuring development is both sustainable in design and also in how it interacts and impacts the wider environment. These are projects such as our new sheltered housing schemes which are being developed with sustainability as a one of the main priorities. For example, the new Assheton Court development in Portchester will have two communal air source heat pumps to provide heating and hot water.

Land Stewardship: These are projects focused on protecting our green spaces and enhancing biodiversity in the Borough. For example, the Abbey Meadows site in Titchfield which opened in 2021 comprises of wildflower meadows, and an active apiary (beehive area). These all help improve biodiversity in the area.

Air Quality: Air pollution effects both human health and the natural environment. Therefore, the Council monitors certain sites for high levels of pollution and takes action to reduce levels when necessary.

Coastal Management: Fareham Borough Council's coastal management service, delivered through Coastal Partners, have several projects in place that both protect and enhance our coastlines.

Waste and Recycling: There are several projects focused on reducing the impact waste has on the environment. For example, the Council's Garden Waste service has increased the amount of waste that goes to compost.

7. Following the structure set out above, Appendix A to this report provides readers with a cohesive magazine style document that provides information on all the projects that the Council has undertaken over the past few years that have had a positive environmental impact on the Borough.

Environment Strategy

8. As can be seen in Appendix A to this report, the Council has put a huge amount of work into preserving and improving our environment over the years and we will look to continue this focus going forward.
9. Therefore, the next step is to create a formal Environment Strategy which will guide us in all our decision making to continue to protect and enhance Fareham's environments for future generations. The strategy will bring together all the different environmental elements into one cohesive strategy.

Environmental Considerations

10. The main environmental considerations associated with this report are to do with the production of the magazine in Appendix A to this report. To mitigate any potential impacts, hard copies will only be printed when necessary.

Financial Considerations

11. The costs associated with this report can be met within existing budgets.

Conclusion

12. This report sets out the work the Council has done to protect and enhance the Borough's environment and how it plans to continue to do so with the formation of an Environment Strategy.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Alex Jolley (01329 824470)

Fareham's Greener Future





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A warm welcome from Executive Member for Planning and Development, Councillor Simon Martin.



Improving our environment is something that Fareham Borough Council takes very seriously. After all, the vast majority of our staff are also residents of Fareham and want it to be the best that it can be.

We have already committed to becoming carbon neutral across all our buildings and services by 2030, but 'environment' incorporates so much more than carbon reduction.

A huge amount of work and effort goes into preserving and improving our lived-in environment and this ethos underpins many of the projects we undertake. Whether that be the management and upkeep of our many green and open spaces, the preservation and expansion of our habitats, or how we go about building and improving our homes, environmental matters are always carefully considered.

“
the Council is working hard to ensure that Fareham is a place we can all be proud of

The next step is to create a formal Environment Strategy which will guide us in all our decision making to continue to protect and enhance Fareham's environments for future generations.

In the meantime, this publication has been designed to highlight the considerable work that has been put into our

environment in recent years and just some of the achievements we have made to date.

Of course, we need the help and support of all Fareham residents to do their bit for our environment but, as you can see, the Council is working hard to ensure that Fareham is a place we can all be proud of both today and long into the future.



Carbon Reduction



Fareham Borough Council has committed to being carbon neutral in its operations by 2030. This is an ambitious target, but we are proud of the progress we have made in reducing our carbon emissions so far. Many projects have been implemented to reduce the Council's own carbon emissions as well as helping our wider community with education and support.

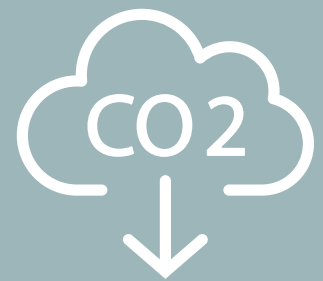
Delivery of our services

In February 2022, we converted our garden waste collection vehicles to operate using a biofuel, hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) instead of diesel. Following the success of the trial, we also converted our small diesel vehicles to operate using HVO.

Diesel is a significant contributor to the Council's carbon emissions with fleet fuel contributing over 47% of our direct emissions in 2022/23. HVO produces

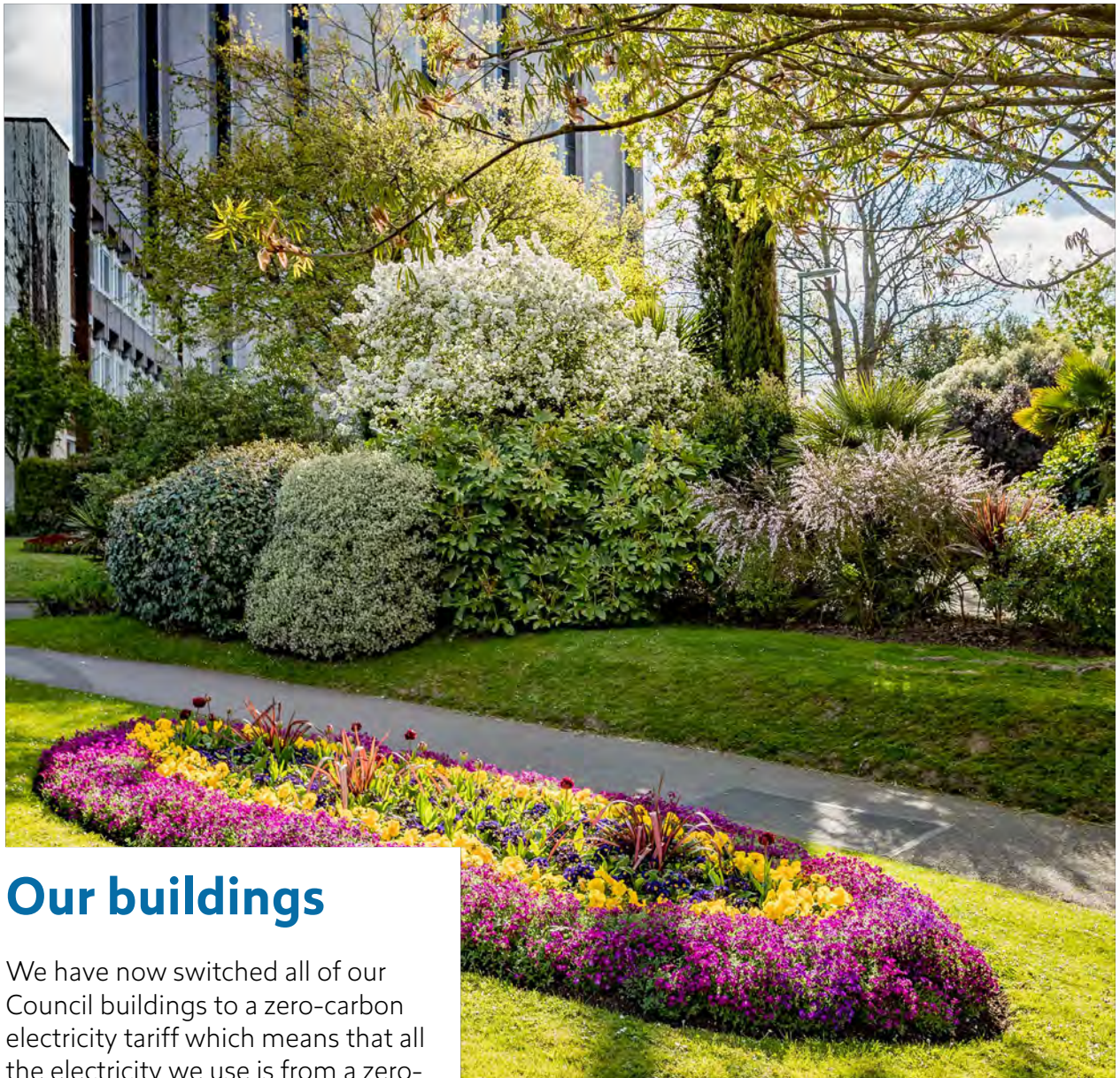
significantly less carbon than diesel and continuing to run the garden waste and small vehicles on HVO in 2022/23 reduced the Council's annual carbon footprint by approximately 299 tCO₂e (tonnes of CO₂ equivalent).

We have approved a rolling vehicle replacement



HVO use in 2022/23 **reduced** the Council's carbon footprint by approx **299 tCO₂e**

programme for the Council's vehicle fleet over the next five years. As part of the programme the Council will look to procure 15 electric vans and one electric small Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV). To accommodate these, we will look to install a number of electric vehicle charging points at our Depot site as well as explore the feasibility of distributing some of these at strategic sites across the Borough.



Our buildings

We have now switched all of our Council buildings to a zero-carbon electricity tariff which means that all the electricity we use is from a zero-carbon source.

We also launched a staff campaign, 'Small Change Big Difference', which focused on getting employees to think laterally about climate change and how small changes in our individual behaviour can collectively make a big difference.

Some of the changes have focused on turning devices off at the end of the day and using the stairs where possible. This has contributed to a 9.7 tCO₂e reduction in electricity emissions in our Civic Offices. We also used less gas in the Civic Offices compared to previous years.

Implementing these measures as well as others outlined in this document have contributed to the Council's operational carbon footprint of 1505 tCO₂e in 2022/23. This is 421 tCO₂e less than 2019/20, and represents a 22% reduction.

The redevelopment of the Osborn Road Multi Storey car park into a surface car park will see the electricity emissions of the site reduce by an estimated 54 tCO₂e each year.

During 2023 the Council put together a funding bid asking for £1,498,665 from Sport England's Swimming Pool Fund. The funding is for each of the Councils' Leisure Centres and consists of several carbon reduction measures including rooftop solar panels at both sites. The outcome of the bid will be determined in Spring 2024.



Solent Airport

In 2022/23 the airport's mower ran on HVO with this rollout being expanded to the airside vehicles in 2024, meaning that all operational vehicles will use HVO going forward. This will reduce the airport's carbon footprint by around 16 tCO₂e per annum.

We have worked closely with our airport operator to develop a carbon reduction plan for the airport. The plan sets out potential projects that could be undertaken to reduce the airport's carbon footprint.

One project that has been implemented is a staff engagement plan which focuses on reducing the control tower's emissions through simple measures such as turning off lights and computers when not in use.



Supporting residents

The Council has successfully implemented a total of 177 energy efficiency improvements to 159 properties in our housing stock to date. Funded in part by a government scheme, the measures focused on solar panels, loft insulation, and upgrading electric storage heaters, helping to improve the comfort and reduce energy bills of Council tenants.

The Council started working with a number of other councils as part of the Warmer Homes consortium in 2022/23. The scheme provides free energy saving measures to low-income households with poor performing homes. The scheme has been delivered to 109 private low-income households so far, with energy saving measures worth nearly £450,000.

We have continued to work with the Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) who offer low income and vulnerable residents free energy and debt advice alongside a range of measures such as free small energy saving devices and funding for insulation.

We have also delivered the Solar Together scheme for a number of years now, alongside Hampshire County Council and iChooser. This innovative programme has provided cleaner, greener and more sustainable power for over 200 Fareham residents so far, by offering high-quality solar panels and battery storage through a group-buying scheme, to ensure the most competitive prices.



Supporting community locations

In May 2022, £30,000 of funding was allocated to carbon reduction measures across the Council's community centres. The measures installed range from small energy saving products such as LED lightbulbs, radiator reflectors and water tanks, to larger measures such as replacing old energy inefficient appliances. Titchfield Village Trust were also successful in a bid to our Community Fund for the installation of solar panels on the Titchfield Parish Room new roof.

We have also joined The Solent Cluster – the first major decarbonisation initiative to substantially reduce CO2 emissions from industry, transport and households across the Solent and southern England.

Supporting Local Business

We are using funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and partnering with industry experts to support local businesses to calculate their carbon footprints and put in place plans for carbon reduction.

The Council has created a dedicated webpage www.fareham.gov.uk/climatechange, which includes business, community and resident-specific areas with a range of information and advice as well as helpful resources and toolkits. There is also a carbon footprint calculator so you can see what your current footprint is and how you can reduce it. There is further information about community initiatives throughout this publication.





Supporting Sustainable Development

Housing

With around a quarter of the UK's carbon emissions coming from our homes, Fareham Housing, the housing team at Fareham Borough Council, is actively working on both retrofitting improvements and ensuring that new homes are energy efficient. In line with the Fareham Housing Greener Policy (2019) and new Building Regulations, all new developments undergo an appraisal to ensure implementation of the most suitable energy efficient measures, both now and in the future. This may include solar panels and/or Air Source Heat Pumps and electric vehicle (EV) charging points.

These actions help mitigate the effects of climate change, assist in keeping energy costs low for our tenants and combat fuel poverty.

You can find information at www.fareham.gov.uk/housing





Assheton Court, Portchester

In January 2023, Fareham Housing secured planning permission for a new purpose-built, 60-bed affordable housing development for the over 55s. As well as providing much needed affordable housing specifically for older people, the new development will deliver high levels of energy efficiency to help mitigate climate change and the impact of soaring fuel prices.

Queens Road, Fareham

Fareham Housing secured planning permission to redevelop this site by delivering two three-bedroom homes. Work on the site started in June 2022 and the homes were completed in May 2023. The homes incorporated solar panels and air source heat pumps to provide heating and hot water.

Capella Close, Hill Head

Fareham Housing delivered 11 new affordable, shared ownership homes in March 2023. The installation of solar panels on each home has made the homes more energy efficient, with the aim of reducing bills for residents.

Oak Tree Close, Sarisbury Green

Fareham Housing delivered five family homes on this site in July 2020, including solar panels on each property.

Retrofitting

The Council is part way through a project at Fort Fareham Housing Estate, which takes a whole house approach to address both thermal and structural deficiencies in the houses. Two homes were completed in December 2023 with works on a third started. The remaining properties will be complete by the end of 2024/25.

Work has started in the Bishopsfield Road area to improve the thermal efficiency of poorly insulated fly-over flats. This includes replacing the existing insulation on the front, rear and underside with a more effective product, and new windows. One block has now been completed and the programme will continue over 2024/25.

Additionally, the design and operation of the heating system at Sylvan Court has been improved. The original install required mechanical changes for how the water flows around the building in order to run the system more efficiently. The upgrades allow it to reduce the flow temperature and use of gas, all without the residents losing any heat.

Looking forward, the Planned Maintenance team are also in the inception stages of a number of projects to improve energy efficiency. These include upgrading cavity wall insulation and replacing windows and doors in blocks of flats throughout the Borough. The programme of replacements will start in the new financial year.

As part of a wider work with Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH), we have applied for funding to deliver water efficiency measures in our existing housing stock. Where wastewater treatment works have a permit limit, the reduction in water use has an associated reduction in nutrient pollution. This will allow us to use the reduction in nutrient pollution as mitigation to support Council-led affordable homes programmes. Additionally, this project has benefits in terms of water resource management and lower water bills for residents where they are metered.

This will be delivered in 2024/25.



Welborne Garden Village

Welborne Garden Village is the most ambitious development that Fareham Borough Council has ever planned. Welborne will be a sustainable garden village with a community of 15,000 people. Taking a nature-led design approach, Welborne will have a focus on biodiversity and the creation or restoration of natural habitats from previously intensively farmed agricultural land.

One of the main aspirations is to deliver low and zero carbon energy to both residents, and businesses. In May 2021, Fareham Borough Council was awarded £36,850 funding from the Government's Heat Networks Delivery Unit (HNDU) towards the production of a detailed techno-economic feasibility study of low

carbon heat network options at Welborne in partnership with Buckland Development.

This resulted in a carbon ambient heat network solution to initially provide heating and cooling to the first 700 of Welborne's new homes, and community buildings in the first phase of the development. As Welborne expands, it is planned that the network will supply all 15,000 residents in 6,000 new homes with heat, hot water and cooling. The technology emits 90% less CO2 emissions than a gas boiler and 50% less than air source heat pumps. It is also cheaper for residents and businesses, saving an average three-bedroom house around £160 per year compared with an air source heat pump.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a new mandatory

requirement for new development to increase biodiversity and ensure that post completion, the habitat for wildlife is at least 10% better than it was before development. While this improvement should be delivered on site, we know this can't always be achieved and off-site solutions are also needed.

In July 2023 our Executive agreed to the principle of using Council land for the creation of biodiverse habitats off site for both private developers and to support Council led schemes. We have been working closely with an ecologist from Hampshire County Council to consider Council sites which may be suitable to support BNG projects.

Nutrient Neutrality

When nutrients, such as phosphates and nitrates, enter into waterways they can reduce the quality of



water, harm wildlife and cause excess algae growth.

In 2019 Natural England introduced guidance requiring nutrient neutrality as a requirement for all overnight accommodation (new homes and visitor accommodation) in the Solent. This was because increased levels of nutrients in the Solent has a significant impact on the feeding habitats of internationally important bird species.

As a result, all applications for new housing within the Borough, as well as 74 other planning authorities across the country, must either be nutrient neutral or mitigate the impact by reducing nutrients elsewhere in the same catchment area.

Understanding the opportunities, for both the environment and for sustainable growth, that nutrient neutrality requirements provided, Fareham Borough Council has been at the forefront of delivering effective solutions. In fact this Council, alongside the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, developed the first cross boundary mitigation solution in the country. Fareham Borough Council has gone on to support this valuable mitigation market by allowing developers to access multiple mitigation schemes across the catchment area. In total, these schemes have both significantly contributed to reduced nitrogen

entering our coastal areas as well as providing much needed sustainable growth.

As well as the ground-breaking work undertaken specifically by Fareham Borough Council, the Council also works with PfSH on mitigation schemes across the catchment area, and hosts a Strategic Environmental Planning Team who work across the entirety of south Hampshire on environmental issues. This team has facilitated a nutrient mitigation market across south Hampshire. In total, these schemes have removed over 23,000kg of nitrogen out of our water system, and mitigated development of over 10,000 new homes.

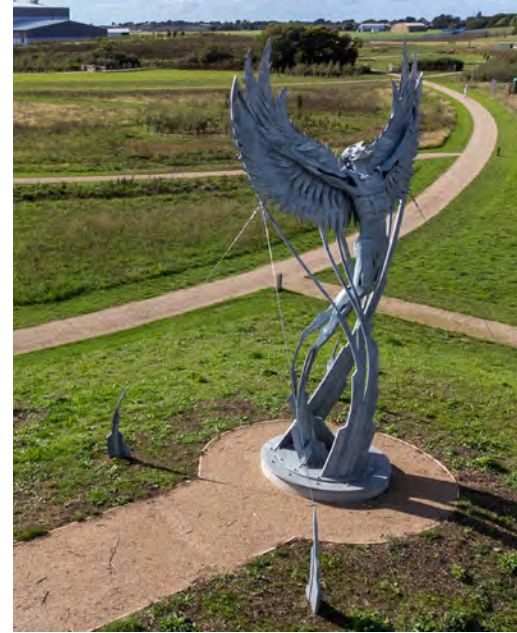
New Forest Recreation Impact

The New Forest is one of Europe's most important locations for nature and conservation. Its unique mix of landscapes including ancient woodlands, wetlands and bogs, and open heathlands means it is home to many rare species of plants and wildlife long since lost from the rest of the UK and Europe. As new development takes place, more and more people are visiting the New Forest, which is placing greater pressure on protected wildlife sites there.

The Council is working closely with New Forest Council and the New Forest Park Authority to mitigate the impact of new homes in Fareham on the New Forest.

There is currently approximately £150,000 available from new developments to help pay for the improvement and creation of more greenspaces in Fareham to act as alternatives to a visit to the New Forest. Our Open Spaces team are working to develop projects to deliver over 2024/25.





Land Stewardship

Fareham Borough Council manages a wide range of open spaces, forest and woodlands, parks and gardens. We are committed to the creation and enhancement of habitat rich, well-maintained and beautiful spaces for all our residents to enjoy as well as supporting the wider natural environment.

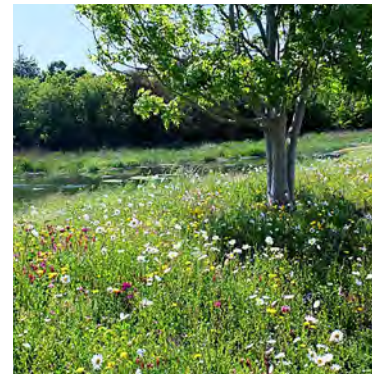
This approach makes us more resilient to a changing climate, increases biodiversity and it demonstrates how smaller incremental changes in approach can have a significant and ongoing impact.

Planting and re-wilding

In past years the Council planted extensive seasonal floral displays at key sites and locations across the Borough. Over the past three years however, the Council has changed our approach to seasonal displays. We now design these schemes to provide more sustainable annual and perennial

meadows alongside other perennial planting schemes to roadsides, on roundabouts and within cemeteries to assist the Council to balance the effects of climate change.

We currently have five roundabouts that feature annual wildflowers and another two roundabouts that feature pollinator friendly perennial planting. There are also some verge areas with wildflowers, all of which is beneficial to wildlife using both nectar and pollen rich cultivars. This planting mix also



removes the need for ongoing watering and the unnecessary use of a precious resource.

The Council has also been trialling the reduction of grass cutting in selected areas to see what wildflowers establish with a view to supporting and increasing biodiversity.

We no longer use peat in our landscaping and gardening works as harvesting peat releases huge amounts of stored carbon dioxide. Additionally, peat contains little to no nutrients and growing in peat-based mixes requires the use of fertilisers to keep plants healthy.

Anson Grove

We have undertaken a re-wilding project in Anson Grove open space to help restore a 900 square-metre area of chalk grassland. Funding was granted from Portsmouth Water and the work was completed using a local contractor and members of the Fareham Conservation Volunteers. The site was cleared of invasive species and a mixture of grasses and wildflower seeds were sown to support an increasing level of species diversity on an already rich site.



Abbey Meadows

The Council officially opened Abbey Meadows in Titchfield to the public in 2021. It comprises around 20 hectares of land including footpaths, wildflower meadows, dog-walking areas, educational wildlife areas and an active apiary (beehive area). Served by a central footpath, Abbey Meadows offers a tranquil place to visit within Fareham and forms a key part of the Titchfield Abbey Conservation Area.

Since taking over the site in 2018, the Council has been working to establish new meadows filled with wildflowers and plants. There are also future plans to create a new community orchard as well as planting native trees to help grow and support local wildlife.

The Council has also planted two copses of 180 trees at Abbey Meadows to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee. The Queen's Copse and the Platinum Copse were planted in 2023 and were specially created to provide secluded and protected wildlife habitats to encourage biodiversity in the area.

Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Park

The 16 hectare Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Park was opened to the public in 2023. Featuring a network of accessible paths and cycle routes, a dog exercise area and various habitats, around 21,000 trees have already been planted and tree and shrub planting will continue as the seasons allow to further enhance the park.

The mix of planting was carefully considered to be attractive to wildlife and create biodiverse habits with ongoing management minimising impacts to the adjacent airport at Daedalus.

Trees

Trees contribute to our environment in many ways; they improve the quality of the air removing dust particles and harmful gas emissions such as carbon dioxide. Trees in urban areas help to reduce the heat island effect, reduce soil erosion and flash flooding by slowing down and capturing fast flowing water. In addition, our

trees help to improve biodiversity and provide landscape character whilst also adding a sense of place to our town centre, neighbourhoods and parks. These benefits all help to improve our health and wellbeing and in turn improve the quality of life for those who live and work in Fareham.

The Council is responsible for between 210,000 to 220,000 trees on more than 870 hectares of public open space, woodlands, including ancient woodlands and housing areas. Over 22,000 of these trees located in parks, frequently used open spaces, cemeteries and adjacent to houses are inspected regularly as part of the Council's proactive tree safety inspection programme.

The Council has an annual tree planting programme, which focuses on replacing mature trees that have had to be removed due to disease or for safety reasons.



Community Involvement

The Council has worked with Gosport and Fareham Friends of the Earth to install a new wildlife meadow at Fareham Cemetery and more recently a new bog garden has been planted at the Park Lane Leisure Centre site. The garden was designed by the group and they also assisted in the planting.

We also worked with the Wallington Village Community Association to install a wildflower meadow by the banks of the Wallington River.

In 2023 the Council's Tree Team worked with the Hampshire Forest Partnership, The Tree Council and a proactive local community group to plant over 500 native trees and shrubs on the open space next to Porchester Castle.

The project took place in two phases with community planting days in February and October to plant native tree and shrub species, in informal groups, around the north and east margins of the open space at Castle Street. The areas were formerly short mown amenity grass, which will be managed less intensively to enable wild grasses and flowers to thrive with the groups of trees and shrubs planted within them. The new planting connects with the existing naturalised vegetation along the bank of the sea defence and drainage ditch. This project will improve the quality of the open space for local people, increase biodiversity and ecology benefits; and as a consequence, capture and store carbon in the long term and improve the health and wellbeing of local residents.

Our Countryside Team works very closely with a wide range of volunteers including community groups, private landowners such as farmers, local companies, schools and individuals to help manage and maintain our wildlife habitats. This includes invasive species removal, installing dead hedging and pond management.



Coastal Management

The Borough's coastline has a diverse range of landscapes and seascapes, including estuaries, salt marshes, soft cliffs and shingle beaches. It is defended along much of its length, reflecting the substantial urban population living within the coastal zone.

Fareham Borough Council's coastal management service, Coastal Partners, is responsible for managing coastal flood and erosion and is in the process of conducting a number of projects including:

Coastal Management Study at Hook Lake

In 2021 Hook Lake was chosen as an area to investigate the feasibility of creating new intertidal (coastal) habitat. The creation of new compensatory habitat is a legal requirement to offset the losses experienced across the wider Solent as a result of sea level rise and more frequent storm events. This new habitat must be reinstated at a number of suitable sites to enable future coastal defence schemes in the area to progress.

Coastal Partners has worked in partnership with Hampshire County Council, who own and manage Hook Lake, the Environment Agency and other key stakeholders to undertake the Hook Lake Coastal Management Study. This study, which was funded by Defra Grant-in-Aid, will be concluding in spring 2024.



Launch of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Studies



Coastal Partners has secured funding from the Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and Fareham Borough Council to assess and develop long-term coastal management options at Fareham Quay and at Alton Grove to Cadour Drive.

At both sites, sections of the sea wall are in very poor condition and reaching the end of their serviceable life. If no coastal defences were in place, 49 properties across both areas would be at flood risk from an extreme tidal event. This increases to 400 properties at risk during a similar event in 100 years' time.

Further to this, both sites contain areas of former landfill and continued erosion of defences in these locations could potentially pollute the environmentally important Portsmouth Harbour.

Given the high costs associated with ongoing maintenance and repairs of current defences, a more sustainable, longer-term solution is required.

The Fareham Quay and Alton Grove to Cadour Drive Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) studies were launched in October 2022 and will take approximately two years to complete. The projects will also actively explore opportunities to integrate wider Council initiatives to improve the public realm, amenity, recreation and access, and, where possible, enhance community health and wellbeing.

The project team will identify, appraise and cost options for coastal management, investigate potential funding sources for delivering schemes and develop outline designs for each location.

For more information about Coastal Partners, please visit <https://coastalpartners.org.uk>



A safe haven for birds

The Solent is internationally important for its wildlife. Each winter, it hosts over 90,000 waders and wildfowl including 10% of the global population of dark-bellied Brent geese. A number of Special Protection Areas have been designated across the Solent to protect these birds and the habitats that support them.

Bird Aware Solent is a partnership of authorities, including Fareham Borough Council, funded by fees paid by developers of new housing and overseen by the Partnership for South Hampshire. The partnership seeks to mitigate potential impacts from increased local housing development near the Solent coast. It also raises awareness on the importance of the Solent for overwintering birds and tries to reduce the amount of disturbance caused by recreation through a team of dedicated rangers.

We have used the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy since March 2018 for all new residential development within 5.6km of the Special Protection Areas.

In the past three years, nearly £500,000 has been secured from qualifying development in Fareham and used to fund a range of projects. Hill Head beach is one such important place for protected birds including dunlin, sanderling and brent geese, which migrate here from as far as Siberia to feed and roost on the rich sand and mud flats. They need to be able to feed and rest without being disturbed in order to survive the winter and return to their summer breeding grounds.

In recent years, birds have frequently been disturbed on this part of the beach, with over 80% being related to a dog's presence or behaviour. Following a public consultation in 2023, Fareham Borough Council introduced an additional seasonal dog exclusion zone at Hill Head to safeguard protected birds. The new protected zone will create a safe haven for migrating birds at the western end

of the beach, between October and March each year.

Fareham Borough Council has also purchased a site at Mill Lane to provide compensatory habitat for wintering birds, primarily Brent Geese, following a partial habitat loss at Solent Airport.

The Mill Lane site is part of a string of floodplain grassland sites along the river and is immediately adjacent to similar habitats to the East of the Meon at Abbey Farm.

The provision of suitable habitat in this location constitutes a significant enhancement of the habitat network. The site is now being managed to create suitable foraging habitat for overwintering waders and wildfowl and to provide additional biodiversity benefits for many other species.

Air Quality

The air you breathe can impact on your health and wellbeing. We currently monitor over 40 sites across the Borough and it is reassuring to know that since we began measuring, air pollution levels have continued to decline across Fareham.

Through our monitoring we highlighted two areas; Gosport Road at the junction with Newgate Lane and Redlands Lane; and Portland Street, by Market Quay car park that were exceeding the Air Quality Standards set by the government for levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). A major factor was the high number and type of vehicles travelling in and out of the Gosport peninsula each day.

These locations were designated as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). To tackle the closely connected spots, an Air Quality Action Plan was put into place in 2008. This contained a range of measures such as improving public transport and encouraging cycling.

In 2018, we worked in partnership with Hampshire County Council and secured £500,000 of Government



funding to implement measures such as providing real time information at bus stops.

With NO₂ levels within both the Gosport Road and Portland Street AQMAs being consistently below the Air Quality Standards, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) instructed the Council to revoke both AQMAs and these are now no longer in place.

There are still some areas of elevated air pollution within the Borough however, the stretch of road from the A27 by the Delme roundabout, down to the Quay Street roundabout, part of Gosport Road and along the A27 is the main location. We are continuing to monitor these locations and are

reporting to DEFRA on an annual basis. We do anticipate that these areas will soon be below the Air Quality Standards also.

Future Generations

We are aware of the transboundary nature of air pollution and of the difficulties that solving this issue present us. Hopefully soon, all locations will be compliant with Air Quality Standards. We will continue to monitor across the Borough and will be focusing our efforts to reduce other air pollutants such as particulate matter.

Find out more about air quality in Fareham and what you can do to help at www.fareham.gov.uk/airquality





Waste and recycling

The Council collects around 35,508 tonnes of household waste, recycling and garden waste, filling around three million bins each year! The good news is that very little is sent to landfill.

Recycling

Our current recycling and composting rate is around 35% a year.

All of the recyclable materials from Fareham's kerbside collections (cans, plastic bottles, paper, card, tins and empty aerosols) are sent to one of two Material Recovery Facilities in the county, in Portsmouth and Alton.

The materials are separated before being baled up and sent to private companies for recycling into new products.

General Waste

The Council not only collect all of your household bins, but all of the waste from litter and dog bins too – all 627 of them. Around 686 tonnes of waste is collected from our litter bins and through litter picking of streets, parks, seafronts and open spaces each year – that's like 98 elephants or 381 average cars!

Most of the non-recyclable waste we collect is taken to one of three Energy Recovery Facilities located in Marchwood, Chineham and Portsmouth. These facilities safely incinerate the waste and use the heat from this process to create steam, in turn generating electricity which is fed to the National Grid.



Garden Waste

All of the waste disposed of as part of our Clip and Collect garden waste subscription service is taken to one of two composting sites: Herriard near Basingstoke and Chilbolton near Stockbridge. The finished product is 'Pro-Grow', a high quality soil conditioner that is available to buy at every recycling centre.

Residents also have the option to compost garden and food waste at home, and information about the introduction of weekly food waste collections can be found on page 23.



Fly-tipping

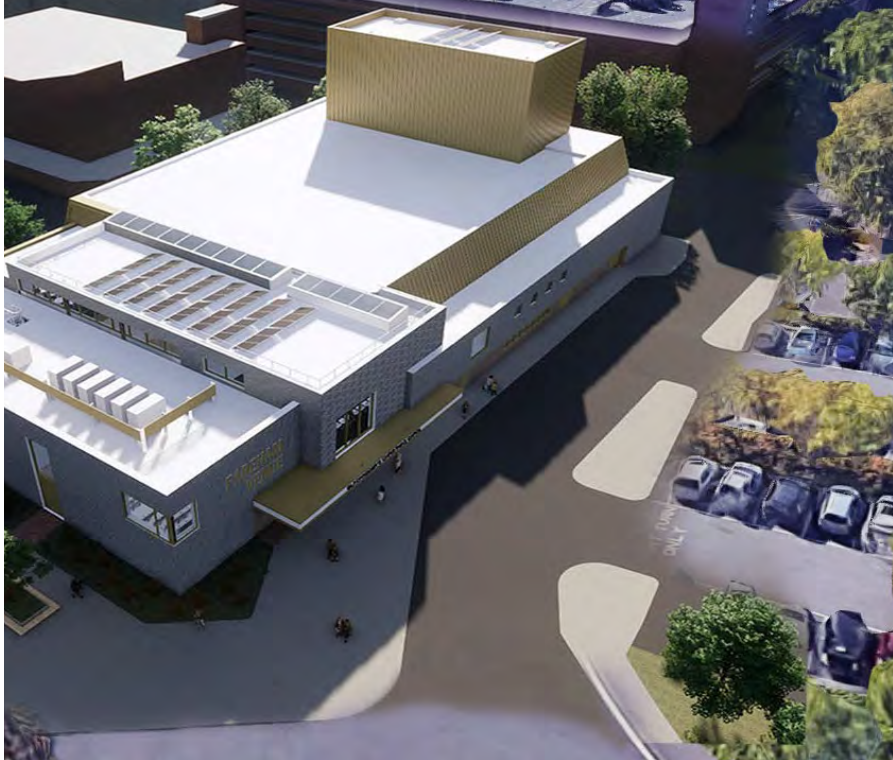
The Council is also responsible for the removal of illegal fly-tipping. The total cost of the removal of litter and fly tipping each year is over a million pounds.

In 2020, an expanded Parking Enforcement Team took on environmental enforcement duties such as littering, dog fouling and control, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles and Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO). This approach offers greater flexibility and resilience to deal with fly-tippers, encampments, dog fouling, drug paraphernalia etc.

What can you do to help?

Recycling and waste reduction is not just the Council's responsibility - everyone has a role to play. Fareham Borough Council has a dedicated webpage where you can find a range of tools and guidance to help you.

Head to **www.fareham.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling**



Next steps

As you can see, we have done some great work so far to help protect the Borough's wider environment. A major next step will be to create a comprehensive strategy to pull together all of these strands and to create a forward working plan. An Environment Strategy will guide us in all our decision making when it comes to future development and will serve to continue to protect and enhance Fareham's environments for future generations.



Upcoming projects:

One of the most important projects over the next 12-months will be developing timelines for reducing our emissions. This will include the costs involved in achieving our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030. Also on the agenda are:

Reducing vehicle emissions

We will continue to use HVO in part of our fleet as a low emission fuel. However, due to the relatively high cost of the fuel, we are not able to roll out

HVO across the whole fleet. We will, however, continue to introduce more electric vehicles, together with the supporting infrastructure required. We will also roll out electric vehicle charging provision at key locations across the Borough.

Decarbonising our buildings

Our buildings such as the Civic Offices and Depot represent a significant proportion of our emissions. Therefore, in 2024/25 we plan to apply for Government funding to improve the energy efficiency of our buildings.

The new Fareham Live development will use four Air Source Heat Pumps to provide heating and ventilation, and solar panels on the roof of the Flytower. The new surface car park will also have four electric vehicle charge points installed with the capability to increase the number if needed.



Generating renewable energy

A feasibility study and detailed business case is being developed for a Solar Farm on Council owned land. The site has significant generation potential and could generate more electricity than the Council currently consumes in its operations. While this would help reduce our carbon footprint, particularly over the short term, it would also generate much needed income.

Alongside the Solar Farm project, we are continuing to explore other options for generating our own renewable electricity such as:

- Assess the potential of other Council controlled sites for renewable generation.
- Continue with solar energy schemes on existing Council buildings and new capital projects.



Climate Adaptation

Since approving our Climate Change Action Plan in 2021 we have completed several climate adaptation projects to ensure that the Borough can respond to climate change. We will continue to identify and undertake climate adaptation projects going forward. For example, we will look to:

- Install a bog garden at Park Lane in partnership with Friends of the Earth to increase biodiversity in the area.
- Identify Biodiversity Net Gain projects within the Borough.
- Review our Local Level Strategic Flood Risk Assessments.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Fareham officers, alongside ecologists from Hampshire County Council, will be working jointly using existing Council land to create and enhance habitats which can then be used as BNG units to support both local developers and our own housing and commercial development programmes.



Continuation of upgrades to our housing stock

Our Planned Maintenance team are in the inception stages of a number of projects to improve energy efficiency in our housing stock. These include upgrading cavity wall insulation and replacing windows and doors in blocks of flats throughout the Borough. The programme of replacements will start in the 2024/25 financial year.

Nutrient Neutrality

The Council, as part of PfSH, will work with the Strategic Environmental Planning Team to deliver grant funded projects of approximately £9m to develop and provide nutrient solutions for the wider catchment.

Increasing our rates of waste and recycling

We have received funding from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to begin our preparations to introduce weekly kerbside food waste collections from 1 April 2026.

Capital funding of £969,223 has been allocated for the purchase of food bins, including internal kitchen caddies, external kerbside caddies and communal bins as well as food waste collection vehicles.

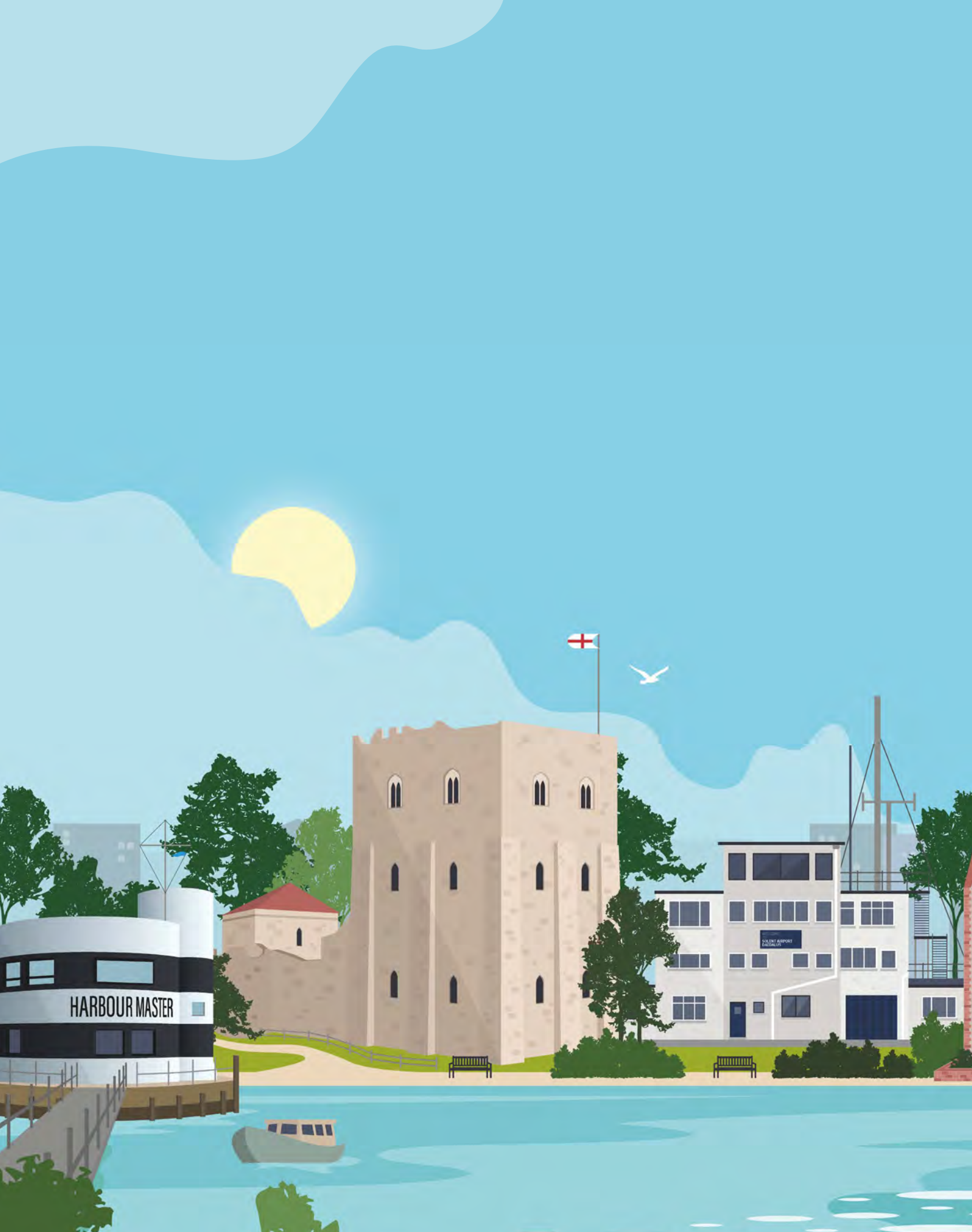
Weekly food waste collection is required for all households under the Environment Act 2021. This act aims to increase household recycling rates by introducing simplified recycling requirements, with people able to recycle the same materials without needing to check what their council will accept.



Air Quality

A new Air Quality Strategy is being developed that will aim to help improve air quality conditions throughout the Borough and to maintain low concentrations of NO2 in the longer-term.

We have a dedicated set of climate pages on our website www.fareham.gov.uk/climatechange where you can find a range of advice and support.



www.fareham.gov.uk