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Social Value Impact Assessment of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan

A Social Value Report
for Suffolk County Council
April 2025

Images courtesy of Suffolk County Council

Contents

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1 Introduction

In 2019, Suffolk's Borough, District and County Councils acknowledged or declared a 'Climate Emergency'[1], recognising the enabling role they had to play in supporting businesses, communities and residents to work towards a net zero Suffolk. This led to the creation of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan (SCEP) in April 2021, and commitment from Suffolk's Public Sector Organisations to work together in delivering its aims.

This report presents the emerging social value benefits that delivery of the SCEP brings to Suffolk. The social value impacts look at a wide set of benefits to communities and business, including some benefits of carbon dioxide emissions savings. However, it is important to note that the full environmental and economic benefits of reducing carbon dioxide emissions are not captured in the social value impact assessment.

1.1 About the SCEP

The plan sets out the ambitions to work towards Suffolk becoming a net zero county. The SCEP was revised in 2023 to provide more focused actions which have a greater emphasis on behaviour change and the co-benefits of climate change action, particularly social and health benefits. The actions in the SCEP have been developed and refined to maximise deliverability and impact. There are 48 actions in the SCEP under five themes, each with their own set of goals:

Theme	Goals
Collaborative Action	• Increased climate awareness and action, and of the co-benefits of taking climate action for other sectors, including health.
	• Leveraging and financing local climate action.
	• Fostering further stakeholder collaboration.
	• Monitoring and communication of progress.
Sustainable Homes	• Improved energy efficiency of homes.
Low Carbon Transport	• Increased sustainable transport readiness.
	• More efficient freight.
	• Reduced demand for car use.
	• Transition to a zero-emission fleet
Industrial and commercial energy use	• Carbon literacy and active carbon management..
	• Decarbonisation in the industrial and commercial sector
	• Decarbonisation in the public sector.

1 | Suffolk County Council, 2019, Meeting Agenda Thursday 21 March 2019

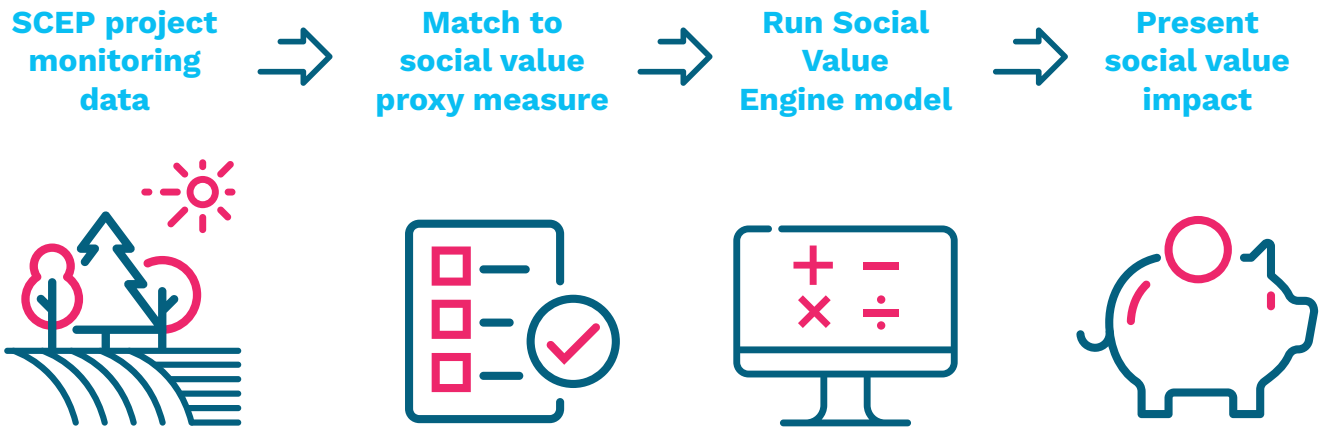
Theme	Goals
Cleaner Power	• Grow Suffolk's low carbon energy production capacity.
	• Support the development of a smart and flexible grid.
	• Develop Suffolk's low carbon economy.
	• Public sector leads the way with renewable energy production

1.2 Social value impacts

Social Value UK defines social value measurement as a way to "understand and record the relative importance people place on the wellbeing changes they experience"[2].

This report presents the social value impact which elements of the SCEP activity have generated to date, with chapters focussed on each of the five SCEP intervention themes, and the wider projects that run alongside the programme.

To monetise the social impacts delivered by the SCEP, the assessment incorporates Social Return on Investment (SROI) principles to quantify wider health, wellbeing and environmental benefits that may have taken place through SCEP interventions. We used the Social Value Engine (SVE) tool, which provides calculated financial proxies for a range of outcomes such as improved health or community cohesion derived from a range of evidence bases. The SVE is an online tool accredited by Social Value UK.



Financial proxies in the SVE were mapped against key outputs and outcomes of the SCEP projects. The outputs and outcomes which were both relevant in terms of social value and had data available have been used. Therefore, the social value impact assessment is based on a subset of SCEP activity, which will also be generating a wider range of environmental and economic benefits.

There has been lots of activity delivered as part of the plan with progress being made against goals and targets, and the data captured to track progress show this. However, it is important to note that this report only uses a selection of the progress measures in the social value impact analysis, so we would expect benefits to be even greater. A toolkit is being developed so that in future we can include more of the activities and projects which have been delivered.

Fighting climate change with effective stewardship of the environment through activity by local people, communities and the public sector organisations in Suffolk will have extensive and long-lasting benefits beyond what can be measured so far.

2 | Social Value UK, What is Social Value and Why does it Matter? Accessed here

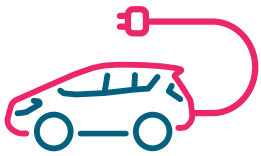
This Social Value impact report shows the emerging social value benefits the SCEP brings to Suffolk's businesses and citizens, as well as the environment. As the SCEP states:

> *"Transitioning to a net zero Suffolk brings with it a wide range of consequential benefits. Better air quality and active travel can lead to physical health improvements, an increasingly engaged and collaborative community can benefit from improvements in mental health, and improving the energy efficiency of buildings can reduce energy bills for households and businesses alike. Putting Suffolk at the forefront of the transition to net zero prepares the county's residents, communities, and organisations to seize future opportunities.*
>
> *A system-wide approach can deliver benefits through partnership working, collaboration and efficiency, ensuring we tackle the challenges of the climate emergency and improve the wider determinants of health. By reducing carbon emissions, we can reduce NHS admissions."*

Through the application of the SCEP, Suffolk's ambition is to be putting in measures and making progress towards net zero by 2030. Partners involved in the SCEP recognise the broad range of co-benefits that can be delivered through climate change including:

- Warmer homes that are more affordable to heat
- Improved energy security
- Improved air quality and health
- Reduced inequality
- Connecting with nature and biodiversity
- Reduced risk of local flooding and of extreme heat
- Stronger communities
- Job creation.

The emphasis on the co-benefits of a greener county created through the delivery of the SCEP actions are not to be forgotten. As outlined in the SCEP, the journey to net zero should not just acclaim carbon reduction as an outcome, when the financial, health, economic and social benefits are so significant.

THEME	MEASURABLE SOCIAL VALUE IMPACT	BREAKDOWN
Collaborative Action 	**£2.4m**	**People attending conferences and community network events and community projects** **306** adults and **342** young people engaged in climate conference events **46** community projects Creating a social value of **£1.0m** to participants Enabling community activity with equivalent value of **£1.4m**
Sustainable Homes 	**£48.5m**	**Installation of energy saving measures** **48,040** homes taking up insulation and low carbon energy measures Equivalent to **£48.5m** in EPC improvements for residents
Low Carbon Transport 	**£267,000**	**Public using alternative methods of travel and business partnerships established at the Freeport** **2,567** people using alternative methods of travel Reduced carbon footprint with equivalent of **£177,000** offset CO2 costs for travel miles **13** partnerships established between local firms and the Freeport Equivalent to a social value of **£90,000** through more efficient collaboration
Industrial and Commercial Energy Use 	**£879,000**	**Business support and carbon savings** **949** businesses supported and accessing advice services Generating the equivalent of **£862,000** in social value from work and upskilling through training. **1,100 tCO2(e)** in carbon emissions saved Equivalent of **£17,000** through carbon savings.
Cleaner Power 	**£169,000**	**Businesses supported to innovate and invest, and improvements on civic buildings** **18** businesses accessing innovative approaches Equivalent of **£89,000** generated through encouragement of business innovation. **12** businesses accessing support and skills investment Equivalent of **£79,000** generated through encouragement of investment in skills.

2 Collaborative Action

The Collaborative Action theme is designed to maximise low carbon energy opportunities through leveraging public and private sector investment, and drive behavioural change by engaging with people, organisations and communities in Suffolk.

This theme recognises that no single cause is the problem, and no individual can be the solution. By facilitating increased communication across the county there will be more effective solutions. This may come in the form of leveraged finance or by creating opportunities for new connections between stakeholders. To achieve this there will be a need to work with local experts and companies, and by ensuring the economic wealth from the sector is kept within Suffolk. Government intervention may also be needed, but local communities will still need to have a say in what affects them.

The four goals for this theme are:

1. **Increased climate awareness and action, and of the co-benefits of taking climate action for other sectors, including health**
2. **Leveraging and financing local climate action.**
3. **Fostering further stakeholder collaboration.**
4. **Monitoring and communication of progress.**

2.1 Social value summary

The interventions delivered under the Collaborative Action theme have facilitated stronger community engagement through its community-based initiatives through targeting the community network database and via community energy projects delivered (Community Energy Groups). It has also enhanced partnership arrangements through the SCEP's active engagement with stakeholders and hosting conference events with public sector organisations and schools.

Social value is created by the benefits of increased climate awareness and action as well as working collaboratively and through partnerships to more efficiently deliver community projects.

- **£2,449,000** of measurable social value impact has been generated by activities under the Collaborative Action theme. Over 10 years, the long-term social value impact of this activity is **£9,630,000.**
- Encouraging 'Collaborative Action' through increased local partnerships and projects, via more targeted funding promotes a call to action in response to the climate emergency, and aims to instil behavioural change within residents, businesses and organisations across Suffolk.

Social value here is to individuals and groups who gain the wellbeing benefits of participating in community activities, without needing to pay for it. Research suggests on average people save £2,122 by being able to access community activities compared to paying for activities.

2.2 Wider impacts and co-benefits

In addition to the social value impacts, there will be a variety of co-benefits which can be attributed to the actions of the Collaborative Action theme. The co-benefits themselves are interrelated – for example, improved air quality also contributes to improved health. Co-benefits identified for this theme are:

- **Access to funding within communities** that will be improved by a greater supply of grants available. This will enable a greater number of Suffolk communities to implement decarbonisation measures and work together to take action.
- **Improved health and wellbeing,** achieved through living in a better-quality environment.
- **Improved air quality,** as fewer pollutants are emitted into the local atmosphere which will be felt most acutely in urban areas.
- **Greater biodiversity** which will be supported to grow as environmental pressures reduce. Greater biodiversity will further improve the natural environment, improving air quality and health and wellbeing benefits even further.
- **Community resilience and cohesion** which is being established and developed through the various projects encouraging collaboration.
- **Greater social acceptance of projects** which is essential in ensuring projects can be implemented with full support and will have a continued legacy after the initial activity.

Case Study: Suffolk Youth Climate Conference

The Suffolk Youth Climate Conference gives high school students the tools to turn their enthusiasm for the recovery of our climate into action. It was first established in 2023 and each year since, hundreds of secondary school students and their teachers gather to learn how to take action for our climate.

Following a day of celebrity guest speakers, interactive activities and practical workshops, both students and teachers leave with the knowledge and motivation to make a difference in their community.

The topics covered range from electric vehicles to nature-based solutions, the global food system to coastal adaptation, plastic pollution to flood and water management and sustainable fashion to climate anxiety. There is something for everyone!

Since its launch, 25 secondary schools have been engaged with 342 young adults aged between 13-18 attending the previous conferences. So far, 260 students have singed up for the 2025 conference due to take place in July. 91% of students who have attended the conferences said they have felt inspired to do more or to encourage others to take action in the climate crisis. In addition, as a result of the conference, a Sustainable Schools Network has been established, with 26 schools signed up to date.

After attending the conference, some teachers outlined:

We all came away incredibly inspired and signed up to everything mentioned across the day. Lesson planning to incorporate ideas from the day is already in action!"

"It was a fantastic day - the students came back absolutely buzzing about it. We loved it, the workshops were pitched at the right level and the talks were all awesome."

"I am better informed about planning for sustainability within school. Our students have learnt a great deal more on what they need to do in order think about the plans they need to make to combat climate change."

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3 Sustainable Homes

The Sustainable Homes theme is designed to ensure the homes of Suffolk residents are energy efficient.

The Sustainable Homes theme aims to reduce the CO2 emissions from homes, which accounted for 27.2% of the county's emissions in 2022[3]. To achieve this, the homes sector will need to reach net zero emissions. This will be delivered through energy efficiency measures and changing how homes are heated. Consideration will also be given to emerging technologies and plans to reduce electricity usage. This can also contribute to actions in other themes such as the installation of EV charging at home and rooftop solar installations.

The goal for this theme is:

1. **Improved energy efficiency of homes**

3.1 Social value summary

The interventions delivered under the 'Sustainable Homes' theme have enabled homes across the county to become more energy efficient with the installation of insulation and energy saving measures.

Social value impact arises from the benefits to households of improving their home's Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). Schemes which support energy efficiency housing improvements have the potential to generate a wide range of benefits including: reducing household energy bills, reduced health issues associated with damp conditions and increase property values.

- **£48,532,000** of measurable social value impact has been generated by activities under the Sustainable Homes theme. Due to the use of domestic energy prices to model social value arising from improved EPC ratings in properties, we haven't forecast a ten-year net present value.
- Through increased partnership working and increased investment in upskilling in retrofit construction across Suffolk, a more energy efficient housing stock will be delivered.

Social value here is to households who benefit from better energy efficiency, meaning they can experience warmer and healthier homes. On average households save £1,347 if their home is improved by two EPC levels, although savings will vary between residents in Suffolk.

3 | GOV.UK, 2024, UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2022

3.2 Wider impacts and co-benefits

In addition to the social value impacts, there will be a variety co-benefits which can be attributed to the actions of the Sustainable Homes theme.

One of the most important wider impacts is the health and wellbeing benefits of people living in warmer and less damp homes. Tackling poor health resulting from cold and damp can reduce costs for NHS and well as improving living standards for individuals.

Research by Citizens Advice has found a strong link between poor energy efficiency and damp and excessive cold. A national survey of renters by Citizens Advice found that those in homes with an EPC D-G were 73% more likely to experience damp than those with an EPC of A-C. They were also 89% more likely to experience excessive cold than homes with an EPC of A-C. In the survey, 42% of renters say damp, mould and excessive cold has increased their energy bills, 8% said it had made their respiratory illness worse[4].

An evidence review by Public Health Wales, which looked at studies from around the world, suggests that for every £1 spent improving energy efficiency and warmth in vulnerable households, there is a return of between £1.87 and £4 in health benefits. Importantly, these positive outcomes will be felt most by low-income households, and least by more well-off households even with the same interventions[5].

However, the Public Health Wales review concludes that the evidence base on the long-term health benefits of energy efficiency measures is lacking, especially evidence on the link between particular energy efficient measures and health conditions.

Other related co-benefits include more affordable energy, reduced demand on the national grid and economic growth opportunities:

- **Reduced fuel poverty, energy security, reduced demand on national grid** which can all be achieved with a more efficient home. Lower fuel bills will reduce the need for those in poverty to choose between eating and heating their home. Further to this, as homes become more efficient their energy demands will decrease.
- **Green job creation, A workforce with skills relating to low carbon activities** which future-proof jobs for those who need to transition out of carbon intensive industries.
- **New markets/growth, Inward investment** which should be seen in the housebuilding and retrofitting industries. This will draw investment from companies wishing to get their products in homes, such as insulators or PV providers, to improve their energy efficiency.

4 | Citizens Advice, 2023, Damp, cold and full of mould¸ Accessed here.
5 | Jones & Davies, 2021, The importance of household energy efficiency for health and well-being. Accessed here.

Case Study:
Lower energy costs and cosier homes

Tenants of period properties with low Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) ratings are enjoying lower energy costs and cosier homes thanks to work carried out by their landlords and West Suffolk Council.

Ten properties at the Euston Estate and four Metcalfe Almshouses in Hawstead have been fitted with several energy efficiency measures, through funding from the Government's Sustainable Warmth funding and landlord investment.

At Euston Estate ten homes have been fitted with air source heat pumps. Andrew Blenkiron, Estate Director at Euston Estate, said: "We wanted to ensure that the tenant's carbon footprint was reduced, but most importantly we wanted to ensure that the homes our tenants live in are comfortable, affordable and that they are nice, warm and cosy."

Jess, resident at the Euston Estate, said:

"The storage heaters I had previously were extortionate, so I used them only when I absolutely had to. The new heat pumps are much easier to use, are more efficient and affordable. My house now feels lovely and welcoming inside, the added warmth has made such a difference."

Read more here: https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr240215ws01.cfm

Case Study:
Residents benefit from warmer homes and reduced bills in Woodbridge

At the Morely Avenue & Station Road site in Woodbridge, 22 bungalows – mostly occupied by elderly, low-income residents – were struggling with heat loss due to uninsulated pitched roofs. With all homes rated EPC band E, heating costs for residents were high.

Over 17 weeks, retrofit fit work was undertaken and involved installing a pitched roof insulation board (Kingspan Thermapitch) in between the rafters in two layers of 75mm. The cavity walls were retrofittable with mineral wool, the timber cladding was removed, Thermapitch insulation was installed and the cladding reinstated. The improvements raised all homes to EPC band C, with residents now saving an average of £295 a year on energy bills.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive—88% say their homes feel warmer, and the quality of work was rated 9 out of 10. The project also created full-time jobs for six people.

Residents were pleased with the installations:

"My house feels so much warmer already. I can now sit here with one radiator on in a short-sleeved shirt and feel warm".

"It is noticeably warmer in the mornings before the heating comes on. I am very pleased with the job and the workers were very polite and courteous".

4 Low Carbon Transport

The Low Carbon Transport theme aims to support people to move around the county in more sustainable ways, with a reduction in vehicles which produce high emissions, and a promotion of alternative modes of transport.

Transport in Suffolk accounted for 37.9% of the county's CO2 emissions in 2022[6]. The primary focus to reduce this is by supporting residents and businesses to make less use of fossil fuelled vehicles. Methods to deliver this include the promotion of electric vehicles, and less carbon intensive transport methods (such as cycling and walking). These actions are mutually beneficial, as minimising car use will reduce the demand on the electricity grid. Wider benefits will include health improvements through an active lifestyle and air quality improvements through less particulate emissions.

The four goals for this theme are:

1. **Increased sustainable transport readiness.**
2. **More efficient freight.**
3. **Reduced demand for car use.**
4. **Transition to a zero-emission fleet**

4.1 Social value summary

The interventions delivered under the Low Carbon Transport theme have promoted and facilitated lower transport emissions through engagement campaigns and improvements to transport infrastructure. It has also enhanced partnership arrangements through the SCEP's active engagement with stakeholders.

Social value is created by the benefits of increased use of public and active transport, reduced dependence on private cars, and reduced carbon emissions.

Our social value to society here includes the benefits of reduced carbon emissions resulting from people being encouraged to travel more sustainably. Organisations benefit from the savings arising from more effective and efficient communication. More travel behaviour data is needed to assess health improvements from active travel as these will also be generating social value.

- **£267,000** of measurable social value impact has been generated by activities under the Low Carbon Transport theme. Over 10 years, the long-term social value impact of this activity is **£1,048,000.**
- Greater access to sustainable mobility options will increase the number of people who choose to travel in a more environmentally friendly way. By reducing some of the financial barriers, these modes of transport will be available to a wider proportion of the county.

6 | GOV.UK, 2024, UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2022

4.2 Wider benefits and co-benefits

In addition to the social value impacts, there will be a variety co-benefits which can be attributed to the actions of the Low Carbon Transport theme. The co-benefits themselves are interrelated – for example, improved air quality also contributes to improved health. Co-benefits identified for this theme are:

- **Improved health and wellbeing** which can be achieved by people taking more active modes of transport to move around the county and through reduced particulate matter pollution from vehicles.
- **Improved air quality** which will be seen with fewer internal combustion engine powered vehicles on the roads, more people choosing active transport, and public transport options become less carbon intensive.
- **Community resilience and cohesion** which will occur through projects which engage the community and encourage them to collaborate to find solutions. This can ensure people maintain higher levels of low carbon transport use even after the intervention has ended.
- **Financial savings** through the use of public transport, reducing spend on parking and fuel. Active travel is free at the point of use and can be substantially cheaper in the long-term. A successful reduction in congestion will benefit businesses and individuals who still rely on driving, as well as bus efficiency.
- **New markets/growth, Inward investment** to occur throughout the county's transport infrastructure network and shared mobility opportunities.

5 Industrial and Commercial Energy Use

The Industrial and Commercial Energy Use theme works with the private and public sectors to support and enable them to reduce their carbon emissions.

Industry, business and the public sector contributed 29.4% of Suffolk's carbon emissions in 2022[7]. To reduce emissions across these sectors there is a need to have buy-in from a wide range of stakeholders. Some businesses have already pledged their own net zero policies, but it is hoped this can be expanded further with a formalised carbon charter with support from the sustainability hub.

The three goals for this theme include:

1. **Carbon literacy and active carbon management.**
2. **Decarbonisation in the industrial and commercial sector.**
3. **Decarbonisation in the public sector.**

5.1 Social value summary

The interventions delivered under the Industrial and Commercial Energy Use Theme have supported businesses to take decarbonisation measure to tackle the emissions from their energy use. The theme has also provided guidance on how best to achieve this. The public sector in Suffolk is also setting an example of successful ways to work towards net zero.

Social value is generated by the actions businesses and public sector organisations are taking to reduce and decarbonise their energy use, as a result of engaging with the services provided.

- **£879,000** of measurable social value impact has been generated by activities under the Industrial and Commercial Energy use theme. Over 10 years, the long-term social value impact of this activity is **£3,453,000.**
- Increasing carbon literacy across Suffolk will equip individuals and communities with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand the impact of carbon emissions. This understanding will have longer term impact on actions taken.
- Raising awareness of the climate emergency in the workplace fosters a sense of shared responsibility in both the private and public sectors to work towards mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Social value here is felt by businesses who can access training and advice for no cost. The average cost of a management training course is around £1,200, so businesses in Suffolk are saving this. Reducing carbon emissions brings social value to society as a whole.

7 | GOV.UK, 2024, UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2022

5.2 Wider benefits and co-benefits

In addition to the social value impacts, there will be a variety co-benefits which can be attributed to the actions of the Industrial and Commercial Energy Use theme. The co-benefits themselves are interrelated – for example, improved air quality also contributes to improved health. Co-benefits identified for this theme are:

- **Improved health and wellbeing** will be achieved by employees and local residents who benefit from a cleaner and less polluted environment.
- **Improved air quality** from reduced fossil fuel use during business operations and transport which creates benefits for society as a whole. This benefit will arise most acutely in industrial sectors.
- **Financial savings** will be achieved by businesses who engage in more efficient energy use, improving their resilience. This will be most acutely felt by carbon intensive companies as their energy use reduces or transitions to cheaper sources, or energy produced on-site. Businesses subject to the UK Emissions Trading Scheme may also benefit from needing fewer GHG permits.
- **New markets/growth, Inward investment** will be driven by businesses developing new energy solutions, or investing to benefit from the capabilities and assets in the region.

6 Cleaner Power

The Cleaner Power theme supports the development of a more environmentally friendly energy grid, it utilises renewable energy and novel approaches to networks.

The demand for a more renewable energy system has been growing, as emissions have decreased since 2005. This will play a key role in supporting the transition to greener transport and more efficient homes and businesses. Small-scale generation by roof-top solar, has been shown to be viable, and will reduce the demand on the national grid with more locally produced energy.

The three goals for this theme include:

1. **Grow Suffolk's low carbon energy production capacity.**
2. **Support the development of a smart and flexible grid.**
3. **Develop Suffolk's low carbon economy.**
4. **Public sector leads the way with renewable energy production.**

6.1 Social value summary

The interventions delivered under the Cleaner Power theme have promoted the use of renewable energy. This has included the promotion of community energy initiatives, and greater engagement with UK Power Networks. Businesses have also been supported to find more sustainable ways to power their operations. The public sector has led the way in transitioning civic buildings to renewable energy sources. The councils have also supported this work by developing policy to further promote these actions.

- **£169,000** of measurable social value impact has been generated by activities under the Cleaner Power theme. Over 10 years, the long-term social value impact of this activity is **£663,000.**
- The advancement of Low Carbon Heat Networks, which can lower prices for residents, will contribute to the alleviation of fuel poverty. This is further supported by collaborative energy planning projects which can make the grid more flexible.
- Communities and businesses have been empowered to take action, which has led to the creation of community led energy decarbonisation projects. Clear leadership by SCC has expedited this development.

Social value includes businesses and organisations receiving targeted training without cost, saving money on upskilling and reduced cost of innovation. Public sector bodies benefit from income generation from solar PV installations on civic buildings.

6.2 Wider benefits and co-benefits

In addition to the social value impacts, there will be a variety co-benefits which can be attributed to the actions of the Cleaner Power theme. The co-benefits themselves are interrelated – for example, improved air quality also contributes to improved health. Co-benefits identified for this theme are:

- **Improved health and wellbeing** will be achieved by residents who see a reduction in their fuel bills and benefit from a cleaner and less polluted environment.
- **Improved air quality** will be seen where renewable energy sources replace heavily emitting power sources such as fossil fuels. The reduction in emissions from energy will put fewer pollutants into the air.
- **Reduced fuel poverty, energy security, reduced demand on National Grid** will be achieved as greater levels of renewable energy will reduce Suffolk's reliance on imported fuels, protecting against price fluctuations, and reducing costs. Locally produced and stored energy distributed via local networks – like heat networks or developments with electricity microgrids - will reduce demand on the National Grid.
- **Greater social acceptance of projects** will be seen where communities are empowered to take action together via community owned renewables projects.

Case study Tenants of period properties with low Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) ratings are enjoying lower energy costs and cosier homes thanks to work carried out by their landlords and West Suffolk Council.

Ten properties at the Euston Estate and four Metcalfe Almshouses in Hawstead have been fitted with several energy efficiency measures, through funding from the Government's Sustainable Warmth funding and landlord investment.

At Euston Estate ten homes have been fitted with air source heat pumps. Andrew Blenkiron, Estate Director at Euston Estate, said: *"We wanted to ensure that the tenant's carbon footprint was reduced, but most importantly we wanted to ensure that the homes our tenants live in are comfortable, affordable and that they are nice, warm and cosy."*

Jess, resident at the Euston Estate, said: *"The storage heaters I had previously were extortionate, so I used them only when I absolutely had to. The new heat pumps are much easier to use, are more efficient and affordable. My house now feels lovely and welcoming inside, the added warmth has made such a difference."*

Read more here: https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr240215ws01.cfm

7 Wider projects

This section presents the social value benefits of other projects delivered in Suffolk which have complemented the SCEP and its aspirations.

7.1 Solar Together Suffolk

Solar Together Suffolk, run by Suffolk County Council on behalf of the partnership, aims to increase the number of Solar Photovoltaic Panels (PVs) and battery storage systems across the county. The scheme is designed for homeowners, renters (with permission), SMEs and Commonhold Associations to benefit from a collective purchasing model to secure a great deal on solar PV and battery storage. Pre-vetted and certified installers compete in a lowest price auction to deliver this to residents.

The interventions delivered under Solar Together Suffolk has enabled homes across the county to reduce their environmental impact with the installation of PVs and battery storage systems.

Social value here arises to residents from being able to access more affordable energy and to society from a reduction in carbon emissions.

7.2 Warm Homes Suffolk

Warm Homes Suffolk is an £18 million grant which provides support to insulate and improve the energy efficiency of private homes for owners, tenants and landlords (where there is no gas central heating and the total annual income for the occupants is less than £36,000). The focus of this project is to improve Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings from inefficient D, E, F and G ratings to C or higher.

The interventions delivered under Warmer Homes Suffolk has improved the condition of homes across the county and delivered carbon savings.

The evidence suggests that £1,408,000 of measurable social value impact has been generated by activities under Warm Homes Suffolk.

7.3 Carbon Charter

The Carbon Charter was launched by Suffolk County Council and the Environment Agency in 2010 as a means for local businesses to have their achievements verified and has since evolved into Suffolk's well-known hub for business sustainability. Therefore, it has become a powerful network through which much of the ICE theme actions are communicated and implemented, directly to the aspired demographic.

The Carbon Charter provides support and recognition to businesses throughout Norfolk and Suffolk as they take positive action towards net zero. Providing a benchmark for sustainable business, the Carbon Charter continues to develop an ever-growing suite of resources available to all.

The scheme has three tiers: Bronze for businesses at the start of their net zero message; Silver for businesses that can demonstrate a carbon reduction; Gold for businesses which are leading the way and can set an example to others wishing to achieve net zero. Businesses typically start at the Bronze stage (with a few businesses actively engaged in carbon reduction starting at silver). As part of the scheme, businesses can receive an assessment (chargeable based on employment size) which provides tailored suggestions to improve the company's carbon footprint.

The Carbon Charter project is an important tool to guide business' carbon reductions. Through the desire to progress to higher levels of accreditation businesses are expected to implement a range of improvements to their environmental impact. These actions are not a direct output of the project, therefore the social value generated will be produced elsewhere.

7.4 Community Thermal Imaging Project

The Community Thermal Imaging project was delivered in two phases between November 2022 to April 2023 and November 2023 to April 2024. The project provided community groups with thermal imaging cameras to conduct heat loss surveys of buildings. This can highlight where heat is escaping from the homes, and better target measures to make the building more energy efficient. Communities who identify a problem were then referred on to other schemes – such as the Warm Homes grant.

The interventions delivered under the Thermal Imaging Project have generated social value impacts around sustainable communities and increased belonging and a feeling of wellbeing of individuals within them.

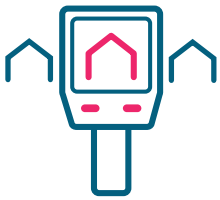
The evidence suggests that £378,000 of measurable social value impact has been generated by activities under the Community Thermal Imaging Project. Over 10 years, the long-term social value impact of this activity is £1,485,000.

Case Study:
Keep the Heat –
Community Action for Warmer Homes

Keep the Heat is a energy-saving initiative led by the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership. Now in its third year, the project gives local community groups and parish councils free access to thermal imaging cameras to help residents identify heat loss in their homes.

Between November 2022 and March 2024, over 1,600 homes were surveyed by 93 participating community groups. A quarter of the households went on to make energy-saving improvements, while half discovered their homes were already well insulated, following 335 weeks of thermal surveying.

With more than 60 groups already signed up for the third year of delivery, the project continues to grow, helping communities take practical, informed steps toward warmer, more energy-efficient homes.

THEME	MEASURABLE SOCIAL VALUE IMPACT	BREAKDOWN	
Solar Together Suffolk 	**£59,000**	**Increase in the number of PVs and battery storage systems across Suffolk**	
		2,384 PV installations	Equivalent to **£29,000** in social value from access to more affordable energy
		2,026 tCO2(e) in carbon emissions saved	Equivalent to **£30,000** through carbon savings
Warm Homes Suffolk 	**£1.4m**	**Increased insulation and energy efficiency of private homes**	
		1,368 properties upgraded	Equivalent to **£1.4m** in EPC improvements for residents.
		1,760 tCO2(e) in carbon emissions saved	Equivalent to **£26,000** through carbon savings
Community Thermal Imaging 	**£378,000**	**Provision of thermal imaging cameras to conduct heat loss surveys**	
		117 communities engaged in the project	Equivalent of **£378,000** in social value from community participation

KADA Research
10 South Street, Park Hill,
Sheffield, S2 5QY. UK

T: 0114 350 3303
M: 07714 136463
E. karl.dalgleish@kadaresearch.co.uk
www.kadaresearch.co.uk