Brighton & Hove Strategic Energy Partnership

Advancing Brighton & Hove's Net Zero Transition

Prospectus

Brighton & Hove City Council

Foreword

Brighton & Hove is a city with a long tradition of climate action and leadership. We were among the first councils to declare a climate and biodiversity emergency, and we are totally committed to driving down the city's emissions.

Our city-wide net zero programme is focused on providing future-proofed infrastructure and technology that will improve lives, support a resilient local economy, and move away from fossil fuels.

This prospectus sets out the opportunity for a new kind of partnership between the public and private sector to deliver these ambitious projects at pace and scale.

The city has considerable strengths to bring to a partnership: strong and consistent political commitment; a large and varied asset base; a mature ecosystem of community energy organisations; and a track record of securing major external funding.

Our Decarbonisation Pathways Study and Local Area Energy Plan provide a clear, data driven roadmap for how Brighton & Hove can transition to a net zero energy system. It identifies a coherent and investible pipeline of 110 priority projects across heat, power, buildings, transport and land use - opportunities that are ambitious in scale, but real, tangible and ready to be taken forward.

These include: heat network zones in the city centre; large scale domestic and non-domestic retrofit programmes; citywide rooftop and ground mounted solar generation; electric vehicle charging infrastructure; opportunities for grid flexibility and smart energy infrastructure, and the decarbonisation of the council's own estate.

We also bring a clear long-term vision: that the transition to net zero must produce economic growth and opportunities for developing new technologies to support good local jobs, new skills, warmer homes, lower bills and thriving neighbourhoods.

We welcome your interest, ideas and expertise. We look forward to working with partners who recognise that Brighton & Hove is not only committed to a low carbon future — but is ready to deliver it.

Councillor Tim Rowkins
Deputy Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council and Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services.

Introduction

Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) invites potential partners to engage in a unique opportunity to shape the city's transition to net zero. With a defined pipeline of capital projects, we are seeking a strategic partnership that can accelerate delivery, unlock innovation, and create long-term value for both the city and its investment partners.

Our ambition is to enable energy decarbonisation for the whole city, whilst tackling inequality, generating economic benefit and providing a better Brighton & Hove for all of our residents and businesses.

Strategic context

The population of Brighton & Hove has a long tradition of engagement in climate action. The city council has consistently shown leadership in this area, with a formal declaration of a climate and biodiversity emergency in 2018, a CDP A-rated city designation for the last 3 consecutive years, and scoring in the top 10% of councils according to Climate Emergency UK, with an exceptionally high score in the category of 'Buildings & Heating'.

Our Carbon Neutral Programme (launched in 2021) laid critical foundations for action. This plan is refreshed in our Climate and Nature Action Plan (expected February 2026), which covers actions relating to climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation and nature recovery. Our Decarbonisation Pathways Study, published in 2024, identifies the transformational changes required across the city's energy system to reach net zero.

Located in The Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere, Brighton & Hove has long been recognised as a fantastic place to live, work and visit. The city boasts excellent transport links via road, rail and sea. Our Council Plan sets out our vision and priorities for the city and provides further information on our demographics.

Decarbonisation is central to our economic, housing, regeneration and adult skills strategies. In addition to our large urban assets, the council also owns 13,000 acres of land around the city periphery, and our nature recovery and carbon sequestration activity includes the City Downland Estate Plan, Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Banks.

Our net zero ambition aligns with regional frameworks such as Sussex Energy, a collaboration between public and private sector stakeholders across Sussex, with the aim of achieving energy neutrality for the region by 2040.

Sussex & Brighton is in the Devolution Priority Programme, which includes Climate and Environment as an area of competence in the devolution framework. This is expected to further enable the aims of Sussex Energy, with Brighton & Hove City Council taking a leading role, as the only already-established unitary authority in the region.

Brighton & Hove is home to two world class universities, both with excellent reputations in engineering. In the most recent national Research Excellent Framework (2021 REF) assessment, 87.9% of the University of Sussex's Engineering research was assessed as world-leading or internationally excellent, and 100% of the University of Brighton's engineering research impact was assessed as 'outstanding' or 'very considerable' for its reach and significance.

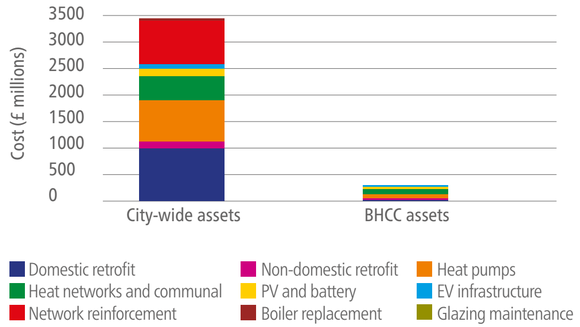
Regarding vocational training, Brighton and the wider Sussex region has an established network of decarbonisation academies, with five 'training centres of excellence' in the built environment and electric vehicle technology, to support retrofitting and green energy installation.

The council currently has a large Labour majority, with primary political opposition coming from the Green Party. Priorities are therefore strongly aligned with the Government's clean energy mission, and political commitment to decarbonisation is expected to remain long into the future.

'Political commitment to decarbonisation is expected to remain long into the future'

Strategic Energy Partnership – Scale of the opportunity

The Decarbonisation Pathways Study (the city's Local Area Energy Plan) outlines a capital investment of nearly £2.6 billion required to deliver the transition to net zero, including investment from property owners but excluding network reinforcement costs. Return on investment varies by project type and may improve under future energy market shifts, in particular, changes to the electricity to gas price ratio included in the scope of Ofgem's energy system cost allocation and recovery review.



Capital investment required to achieve net zero

Capital investment required to achieve net zero, includes:

£100m for PV and battery

£1.8bn for heat pumps

£400m for heat networks

£1.1bn for retrofit

£350m for council assets

The Decarbonisation Pathways Study uses spatial analysis and local insights to identify 110 priority projects to push forward the city's net zero transition. These projects are mapped, along with supporting energy system data, at: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/decarbonisation-pathways-study [1].

Further information is provided on selected opportunities in the latter part of this document. In summary, these include:

[1] Data sources are listed at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/net-zero/net-zero-brighton-hove

Solar Farm

Feasibility and concept design is currently being undertaken for up to 6.5 MWp of ground-mounted generation, at a site located close to potential direct-wire off-takers.

Heat Networks

Brighton city centre, together with an area of Kemptown, contains 181 MWh annual heat demand and a linear heat density exceeding 8 MWh/m/y. Central Hove also has high linear heat density with 20 smaller heat network opportunities identified in outer parts of the city.

Domestic retrofit and fabric upgrades

Around 105,000 properties in Brighton & Hove have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or below. The report identifies geographical groupings of over 8,000 domestic properties where specific, simple measures could yield significant energy savings.

Non-domestic retrofit and fabric upgrades

There is 60.4 GWh/annum of heat demand from non-domestic buildings on council-owned land, with energy rating D or below. From 2027 the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) for commercial properties will be raised to C, improving the retrofit business case.

Rooftop solar generation

As the sunniest city in the UK, Brighton & Hove is estimated to have 670 MWp potential for rooftop Photovoltaic generation (PV) of which 75% is on domestic buildings.

Regeneration

There are opportunities for combining decarbonisation projects with our planned pipeline of regeneration projects.

Individual heat pumps

There are around 37,000 heat pump ready domestic properties currently using gas or electric heating, of which nearly 4,000 are owned by the council. Heat pump deployment for non-domestic properties will likely need to exceed 2,400 properties, 20% of which are on council land.

Electric vehicle charging infrastructure

Brighton & Hove has the best coverage of on-street EV charging outside of London, with more than 7,000 new on-street chargers to be installed over the next 15 years. The city has untapped potential for fleet and rapid-charge hubs, including on council land.

Low carbon technology innovation

There are opportunities to trial innovative technologies using our asset base, such as vehicle-to-grid and smart grid technologies at our fleet depot or a pyrolysis/biochar plant located close to a third-party heat network.

Why partner with Brighton & Hove City Council?

There are numerous benefits for potential partners from joining Brighton & Hove City Council in their proposed Strategic Energy Partnership. Some would apply, to a greater or lesser extent, to any Strategic Energy Partnership with a local authority, however there are additional advantages specific to partnering with Brighton & Hove City Council:

- As an established unitary authority, the council's operations are **unlikely to be deeply affected by Local Government Reorganisation,** though potentially the geographical area might increase. This will enable the council to retain a strong focus on the partnership.
- There is a **coherent set of policies** supporting the council's net zero and energy ambitions, for example the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part 1 and Part 2, Our City Transport Plan 2035, HRA Capital Investment Programme 2025/26 to 2029/30, and BHCC Council Fleet Strategy [2].
- The council is a **large asset owner,** holding a significant and varied property portfolio. Its downland estate (4,880 hectares of land within the South Downs National Park) is unmatched in terms of rural landholdings by a UK urban local authority. Outside of the National Park, the council owns 1,753 hectares comprising 29% green spaces, 24% Housing, 10% educational use and 29% commercial.
- A **city-wide Local Area Energy Plan** has already been undertaken and forms the backbone of this prospectus. The findings have been shared digitally and stakeholder dialogue already established.

[2] See Brighton & Hove City Council's Climate and Nature Action Plan (publication expected February 2026) for further relevant policies.

- There is currently **sufficient capacity in the local electricity grid** to accommodate significant additional solar, heat pump, and EV connections.
- The council engages closely with UK Power Networks, including by providing **input into the 2026 Distribution Future Energy Scenarios (DFES)** to be published in February. This engagement ensures that UKPN's mid-term investment plans take into account Brighton & Hove's strategic energy projects.
- The city's **coastal location** provides potential additional opportunities related to wind and tidal generation.
- The city has a **vibrant SME-led economy,** with strong employment and business growth driven by the creative, digital and visitor economy sectors in particular. Brighton & Hove has some of the best conditions for investment outside of London and the city is making rapid progress on the transition to a more circular economy. The city's Economic Plan sets out an ambition to create an economy that is more competitive, fairer and greener, driven by core missions including to "decarbonise and create a more regenerative economy".
- The council is a key partner in established regional **collaborative partnerships,** including with the **South Downs National Park** which is increasing its role in climate action and with Sussex Energy which is a regional collaboration, whose evidence is expected to influence energy strategy and policy of the Sussex and Brighton Combined County Authority.
- As a unitary authority, Brighton & Hove City Council gives access to **strategic land and planning control.** The council's remit includes planning, road use, land release, social housing and public assets - key levers for unlocking, speeding up, and derisking complex infrastructure projects.
- The council has a **strong track record as a highways authority.** Net zero projects, such as heat network deployment, often entail periods of disruption and changes to the public highway. Through initiatives such as Valley Gardens and the rollout of bus service priority measures (eg Western Road Improvement Scheme), the council has consistently demonstrated its ability to effectively manage these changes to enable innovation.
- The council has a good **track record of delivery** and of **achieving grant funding,** including for social housing retrofit, private sector housing retrofit, on-street EV charging, fleet decarbonisation, heat decarbonisation planning and whole school decarbonisation.
- **Continuity of public and political support** for city-wide decarbonisation is expected.
- The city has a **mature community energy sector** with Brighton Energy Cooperative (BEC) and Brighton & Hove Energy Services Company (BHESCo) active since 2010 and 2014 respectively.
- The Sussex and Brighton region will have access to £15.2 million **devolution funding** per year from 2026 to 2028, and £38 million per year thereafter.

By forming a Strategic Energy Partnership with Brighton & Hove City Council, the partner would gain the following advantages:

Access to underexploited market segments
Through mixed asset bundling, the SEP would generate investment opportunities in mid-ticket, distributed infrastructure (eg heat network, EV charging, building retrofit, and solar farm) that are underrepresented in traditional infrastructure portfolios due to fragmentation. These emerging infrastructure classes have long-term growth potential but are harder to access without intermediaries such as local authorities.

Long-term, inflation-hedged returns
The SEP would provide access to long-term, inflation-hedged returns.

ESG and impact delivery
For impact-oriented investors or those with Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), Sustainability Disclosure Requirements (SDR) and net zero portfolio alignment obligations, a Brighton & Hove SEP would offer unique and credible ESG value. Central to the partnership's mission is the city's net zero target, as well as measurable social value such as job creation, affordable housing, reductions in fuel poverty, and regeneration of underinvested areas.

Predictable revenue streams
The council can act as an anchor tenant (eg energy offtaker, lease guarantor, long-term buyer of retrofit) derisking projects through predictable revenue streams.

Reputational legitimacy
Co-investing with local authorities enhances social licence and community acceptance, critical for infrastructure in dense or politically sensitive areas. This legitimacy can also facilitate forming partnerships with other stakeholders in the city.

Pathways to blended finance
As a local authority, the council may have access to funds, such as the National Wealth Fund, Community Municipal Investments and grant funding, which would not be available to the private sector acting in isolation.

Model flexibility and first-mover advantage
BHCC is open to a wide range of partnership models. Early partners can shape the design and benefit from proprietary deal flow (capturing significant market share), reputational leadership and co-investment opportunities. Partners could also benefit from governance influence and alignment with future public capital flows.

Spotlight on:

solar farm

Project stage

Techno-economic feasibility and design work for a large-scale, ground mounted solar farm up to RIBA Stage 3 currently underway

Project scale

Expected to be 6.5 MWp

Level of council influence

High (Landowner and commissioner)

Available grants

- Mayoral Renewables Fund
- Great British Energy Community Fund

A site has been earmarked for developing a solar farm on council land. This project would form a crucial element of the council's net zero ambitions and enable renewable power generated at scale within the city to be utilised by local off-takers. The council is dedicated to ensuring long-term community value from a project of this nature, as well as providing value for money for prospective customers.

The investment opportunity

The council has commissioned detailed feasibility and design work for large-scale ground mounted Solar PV on council land. This piece of work, due to complete in Spring 2026, aims to establish the conditions under which planning consent could be granted, including engagement with key stakeholders and planning authorities. The study will also determine appropriate biodiversity and environmental actions, as well as develop a technical design which is both financially viable and reflective of identified constraints.

The area:

- 10 hectare field on the fringe of the city boundary.
- Neighbouring three different high demand off-takers, who have notionally confirmed interest in exploring a power purchase agreement.

Aerial view of the potential solar farm site, adjacent to the American Express stadium (source: Google Earth, imagery © Google)

Spotlight on:

city centre heat network

Project stage

Project identification; Letters of support for feasibility study from large third-party heat load stakeholders

Project scale

181 MWh annual heat demand [3] ; > 8 MWh/m linear heat density [4]; £450 million development cost [5]

Level of council influence

Medium (Planning authority; key asset owner and potential land owner for city centre heat network; able to bid for feasibility study funding)

Available grants

- Heat Network Delivery Unit
- Green Heat Network Fund
- Heat Network Efficiency Scheme

[1] Brighton & Hove Decarbonisation Pathways geospatial data
[2] Brighton & Hove Decarbonisation Pathways Report (page 43)
[3] Modelling done by DESNZ

There is strong potential to deliver a major, low-carbon heat network in the city centre– a key infrastructure element of our net zero transition with identified opportunities for network expansion. It is expected that this area would be designated a heat network zone. Delivery of a city centre heat network will require strong leadership from the private sector in its commercialisation, construction, and long-term operation. By partnering with the council, developers can unlock access to public finance and strengthen credibility with local stakeholders.

The investment opportunity

The city centre, including extension into Kemptown (see areas 9, 10 and 11 below), is expected to be designated as a heat network zone under upcoming regulation, which would require particular developments to connect to heat networks where one is available. Modelling by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), corroborated by the council's decarbonisation pathways study, identifies this area as having the greatest potential in the city for a heat network, to deliver a substantial reduction in carbon emissions.

The area:

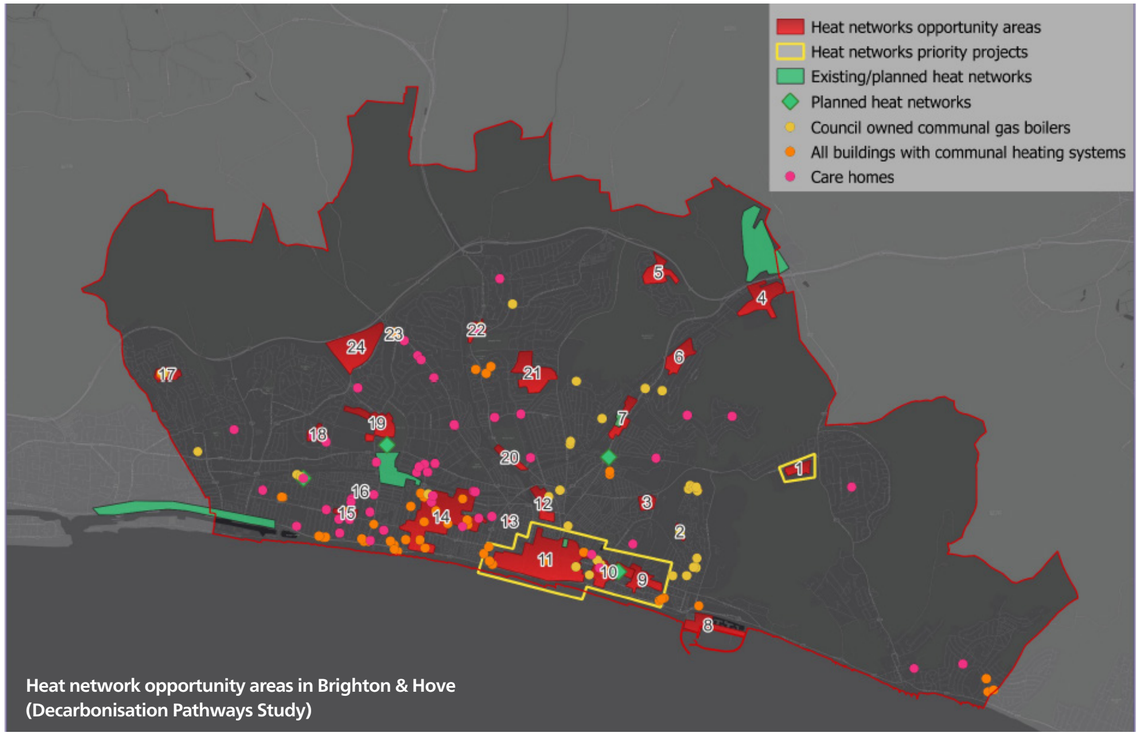
- **City centre area (~142k MWh annual heat demand)** includes potential off-takers such as the council's Prince Regent Swimming Complex, Jubilee Library, Brighton Centre, Royal Pavillion, Brighton University's Grand Parade Building and St. Peter's House Library, Churchill Square Shopping Centre, hotels and several commercial properties.
- **Kemptown area (~39k MWh annual heat demand)** includes potential off-takers such as the Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton College and the council's residential properties with existing communal heating systems.

Importantly, many domestic and commercial properties in the city centre are not suitable for individual heat pumps due to high density, low fabric efficiency, and stricter planning controls in the conservation areas. These limitations, alongside efficiencies owing to high linear heat density, makes district heating the preferred option for heat decarbonisation in the city centre.

The city council owns several heat demand potential anchor loads in the area, and other major heat demand stakeholders (University Hospitals Sussex NHS Trust, Museums Trust including the iconic Brighton Pavillion, Brighton University) have indicated support for development of a techno-economic feasibility study for this heat network and a connection would enable continued progress on decarbonisation across these key buildings.

The University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust recently commissioned Heat Decarbonisation Plans RIBA Stage 4 to phase out all existing fossil-fuel primary heating systems across its 350,000 m^2 estate. The Trust's Royal Sussex County Hospital is in the first phase of a three-phase redevelopment, replacing ageing infrastructure with modern facilities, providing an opportunity to decarbonise the hospital's space and water heating.

The council is committed to ensuring that all off-takers, including its own estate, benefit from substantial energy cost reductions. This will be achieved through targeted retrofit measures that lower heat demand ahead of heat network connection, maximising efficiency and value for all participants. The council is also keen to explore options through the SEP to enable development of small- and medium-size heat networks with lower returns (also mapped opposite).



Heat network opportunity areas in Brighton & Hove (Decarbonisation Pathways Study)

Spotlight on:

whole building retrofit – domestic

Project stage

- **Council-owned social housing:** Established programme with existing contractual arrangements
- **Private sector housing:** Established programme of fuel poverty energy efficiency grants and small-scale community energy programmes for able-to-pay households (eg Carbon Neutral Communities programme)

Project scale [6]

- 105,000 domestic properties require 241,000 fabric improvement measures, with potential for 152.5 GWh/yr energy savings, at a cost of £1,019 million
- 73,000 domestic properties require heat pump (HP) installations
- 4,000 council homes identified as being potentially suitable for HP installation with minimum. fabric improvements (~1,100 currently direct electric heated)
- 7,000 houses and flats require rooftop solar installations; albeit potential far exceeds requirement, with 515 MW domestic rooftop solar potential identified

Level of council influence

High for council housing; Moderate for private rental (MEES enforcement); Planning authority and promoter opportunity for privately owned and occupied (planning and promotion).

Available grants

- Boiler Upgrade Scheme
- Great British Insulation Scheme
- New low- and zero-interest loans and low-income grant scheme to support package of measures (rooftop solar, home batteries and heat pumps) Warm Homes Plan
- Warm Homes: Local Grant Scheme
- Connected for Warmth – ASHP grants

[6] Based on findings from the Brighton & Hove Decarbonisation Pathways Study

The council is keen to leverage its assets and Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) enforcement to contribute toward a SEP-led, city-wide programme of domestic, whole building retrofit in Brighton & Hove that bundles fabric improvements, rooftop solar, battery storage, and renewable heat technologies – a strategic focus of Government's Warm Homes Plan. Importantly, delivery models should support, rather than compete with existing community energy organisations.

Proven delivery and local expertise

Council housing

Since early 2024, more than 850 solar PV systems have been installed on council houses and bungalows, bringing the total generation on council housing to 3MWh/year. Trials with EDF have taken place for domestic battery storage, we have installed Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP), thermal batteries in many properties and 2025 saw the first installation of a communal ASHP. We have a strong record of securing external funding including recent success with both Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund and Local Grant.

Private sector housing

- **Solar Together Sussex group buying scheme (2020 to 2024):** 244 installations, 2,631 panels installed (970 kWh), 192 batteries added to PV (1,002 kWh)
- **Grants for low-income households:** The council promotes and, where possible, works with partners to deliver energy retrofit grants to residents in fuel poverty. These are being continued and widened under the Warm Homes Plan.

The investment opportunity

The council is keen to explore options for neighbourhood level, whole building retrofit schemes, utilising 'priority areas' identified in the Decarbonisation Pathways Study, which include neighbourhoods where retrofit measures (heat pump installation, fabric upgrades and rooftop solar) would be best targeted.

Council housing

The council owns over 12,000 homes, and is aiming for all feasible homes to reach at least EPC C by 2030 (around 1.8k homes remaining). This aligns with proposed MEES for social housing that could make this a regulatory requirement. The council is keen to explore how a SEP could enhance existing retrofit programmes, in particular how it might (i) improve the business case for decarbonising heating and hot water services, (ii) increase renewable generation capacity on our assets for the benefit of residents, (iii) increase bill savings for council housing tenants, and (iv) accelerate delivery.

Private sector housing

Brighton & Hove presents a strong market opportunity for heat pump installation. The Decarbonisation Pathways Study identified 33,300 private sector homes that are likely suitable for heat pump installation without major retrofit, with over one third currently dependent on expensive, direct electric heating.

Many of these homes are concentrated in central neighbourhoods with high fuel poverty. With the Warm Homes Plan providing low income households with fully funded upgrades—including solar panels, battery storage, and heat pumps—and providing the able-to-pay market with low-/no-interest loans, the commercial outlook for domestic deployment of all these measures in the city is highly favourable.

Spotlight on:

whole building retrofit – non-domestic

Project stage

- **Council-owned:** Concept design to delivery and operation, progressed on a case-by-case basis; Intention to establish a portfolio approach enabling cross-subsidy
- **Private sector:** Established projects with existing contractual arrangements on rooftop solar (managed by community energy); No established programme for city-wide whole building commercial retrofit

Project Scale [7]

- Among the 11,300 non-domestic properties in Brighton & Hove, more than 6,800 (61%) have an energy rating D or below (1100 on council-owned land)
- £76.9 million investment in non-domestic fabric improvements could yield 25 GWh/year: energy savings (with 26% from properties on council land)
- Potential to generate 96 GWh/yr of rooftop solar on council-owned land

Level of council influence

High on council-owned and managed properties; Moderate on council-leased properties; Low on private sector non-domestic buildings

Available grants

- VCSE Energy Efficiency Scheme
- Community Ownership Fund round 4

[7] Based on findings from the Brighton & Hove Decarbonisation Pathways Study

The council is keen to leverage its assets to develop a SEP-led, city-wide programme of non-domestic, whole building retrofit in Brighton & Hove that bundles rooftop solar, fabric improvements, and heat decarbonisation. Importantly, delivery models should support, rather than compete with existing community energy organisations.

Proven delivery and local expertise

The council has carried out whole-building retrofit projects within its corporate estate (schools, leisure centres, care homes, etc.). Earlier this year, retrofit works were carried out at Peter Gladwin School, including the full decommissioning of the school's gas boilers. Projects such as these have contributed towards a reduction of gas and oil consumption from the corporate estate by around 40% since 2009/10.

The investment opportunity

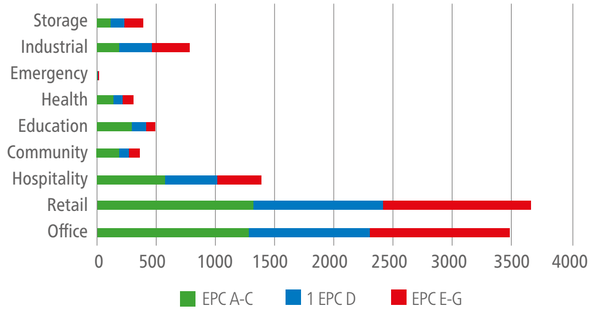
City-wide non-domestic buildings

There are more than 6,800 non-domestic properties in Brighton & Hove with an energy rating D or below (see page 22). There is a density of low performing buildings in the city centre and central Hove, due to the prevalence of old and listed buildings. Many of these properties are likely to require minor upgrades prior to heat network connection. More than 2,400 non-domestic properties will likely require more substantial fabric upgrades to enable heat pump installation, 20% of which are on council-owned land. The total net zero investment requirement for non-domestic fabric improvement is estimated at £76.9 million (see page 22).

The council's corporate estate

Energy audits of the 73 highest emitting corporate buildings and schools owned and managed by the council identified £90 million of capital works, and a potential annual carbon reduction of 3,400 tonnes CO_2e. With project development support from the SEP, further feasibility work could be carried out to assess financial and carbon ROI, putting the council in a stronger position to bid for future grant funding.

The council does not currently have a retrofit programme for its leased buildings. However, given the age profile of the council's 365 commercial properties, and with commercial MEES standards set to rise, there is a significant opportunity to leverage these assets to deliver wide-scale non-domestic building retrofit.



Breakdown of EPC ratings by typology among non-domestic buildings

	Number of properties	Current heat demand (GWh)	Energy saving (GWh)	Cost (m£)
Properties with EPC D	3,260	109.5	12.5	39.2
Properties with EPC E-G	3,610	116.9	12.5	37.7
Total (EPC D and below)	6,870	226.4	25	76.9

Overview of fabric improvement in all non-domestic properties with EPC D or below

Spotlight on:

Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure (EVI)

Public EV charging network

Project stage
Established programme with existing contractual arrangements for on-street public charging; Additional opportunities at identification stage

Project Scale
Opportunities to develop ultra-rapid charging hubs on council land, multiple potential locations currently being scoped for hubs varying in size from 12 to 40+ Ultra Rapid chargers. Potential to co-locate charging hubs with strategic mobility hubs (with Park & Ride a core element) on the edge of the city

Level of council influence
High (Commissioner, land owner and Highways Authority)

Private EVI to electrify public service fleets

Project stage
Concept to early-stage development (varies by hub)

Project scale
- 20 sites linked to public services (hospital sites, fire stations, etc.) identified for potential charging hubs
- 1,250 kVA requirement to support electrification of the council's fleet

Level of council influence
High at waste depot; Moderate at bus depots (via policy levers such as Bus ULEZ); Low at other depots, albeit the council is a key strategic partner for planning approvals and forward planning with UKPN

Available grants
- Innovate UK Increasing EV charging capacity on the strategic road network
- Depot charging scheme
- NHS chargepoint accelerator scheme
- Workplace charging scheme for state-funded education institutions
- Electric vehicle chargepoint and infrastructure grants for landlords
- Electric vehicle chargepoint grant for renters or flat owners

As the public highway authority with a dedicated EV team, considerable land assets, manager of the UK's largest public on-street EV charging contract, and large fleet owner, the council is well positioned to leverage SEP investment to accelerate the expansion of public and private electric vehicle infrastructure (EVI) in Brighton & Hove.

Proven delivery and local expertise

Public EV charging network

Brighton & Hove is currently a leading city in on-street charge points, with the best network coverage outside of London. Independent research by Field Dynamics and Zap-Map shows that 83.1% of Brighton & Hove residents with no off-street parking, now live within a 5-minute walk of a public chargepoint.

Greater Brighton Metropolitan College, the city's largest further education provider, provides training in low-carbon vehicle technology and EVI installation, as do other nearby Chichester College Group FE colleges, such as Crawley College.

The council recently signed 15-year contracts with Char.gy, Blink Charging and Believ, valued in excess of £300 million, to supply over 7,000 public standard, fast, rapid and ultra rapid chargepoints across the city. The project, the largest of its kind to date in the UK, will benefit from £2.865 million national grant funding and around £30 million of private sector funding, supporting the uptake of EVs by local households and businesses.

Public service fleet decarbonisation

In 2024 the council invested £350,000 in upgrading its fleet depot, delivering ground breaking EVI at its Hollingdean waste depot. 15% of the council's fleet is now electric, including 13 HGVs.

In collaboration with the city's largest bus operator, the council successfully secured £8.1 million in Department for Transport funding, unlocking approximately £26.6 million in private investment to rebuild and electrify (4 MVA) the Conway Street bus depot, with 26 electric buses to be added to the Brighton & Hove B&H Buses' fleet in 2026.

The investment opportunity

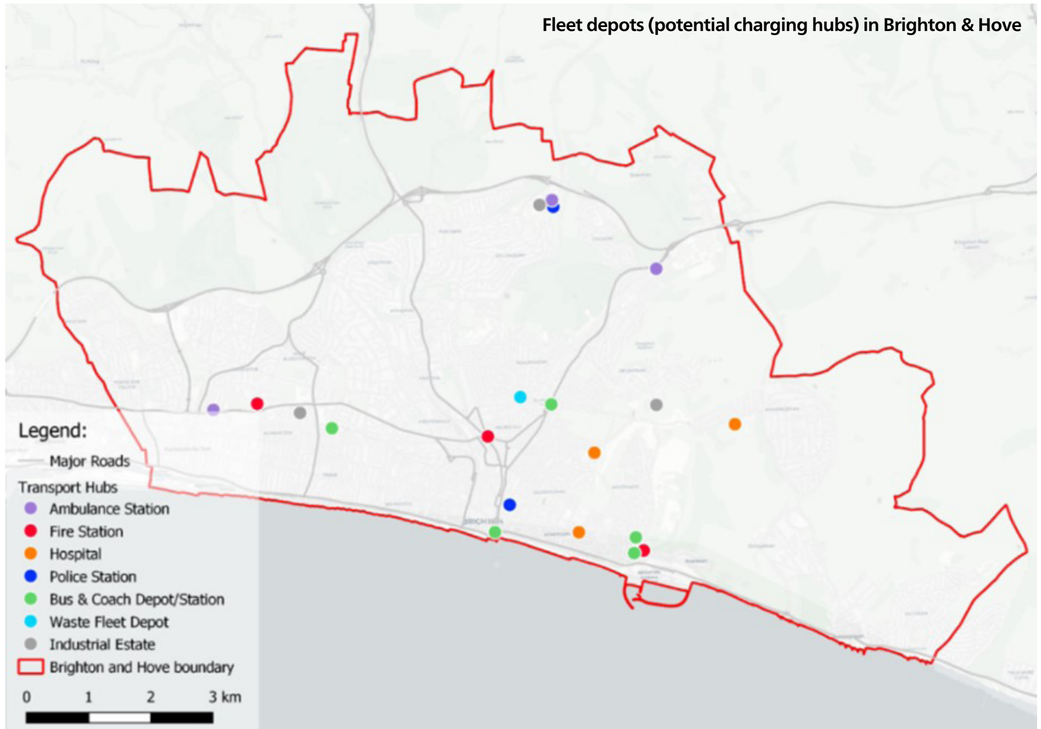
We are open to exploring options to further expand our public charging network, particularly charging hubs, with the SEP potentially assuming responsibility for planning and investment decisions.

Devolution in Sussex and Brighton creates a unique opportunity for strategic planning of HGV and commercial fleet charging hubs, ensuring infrastructure is deployed where it will have the greatest impact across the strategic road network. The council aims to work closely with the Combined Authority to assess areas of council-owned land, with the potential for developing charging hubs through the SEP.

The council is also keen to explore options to expand its private EVI by 1250 kVA to support electrification of its corporate fleet. The map on page 25 highlights similar opportunities across the city, mapping 20 fleet depots linked to public services (hospital sites, fire stations, bus depots, etc.) that will likely require major EVI upgrades in their transition to net zero. With a fleet of 222 buses serving 73 routes, Brighton & Hove Buses face a significant challenge in achieving net zero.

For projects requiring new substations, there are opportunities for the SEP to investigate improving local grid flexibility through battery storage, Vehicle to Grid (V2G) and other smart grid technologies, indirectly supporting the delivery of other SEP projects.

Fleet depots (potential charging hubs) in Brighton & Hove



Spotlight on:

rooftop solar

Project stage

- **BHCC owned (housing and corporate estate):** Established programmes (could potentially be integrated into / enhanced by SEP)
- **Private sector (domestic and non-domestic):** Established community energy programmes

Project Scale [8]

- **City-wide rooftop solar potential:** 670 MWp (621 GWh/yr generation) with 15.4% on properties located on council-owned land
- **City-wide rooftop solar requirement:** 74 MWp, which could be achieved through installation of rooftop PV on 7,000 domestic (515 MWp) and 580 non-domestic buildings

Level of council influence

- **Council owned and managed:** High
- **Council owned and leased:** Moderate
- **Private sector:** Low (planning authority and promotion of community energy)

Sources of external funding

- Smart export guarantee
- New low- and zero-interest loans to support domestic rooftop solar alongside home batteries and heat pumps| Warm Homes Plan
- The Great British Community Energy Fund

[8] Based on findings from the Brighton & Hove Decarbonisation Pathways Study

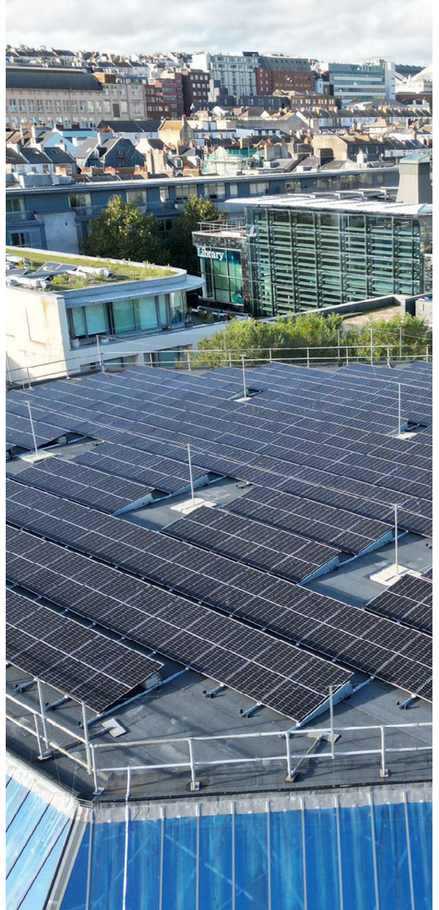
There is opportunity to significantly scale rooftop solar in Brighton & Hove, both as part of and independent from programmes of domestic and non-domestic whole building retrofit. Importantly, delivery models should support, rather than compete with existing community energy organisations.

Proven delivery and local expertise

Brighton & Hove City Council has a strong track record in solar deployment:

- **Corporate Estate:** Solar PV installed across 17 council-owned sites, generating around 700 MWh annually and saving approximately £105,000 per year.
- **Schools Portfolio:**
  - 35 school sites equipped with solar PV systems.
  - 10 self-owned systems generate approximately 160,000 kWh annually, saving around £25,000 per year.
  - Community Energy Framework (facilitated by BEC and BHESCo) powers 30 schools, delivering approximately 1,650,000 kWh annually.

Community energy companies currently own 6.5 MWp of rooftop solar capacity



across Brighton & Hove, demonstrating a thriving local ecosystem of expertise and collaboration.

The investment opportunity

Brighton & Hove is a leader in renewable energy, with over 15 MWp of rooftop solar PV capacity installed across the city. To achieve the city's net zero target, this figure must increase fivefold. Independent analysis by Buro Happold confirms that the city's rooftop potential far exceeds this requirement, creating a unique opportunity for large-scale solar deployment. As one of the UK's sunniest cities, Brighton & Hove offers optimal conditions for solar generation, with sufficient capacity in the local grid to accommodate significant additional solar connections.

To scale to at least 74 MWp rooftop solar capacity, significant investment is needed in:

- **Expanding delivery** to privately owned homes and businesses (a breakdown of commercial rooftop solar capacity by typology and sector is provided opposite).
- **Enhancing council-led programmes** to accelerate deployment.
- **Partnering with community energy organisations** to ensure growth supports, rather than competes with, existing initiatives.
- **Integrating rooftop solar** into neighbourhood-level decarbonisation programmes to improve the business case for whole building retrofit.
- **Bundling solar with battery storage and smart grid technologies** to improve grid flexibility and indirectly support delivery of the wider SEP project portfolio.

Breakdown of solar PV capacity by typology and sector

Typology	Potential PV capacity (MW)	Share
Retail	41	6.1%
Storage	14	2.2%
Community, arts and leisure	11	1.7%
Industrial	15	2.3%
Education	28	4.2%
Office	21	3.2%
Hospitality	14	2.1%
Health	8	1.3%
Emergency services	1	0.1%
Flat	132	19.7%
House	383	57.2%
Total	**669**	**100%**

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