

Climate Change Strategy.



Success Story: Riverway Nursery, Stafford

Key outcomes:

1. Reduced on-site CO₂ emissions by nearly 50% through an anti-idling campaign
2. Delivered 75% pollinator-friendly planting to support biodiversity
3. Generated renewable energy on-site through a solar farm to power depot operations
4. Saved over £70,000 by removing the need for a gas-based heating system
5. Transitioned to a zero-gas site while significantly reducing overall water usage

From pollinator-friendly planting to a solar farm and anti-idling campaign, Stafford Borough Council's streetscene team, based at Riverway Nursery, are embedding sustainable practices to benefit residents and provide value for money.

At the Riverway Nursery, Stafford's streetscene team are working closely with the Borough Council's climate officer and ecology officer to ensure the work they do supports nature.

The team have adopted new groundskeeping practices and played a part in Stafford becoming a bee-friendly town by ensuring the summer floral displays contain at least 75 per cent pollinator-friendly plants.

And at Riverway itself, major changes are helping to create a more sustainable service that is better for the environment and offers value for money for residents.



Anthony Dale, Interim Business Manager for Streetscene is based at Riverway Nursery, Stafford.

He said: “We are responsible for grounds maintenance, street cleansing, pest control and commercial services, with the main vehicle fleet for the council run from this depot.

“From a sustainability perspective, we’ve got a solar farm which we’ve had for a number of years, which produces enough energy to sustain our site.

“Three years ago, we introduced an anti-idling campaign, encouraging the team to turn off vehicle engines when they were stationary for any length of time, rather than leave the engine running while they were loading up or dropping off.

“As a result, the CO2 generated on site has reduced by nearly 50% in that time.”

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Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles is being installed at Riverway to support a shift to EV as the fleet is renewed over time.

Until recently, a gas boiler system at the nursery was used to heat areas for plant growing, but when the boiler came to the end of its useful life, a review of the system found that the service could save money by buying plants in at a later stage.

This meant there was no need to replace the boiler, saving more than £70,000. The new system also means there is no need for gas on the site and water usage has been significantly reduced.

Anthony added: “We hold the public’s purse we’ve got make sure we give good value to residents, so any way we can spend their money better, benefitting the wider community and the climate, is a bonus.

“I think it’s important to make sure that whatever you embed has a bigger impact than in singularity. The planting is a really good example of this.

“Stafford has become a bee friendly town in last 12 months. We’re supporting that by planting out a lot of pollinator friendly plants and there are areas we manage differently now, such as the grass cutting.

“We have adapted what we do, managing some areas differently after speaking to members of the public, and we’re benefitting nature as well.

“While the depot isn’t accessible to the public, we do work with some community groups now and they are following our lead with the planting in their own gardens, putting up bee boxes and bug homes.

“The planting has an immediate impact but can embed into other projects and makes sure the community feel that they are getting good value for money.

“Working closely with climate team we really feel like we’re making a positive difference to the residents of the borough.”

Our Climate Action team is here to help you achieve your sustainability goals. Get in with us to start your journey to a greener future.

