Exeter plots route for Net Zero by 2030

Civic leaders in Exeter have outlined plans to turn the city carbon neutral by the end of this decade. Reduced energy use, cleaner power, electrifying transport and its infrastructure, plus ‘liveable spaces’ are identified as key priorities.

Consultations on Exeter’s [Net Zero Plan](https://www.exetercityfutures.com/news/exeter-focuses-on-the-future-launching-plan-for-a-net-zero-exeter/) began four years ago, picking up speed last summer when the city declared a climate emergency. The council set up a community interest company, tasked to gather views as widely as possible from residents, citizens’ groups and major employers including the Met Office and two NHS trusts.

The road map’s high-level recommendations in include targeting households with energy efficiency schemes and enforcing tougher standards to curb emissions from homes and offices. A local clean power supplier along the lines of Bristol’s or Nottingham’s is flagged up, either directly owned by the city, or run as a co-operative, as is common in Germany.

Exeter City Futures, which compiled the consultations, estimates that sourcing the city’s power from renewables could cut as much as 53,000 tonnes of CO2e each year, rising to 140,000 tonnes if green generation were maximised to full potential. [Research carried out in 2017](https://www.exetercityfutures.com/insights/energy-independence-2025/) predicted the city’s energy consumption could grow by 9 per cent to 11.3 TWh by 2025. Less than 3 per cent of its power at that time came from green sources.

Transport needs attention, particularly in the affordability and reliability of services from bus operators – if private car use is to be minimised within the city. Those businesses and consumers that own EVs need re-assurance that public and private charging points will be readily available. Integrating private and public transport more closely can educate commuters and shoppers to switch out of cars and onto low carbon alternatives, per the pan.

Businesses attending a workshop in February voiced concerns over a lack of viable alternatives to the private car. Key decisions in transport management taken by Devon county, not the city, highlighted fragmented administration, bosses told planners.

Homes must be truly affordable, with rents tied more closely to local incomes, the report recommends. Food must be sourced sustainably, favouring local growers. Trees planted in parks must receive higher priority as carbon sinks, the document recommends.

The road map is intended to spur further discussions. Specific proposals to be compiled by officials will go before councillors in the autumn.

“This plan represents the contribution of hundreds of businesses and individuals across Exeter ... to ensure it remains one of the best places to live in the UK," said Liz O'Driscoll, managing director of Exeter City Futures”.

Read the full document [here.](https://www.exetercityfutures.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Net-Zero-Exeter-2030-Plan.pdf)

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Going net zero means a better business and a better environment for everyone. Net Zero Week curates’ content from government and trade/professional bodies to respected commentators and leading solution providers. We aim to help ALL businesses explore more opportunities and the many benefits on the path towards net zero.

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