

## CLO Silver Award Case Study: **Burnley Borough Council**

### **1. Before**

Prior to the carbon literacy training the Council's approach to decarbonisation was more top-down and primarily the responsibility of managers. The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and adopted their Climate Change Strategy in 2022. The Council has since committed to being carbon neutral by 2030 and achieving net zero by 2050. However, within the Council there was a range in levels of awareness of carbon literacy and consequently some members of staff may have been less able to recognise opportunities and the urgency of action. The Council recognised that systemic change could only be achieved by raising everyone's carbon literacy to achieve engagement and deliver action.

### **2. During**

Burnley Borough Council began carbon literacy training in September 2021. The training was originally delivered through APSE to the Chief Executive and Heads of Service, with the aim of carbon literacy and its importance in decision making being passed down through management. The Council has now started to deliver carbon literacy training internally. This is being led by the Council's Climate Change Officer, and four members of staff have now completed the Train the Trainer course and started to roll out training sessions.

At the end of the training days, learners were advised about the evidence forms and encouraged to think about potential personal and group actions that they could undertake within their job role at the Council. A challenge was explaining how all Council employees have the ability to generate change and help reduce emissions, and that all job roles/ departments have a climate change impact. Through explaining that everyone in the Council has a responsibility to tackle climate change and helping learners realise their influence, everyone that completed the training came up with significant and impactful actions that can be carried out personally through their jobs, and within their teams.

### **3. After**

As staff have become more carbon literate, we have seen carbon reduction initiatives being identified and implemented by staff as part of the Council's Climate Action Plan. Examples include:

Crematorium carryover policy: The crematorium is the council's second-highest CO2 emitter and increasing the efficiency of cremator operation will save up to 20 tonnes CO2 per year. A decarbonisation pathway study, funded by North West Net Zero Hub, is looking at how we can achieve net zero cremations.

Meadow management: Green spaces staff are actively identifying areas of frequently mown grass that can be managed as annual cut meadow, so reducing CO2 costs and increasing biodiversity, with more than 60 ha now managed as meadows, we are saving up to 10 tonnes CO2 per year.

Vehicle & machinery electrification: A new plan to switch fleet cars/vans and small parks machinery to battery electric has been developed with an expected CO2 savings of up to 26 tonnes per year. This will be implemented in the coming years, as soon as practically possible.

Communications sustainability strategy: A new website 'Our Journey to Net Zero' has been created, highlighting the work the Council is doing to move towards Net Zero and signposting people to areas of advice and support to help with the transition to net zero. For example, they can access advice about public transport, reducing energy use, and reduce, reuse, recycle information. <https://burnley.gov.uk/our-journey-to-net-zero/>

These initiatives, along with the ongoing work to deliver carbon literacy, demonstrates the Council's commitment to reducing emissions and tackling climate change. In line with the Council's Climate Change Strategy, further training sessions are planned to continue increasing carbon literacy throughout the Council, maintain engagement with staff, drive action, and support our move to net zero.