

**COUNCIL CARBON EMISSIONS &
CARBON LITERATE ORGANISATION (CLO) BRONZE AWARD**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Scotland has some of the most ambitious targets and progressive legislation in terms of climate change in the world and the public sector is being promoted as playing a leading role towards achieving net zero by 2045. As with other public bodies it has been a requirement for Argyll & Bute Council to monitor, record and publish our carbon emissions and progression towards 'net zero' for the past 7 years. The most recent results from the national 'Reporting Requirements' are for the financial year 2021/22 and have been made available online. A 'Summary Analysis' report covering all submitting organisations is anticipated by Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) in April 2023 (although currently awaiting publication).
- 1.2 Around 160 public bodies (Councils, Health Boards, Government) from across Scotland submitted data in late 2022 about their carbon emissions. Our Council's 2021/22 annual carbon emissions has generally followed a pattern that is consistent across the country akin to a small increase in emissions. This is generally understood to be connected with activities and services returning to normal after COVID-19 plus some 'bounce back' of the economy in terms of increased visitor numbers and business production in terms of waste.
- 1.3 Argyll & Bute Council saw our carbon emissions generated by our business activities increase by 6% in the twelve months of 2021/22. Our carbon footprint increased from 26,619 tCO₂e to 28,218 tCO₂e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent), in 2020/21. The marginal increase in 2021/22 follows a downward trend for the four previous consecutive years and overall in past 8 years we have reduced emissions notably. **Since reporting commenced in 2015/16 there has been a 28.4% reduction in emissions.** The main factors contributing to this increase includes the gradual return of business and activity following the COVID-19 pandemic and increase in quantity of municipal waste collected in the reporting year.
- 1.4 Our Climate Change Board has overall responsibility for the 'reporting requirements' submission and continues to develop new ways to reduce the Council's Carbon Footprint. Our Council adopted its second De-Carbonisation Plan in December 2021, recognising the importance of

setting out a plan to achieve net zero by 2045. There are also ambitious interim targets of reaching a 75% reduction by 2030 which is only 7 years away. Rapid progression has been achieved in previous years through a variety of measures including energy efficiency works, movement away from fossil fuels to heat and power buildings, procuring more low emission vehicles, installing low energy streetlamps and generating renewable electricity through solar panels and wind turbines. Work will also continue on tackling the more enduring challenges in our waste including ban on landfill in coming years.

- 1.5 As part of tackling and reducing our Carbon Emissions, learning about Climate Change is hugely important. This will equip Councillors, staff and decision makers with the tools to make the most informed decisions in the context of a Just Transition and route net zero. Over the tail end of 2022 and early 2023 Argyll and Bute Council has been rolling out training to Councillors and Senior Staff. In March 2023 we achieved the nationally recognised Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) accreditation. We are one of only a small number of Councils to have achieved this accolade in Scotland via training delivered to elected members and senior officers within the Council. This training has been delivered by Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT), a member of the Council's Climate Change Board. Further training for staff, Councillors and Communities is also being offered via ACT and Council

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Policy & Resources Committee:

- 2.1.1 Consider the publication of the Council's 2021/22 carbon emissions report that confirms a small 6% increase in emissions reported for the year, but that carbon dioxide emissions have still reduced by 28.4% in the past 7 years; and
- 2.1.2 Commend and promote the Council achievement of the Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) accolade noting that further training will be rolled out for staff, Councillors and Communities via ACT and Council.

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3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order 2015 requires the 180 public bodies classified as major players to prepare an annual “Report on Compliance with Climate Change Duties” (Schedule 2). Argyll and Bute Council is one of these organisations required to publish annual emissions since 2015. The most recent publication is now uploaded onto the Sustainable Scotland Network platform, with the ‘Summary Analysis’ report scheduled to be released in April 2023 for the reporting period 2021/22 (currently awaited).
- 3.2 The Climate Change Board report progress to the Policy and Resources Committee on a regular basis. This report outlines overarching activities of the Climate Change Board to the Council and is useful to provide a snapshot of the key contributors to Council emissions plus also successes and areas for improvement. The carbon footprint of the Council also aligns to the De-Carbonisation Plan which was adopted by the Council in 2021 which starts to provide a routemap towards net zero by 2045. It should be noted that the reporting requirements solely record the emissions of the Council as a business and do not reflect overall or regional emissions like local industry, private sector, personal travel etc. As reported elsewhere, as a region, Argyll and Bute remains one of the most favourable regional carbon footprints due to large land mass, high forest cover, low number of industrial polluters and low population.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Policy & Resources Committee:

- 4.1 Consider the publication of the Council's 2021/22 carbon emissions report that confirms a small 6% increase in emissions reported for the year, but that carbon dioxide emissions have still reduced by 28.4% in the past 7 years; and
- 4.2 Commend and promote the Council achievement of the Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) accolade noting that further training will be rolled out for staff, Councillors and Communities via ACT and Council.

5.0 BACKGROUND

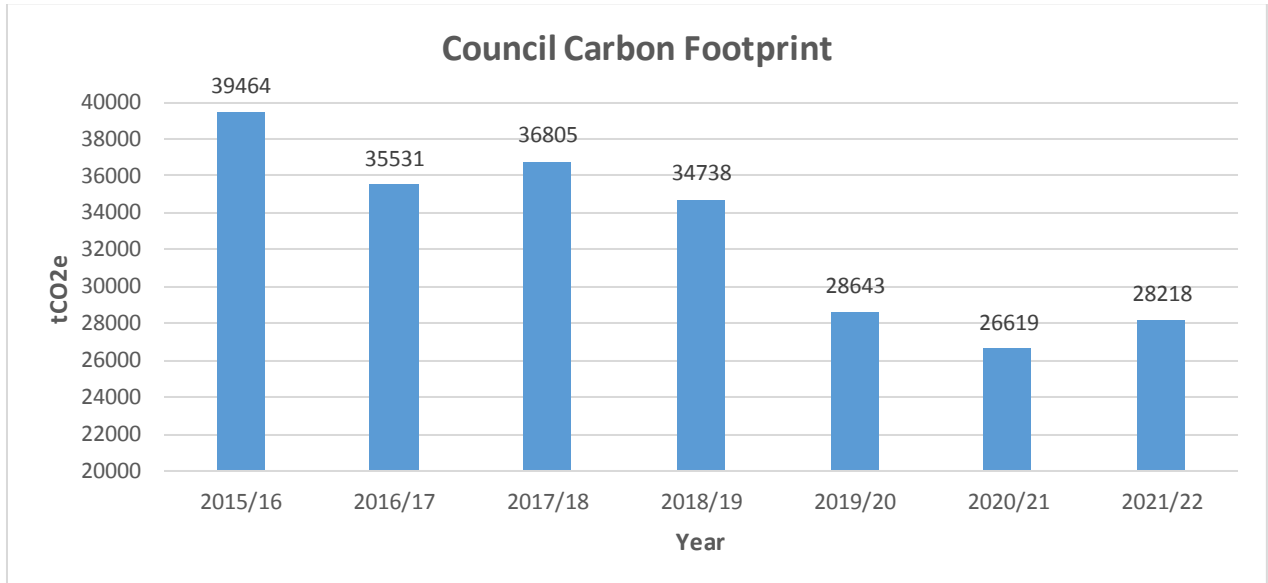
5.1 Since 2015/16 Argyll & Bute Council has published data on its Carbon Emissions annually based on a nationally agreed framework of indicators. There has been an evolution of indicators over the years but most have stayed consistent so a general trend has been able to be formed as outlined in the table below. It should be noted that not all activities produce direct greenhouse gas emissions, however for the purposes of reporting, activities are given a 'tons of carbon dioxide equivalent' rating so they can be more easily compared. This is industry standard approach.

-Table 1- Annual Emissions with Baseline

Reference Year	Year	Scope1	Scope2	Scope3	Total	Units	Comments
Baseline carbon footprint	2015/16	10767.7	11701.3	16995	<u>39464</u>	tCO2e	
Year 1 carbon footprint	2016/17	9146.4	9790.3	16593.8	<u>35531</u>	tCO2e	
Year 2 carbon footprint	2017/18	9437.6	7797.8	19569.4	<u>36805</u>	tCO2e	Municipal waste to landfill is the Council's largest contributor to its carbon footprint; despite a reduction in municipal waste to landfill this year a reporting change negatively impacted emissions.
Year 3 carbon footprint	2018/19	8937.4	5862.49	19938.13	<u>34,738</u>	tCO2e	This represents a 12% reduction in 3 years
Year 4 Carbon Footprint	2019/20	8849	4687	15107	<u>28643</u>	tCO2e	
Year 5 Carbon Footprint	2020/21	8611	4178	13830	<u>26619</u>	tCO2e	33% reduction since reporting began.
Year 6 Carbon Footprint	2021/22	8905	4236	15076	<u>28218</u>	tCO2e	6% increase from previous year but 28% down overall

5.2 Carbon footprint trend across the Council as highlighted below.

Graph 1 – Annual Carbon Emissions

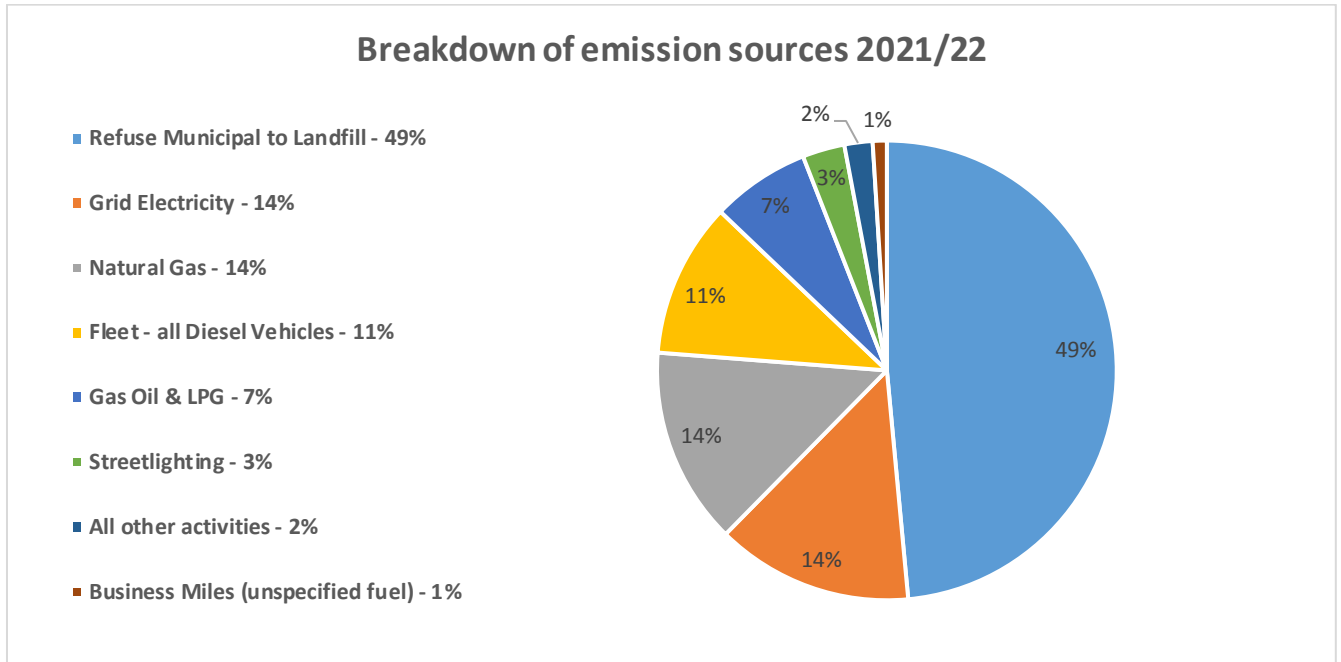


5.3 All activity of the Council is monitored so it is important to understand the breakdown of emission sources. All departments have a responsibility and role to play in monitoring and reducing carbon emissions.

Table 2 - Breakdown of emission sources

Emission Source	Emissions (tCO2e)	Comments
Refuse Municipal to Landfill	13,917	~49% of total carbon footprint
Grid Electricity	3,866	~14% of total carbon footprint
Natural Gas	3,871	~14% of total carbon footprint – mainly used as heating source in buildings
Fleet – all Diesel Vehicles	2,974	~11% of total carbon footprint – bin lorries, cars, vans
Gas Oil & LPG	2,060	~7% of total carbon footprint – mainly for building heating
Street lighting	745	~3% of total carbon footprint
Business Miles (unspecified fuel)	345	~1% of total carbon footprint
All other activities	439	~2 % of total carbon footprint includes collections for recycling, water treatment, tyre processing, glass / WEE recycling

Graph 2 – Breakdown of emission sources



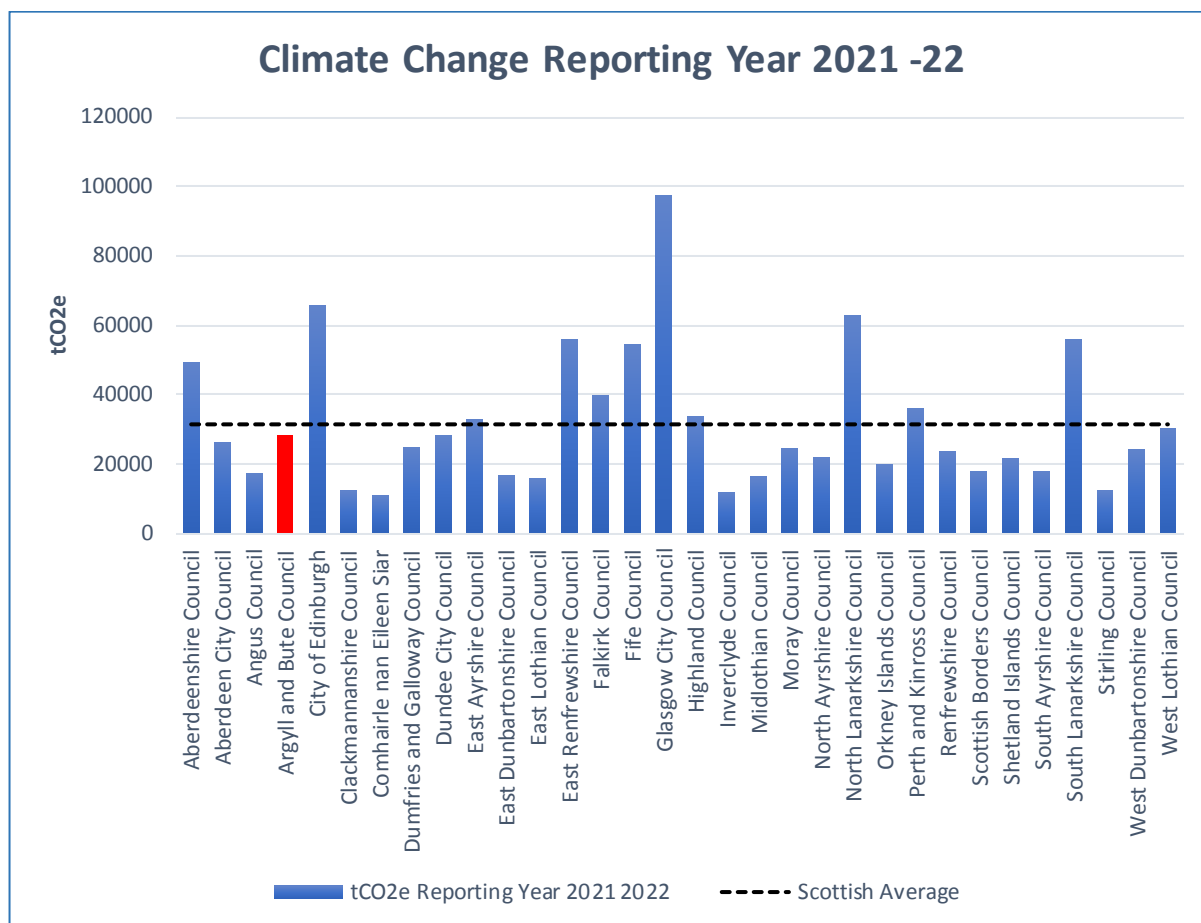
5.4 The relative sources of emissions by activity have remained fairly consistent for several years with processing municipal waste being responsible for around half of the entire emissions. Whilst overall all emission sources have seen small variations, the proportions have remained relatively consistent. Future projects like Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) Landfill Ban, switching to greener ways to heat and power buildings and fleet replacement with low emissions vehicles will obviously have a significant impact on overall carbon footprint.

5.5 The Council have also invested in generating our own sources of renewable heat and energy as outlined this year below:-

Table 3 - Generation, consumption and export of renewable energy

TECHNOLOGY	Renewable Electricity		Renewable Heat	
	Total consumed by the organisation (kWh)	Total exported (kWh)	Total consumed by the organisation (kWh)	Total exported (kWh)
Solar PV	882843	0		
Wind	15000	135000		
Biomass			4678800	0
Air Source Heat Pump			130000	0

Graph 3 – Benchmarking of Council Carbon Emissions



5.6 The graph above highlights Argyll and Bute Council’s carbon emissions in relation to other local authorities who have published their 2021/22 data online. It is very difficult to make a direct comparison as population, physical size, internal processes (particularly waste treatment) and geographic factors all have a material impact on overall emissions.

6.0 Bronze Carbon Literacy Organisation Accreditation

6.1 The Council is proud to have achieved the nationally recognised Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) Bronze award, via training delivered by Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT), a member of the Council’s Climate Change Board. The Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) accreditation is the visible ‘badge’ that showcases an organisation as being committed to Carbon Literacy, having a substantial number of people who are Carbon Literate, having a commitment to support its Carbon Literate people and maintaining its low carbon culture.

- 6.2 CLOs accreditation typically realise in-house benefits such as decreased energy and resource consumption, improved organisational profile, a healthier working environment, a safer supply chain, lower variable costs, enhanced competitiveness, and reduced commercial risk. CLO accreditation is also a clear demonstration of an organisation's corporate social responsibility, and the Council can use this status to support interaction with its communities - whether they are staff or customers, neighbours, learners, suppliers or stakeholders.
- 6.3 In achieving the CLO Bronze award, the Council has met a number of assessment criteria including establishing a baseline on existing environmental performance, having registered a Training Initiative with the project, and having a Board Member / Organisational Leader certified as Carbon Literate. There are four levels of CLO accreditation (Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum) reflecting increasing levels of Carbon Literacy commitment and achievement. This presents an opportunity for the Council to progress onto the CLO Silver award, further developing its Carbon Literacy credentials.
- 6.4 ACT have already provided a mix of Community and Council focussed Climate Literacy Training with more planned. Furthermore, additional Council staff training is currently under development and will be delivered by online training module LEON.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 It is a requirement to publish annual carbon emissions for the Scottish Government. This report highlights our overall emissions for most recent reporting period 2021/22 and confirms overall our emissions are 28% down since records began. There is still much to be done on the Council's journey to achieve net zero by 2045 however training our staff and Councillors plus achieving CLO Bronze status will ensure decision makers are well equipped to fulfil the ambitious targets.

8. IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Policy – This paper content is entirely consistent with climate change policy and action at local, national and international level.
- 8.2 Financial – Paper reports on net downward trend of emissions and can be linked to greater efficiency of ongoing utility costs. Proposed expenditure of allocated climate change funding from 2023 Budget.
- 8.3 Legal – Meeting requirements of Climate Change Scotland Act.
- 8.4 HR – None
- 8.5 Fairer Scotland Duty
 - 8.5.1 Equalities – Protected characteristics – None
 - 8.5.2 Socio economic Duty – None
 - 8.5.3 Islands – None
- 8.6 Climate change – Direct link confirming net downward trend in emissions and proposed future projects that will address climate change.
- 8.7 Risk – Not addressing impacts or causes of climate change can lead to increased cost or censure if targets are not met.
- 8.8 Customer Service – None.

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