

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**  
**Wednesday 13 November 2024**

**1. QUESTION FROM MIKE WALTON (NOT IN ATTENDANCE)**  
**Re: Carbon Budget Overspend**

If DCC had an overspend in its financial budget of 9% that would not be acceptable.

Devon is currently running a 9% overspend in its carbon budget. This too is clearly unacceptable and jeopardises a safe future for ourselves, our children and grandchildren.

Devon has undertaken a lot of good work to reduce the county's carbon pollution, but clearly the current interventions are not sufficient. We need a step change in our ambition and boldness, particularly to reduce transport carbon pollution.

Will Cabinet please urge DCC Officers to bring forward ADDITIONAL measures to recover the current 9% overspend in our carbon budget and present these to the December 2024 or January 2025 Cabinet?

**REPLY BY COUNCILLOR DAVIS**

Each year, the University of Exeter's Centre for Energy and Environment calculates Devon's carbon footprint, measuring the greenhouse gases emitted by activities within Devon, Plymouth, and Torbay. This calculation relies on national datasets published after the emissions have occurred, with the latest available data for 2022.

In 2022, Devon's carbon footprint, including Torbay and Plymouth, was 7.15 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This concludes the carbon budget period from 2018 to 2022, during which emissions exceeded the budget cap by 9%. Although there has been a steady reduction in emissions since 2008, primarily due to the power sector's decarbonisation (which has decreased by about 70% since 2008), the transport, buildings, and agriculture sectors have seen little change in emissions since 2008.

Devon County Council (DCC) is actively reducing its own organisational emissions through its Carbon Reduction Plan, achieving a 56% reduction since 2012.

Local authorities influence around a third of their area's emissions and so recovering the 9% overspend on the 2018 – 2022 carbon budget requires everyone to play their part.

The Devon Carbon Plan, produced by the Devon Climate Emergency partnership, is a comprehensive strategy for everyone in Devon, containing actions to reduce emissions across all sectors, including buildings, transport, and food, land, and sea, which account for 90% of Devon's emissions. DCC is helping to implement actions in the Plan.

For example, the authority is leading initiatives such as:

- **LEVI (Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure):** Expanding infrastructure for electric vehicles, including charging stations. Building on the adoption of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.
- **LCWIPs (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans):** Improving cycling and walking routes. 3 LCWIPs adopted (Exeter, Heart of Teignbridge and Bideford, Barnstaple and Northam) and 3 more consulted upon (Mid Devon, Clyst Valley and New Communities and Countywide).
- **Bus Service Improvement Plan:** Investment in electric buses and bus priority measures to improve reliability of bus services in the most congested locations to make public transport a cleaner, more attractive alternative to the car.
- **Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4):** This transport strategy for Devon is committed to decarbonisation by promoting a more integrated transport network, making it more convenient to travel on foot, by cycle and public transport. Public consultation on this is open between 1 October and 30 November 2024.
- **Train 4 Tomorrow Bootcamps:** Providing training for green jobs.
- **Energy Saving Devon:** Providing energy saving and retrofit advice to Devon's citizens.
- **Local Area Energy Planning:** Identifying with key stakeholders the most efficient pathway to electrify and decarbonise Devon's energy use, including transport.

Additionally, the Council will continue to work with national government to maximise the opportunities presented by devolution.