

Three Rivers District Council

Climate Change and Leisure Committee

LARA Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy

Date: 02/07/2025

CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
2 July 2025

LARA HERTFORDSHIRE RETROFIT STRATEGY

(DfE)

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy (Appendix 2), which will formalise a structured approach to retrofit coordination, funding applications, and project delivery in alignment with the Commitment to Retrofit (Appendix 1), endorsed by a majority of members of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) on 27th March 2025.

TRDC abstained from voting to endorse the Commitment at HCCSP as officers had not been able to obtain the required approvals via governance processes in the timelines that had been set. Hence this report.

- 1.2 This report outlines the objectives of the Strategy and proposes Three Rivers District Council's endorsement to continue to progress coordinated retrofit action in Three Rivers and across Hertfordshire.

2 Description:

- 2.1 For the purposes of this report, retrofit refers to any improvement work on an existing domestic building which improves its energy efficiency, through making it easier to heat, increasing its ability to retain heat for longer, and through replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy.
- 2.2 Energy use in existing homes contributes to around 20% of the UK's emissions¹, and approximately one quarter of Three Rivers District's emissions, and 80% of the homes that will exist by 2050 have already been built² meaning decarbonising existing housing stock through retrofit is essential to the achievement of net-zero.
- 2.3 Retrofitting homes also delivers many benefits beyond reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including healthier more comfortable living environments, improved public health, energy demand reduction, bill savings for consumers, energy security, and local economic growth.
- 2.4 Of the 39,000 homes in Three Rivers District, almost two-thirds are classified as energy inefficient, with EPC ratings D-G³. While the council have worked hard to deliver grant-funded energy efficiency improvements to over 300 local lower-income homes since 2021, and has been a proactive leader in piloting a Retrofit One Stop Shop service for "able to pay" households, the scale of the retrofit challenge demands sustained, long-term action at-scale.

¹ [Housing and net zero - House of Commons Library](#)

² [Climate Change Mitigation | UKGBC](#)

³ Energy Savings Trust Decarbonisation of Housing in Three Rivers Report (2021)

- 2.5 The development of the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy was enabled by the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator project (LARA), funded by The MCS Foundation, Greater South East Net Zero Hub and Aurora.
- 2.6 The LARA initiative aimed to address the systemic challenges of delivering large-scale retrofit programmes. It provides a countywide approach to scaling up domestic retrofit delivery by increasing coordination, stakeholder engagement, and investment opportunities.
- 2.7 The LARA project brought together expertise from across Hertfordshire, including local authorities, training providers, social landlords, trade representatives, and community energy organisations, in the autumn and winter of 2024/25.
- 2.8 Through workshops and established partnerships, the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator project identified key objectives for increasing retrofit demand, capacity, and supply in Hertfordshire:
- **Goal 1:** Increase uptake and successful delivery of retrofit advice and measures.
 - **Goal 2:** Realise the co-benefits of retrofit in Hertfordshire.
 - **Goal 3:** Increase local supply chain capacity and quality through better access and control of resources, data and shared understanding.
 - **Goal 4:** Create a confident, trusted retrofit environment.
- 2.9 Based on these strategic goals, and a mission to: *“Collaborate in Hertfordshire to retrofit all homes in need, so that we enhance our environment and climate resilience, address fuel poverty, improve health and support local jobs.”*, the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy sets out a 3-year, structured and actionable roadmap for accelerating domestic retrofit in Hertfordshire (see Appendix 2).
- 2.10 The expected benefits of delivering a countywide retrofit strategy include:
- Enhanced collaboration across local authorities and key industry sectors.
 - Greater access to funding opportunities through joint applications and shared resource development.
 - Robust capacity-building and training to support the growth of the local retrofit supply chain.
 - Resource efficiency through strategic alignment with national and regional climate adaptation and sustainability goals, in particular those of HCCSP and the Hertfordshire Growth Board.
- 2.11 Given the importance of retrofit action to achieve net-zero targets, adopting and implementing the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy will strengthen the Council’s ability to deliver effective retrofit initiatives at-scale, support local economic growth, and contribute to local and regional sustainability goals.
- 2.12 Upon approval of the Strategy by Three Rivers, the following actions will be taken:
- The Strategy will be formally endorsed and presented to Hertfordshire Growth Board for wider adoption.

- The draft action plan will be further refined in collaboration with multi-agency stakeholders.
 - Initial engagement with the LARA project will focus on identifying priority actions, progressing opportunities for strategic alignment, and identifying funding and resourcing structures.
 - Regular progress updates will be provided via HCCSP and Hertfordshire Growth Board.
- 2.13 Additionally, stakeholders will establish the Hertfordshire Retrofit Body (the “Body” - name tbc) which will define the Terms of Reference, membership, and governance.
- 2.14 The Body’s first task will be to agree and approve a data-driven Retrofit Strategy and action plan(s) to identify and allocate resources for delivery. This Strategy, developed as a draft (Appendix 2) through the LARA project, will set out actions and priority actions that align with the shared vision outlined in the Commitment.
- 2.15 Stakeholders have identified immediate actions for priority investigation:
- develop a delivery vehicle, owned by stakeholders, which implements retrofit measures efficiently to share risk and increase benefit
 - establish a mechanism to promote trusted suppliers to ensure quality and capacity within the supply chain
 - prioritise early-stage actions to build momentum for wider implementation, creating a roadmap of tiered actions as capacity and resource permits.
- The Body may also form time-limited working groups consisting of representatives from some or all of its members to address specific projects such as:
- progressing a Retrofit Facilitation Service to:
 - raise awareness, provide advice and general information
 - coordinate existing markets to engage and progress suppliers; AND / OR
 - take on full renovation responsibility for works and the customer journey
 - creating a monitoring and reporting framework for KPIs and progress.
- 2.16 It is anticipated that TRDC’s Net Zero Innovation Project Manager and Climate Change and Sustainability Manager will be involved with the design of the “Retrofit Body”, and finalisation of the Strategy and subsequent Action Plan, but we are not committing ourselves to a specific role or funding.

Conclusions:

3 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

3.1 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators.

- CP50 District carbon emissions reported as tCO_{2e} equivalent.

4 Community Safety, Customer Services Centre, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

4.1 None as a result of this report.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no immediate financial implications associated with endorsing the Strategy. Setup costs for administration and oversight resource are to be allocated from external grants to deliver two years of administrative support across Hertfordshire.

5.2 Future financial considerations will be presented to the relevant committees as and when specific project funding applications or implementation strategies are proposed.

5.3 Endorsement of the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy will not impact the existing retrofit funding (Warm Homes Local Grant) secured by Three Rivers District Council to improve eligible homes in our district, and the council will not be expected to share this funding across Hertfordshire.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no immediate legal implications associated with endorsing the Strategy.

7 Staffing Implications

7.1 Some officer time may be required to support the development of the Hertfordshire Retrofit body and the Action Plan, but this is not expected to be significant due to the large number of stakeholders contributing across the county.

8 Public Health Implications

8.1 There are no immediate public health implications associated with endorsing the Strategy, however the actions resulting from the Action Plan to promote and accelerate the retrofit of cold and draughty homes across Hertfordshire will support public health by reducing the number of households suffering from cold, damp, and mould related illnesses.

9 Equal Opportunities Implications

9.1 None as a result of this report.

10 Equality Impact Assessment

- 10.1 A short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment (Appendix 3) has been completed for this report recommending the Council endorse and adopt the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy. No negative impacts on groups or people with protected characteristics are anticipated through the adoption of the Retrofit Strategy.
- 10.2 Full Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for specific actions and proposals resulting from the Hertfordshire Retrofit Action Plan on a project-by-project basis where they are likely to impact people or groups with protected characteristics.

11 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

- 11.1 The recommendations proposed in this report will support the Council to progress the decarbonisation of Three Rivers (and Hertfordshire more broadly) through accelerating the retrofit of energy inefficient homes, and mitigate the contribution of the district's housing to climate change.
- 11.2 A sustainability impact assessment has been undertaken resulting in a score of **3.6**. See Appendix 4 for detail.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	4
Travel	0
Goods and Consumption	3.5
Ecology	3.5
Adaptation	3
Engagement and Influence	4
Total Overall Average Score	3.6

12 Communications and Website Implications

- 12.1 The Communications team may wish to publicise the Council's endorsement of the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy on our channels to illustrate TRDC's partnership working and positive commitment to warmer, healthier, greener homes and local economic growth.

13 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 13.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

- 13.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Climate Change and Sustainability service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of likelihood and impact)
The Council fails to endorse and commit to the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy.	The Council is seen to not actively support cross-boundary partnership working and the improvement of existing homes, resulting in reputational damage. The Council is excluded from collective retrofit delivery schemes, and the benefits this can deliver (economies of scale, ease of procurement, consistency across county), hindering the delivery of the Council's Climate Strategy, and depriving residents of the benefits.	For the Committee to approve the recommendations.	Treat	6

- 13.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely Likelihood	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12

	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
	Low ----- Impact ----- Unacceptable			

Impact Score

4 (Catastrophic)
3 (Critical)
2 (Significant)
1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
3 (Likely (21-79%))
2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
1 (Remote (≤5%))

14 Recommendations

14.1 That Members agree to:

- To approve TRDC formally endorsing and adopting the Hertfordshire Retrofit Commitment (Appendix 1) and Strategy (appendix 2) to facilitate knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and funding collaboration across local authorities and other key stakeholders in Hertfordshire.
- To note the development of the action plan within the Strategy, which will be refined through multi-agency collaboration to establish a robust, long-term delivery model.
- To note that officer time may be required to support the development of the Hertfordshire Retrofit body and the Action Plan.

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Data Quality

Data sources:

Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy

Data checked by:

Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer
Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	X

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Hertfordshire Retrofit Commitment (Final)

Appendix 2: Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy (Final)

Appendix 3: Short Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 4: Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

Background Papers: N/A

