

Attendees	Co-Chairs: Ann Cousins (Arup), Cllr Martin Fodor (BCC) Members and alternate members: Lucy Edgar, Alex Minshull, Lizzi Testani, Janine Michael, Iain McGuffog, Dan Green, Olivia Sweeney, Gwen Frost; Lauren Gillis Invitees: Steve Ransom (WECA); Judith Langton; Alex Massie (Living Places); Jamie Abbott & Hannah Spungin (Bristol City Leap); Sam Robinson (BCC)
Apologies	Enda Hayes; Roger Hoare; Sam Willitts; Chris Preist; Savita Willmott; James Sterling
Secretariat	Vicki Woolley (BCNP) – minutes

ITEMS	Item lead
Welcome, quorum & declaration of interests	
Quorum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board was quorate at meeting Apologies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above Membership notices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted thanks to Emma Geen for services to the Board Declaration of interests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None Just Transition principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper copies of the Just Transition principles were provided for reference. Methods of incorporating these into structure of meeting and discussion are still being explored and will be revisited following the upcoming board member refresh. 	
Approval of minutes of last meeting & action register	
Outstanding actions: VW provided an overview of action register, see slides for information.	
Membership refresh process	
<p>Member recruitment underway, reminder that deadline for expressions of interest is 20 March.</p> <p>The June 2025 meeting will be chaired solo by BCC Cllr Co-Chair and refreshed Board will be invited to express interest in the role of co-chair over the Summer. The aim is to enable new members to familiarise themselves with the Board at the June meeting before deciding whether to apply.</p>	
Theory of Change & Board Priorities	
Feedback and/or Approval of Environment Board Theory of Change Version 2: Theory of Change was Approved. Board agreed that the approved ToC as it is can be shared with Board and one city ecosystem, but not publicly. Action: Create a more high-level version for public sharing, subject to ToC being adopted by refreshed Board.	

Feedback on future priorities identified:

These were supported by members with following changes and will be shared with incoming members at future meetings:

- To include reference to the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy (alongside Local Nature Recovery Strategy)
- Leaving space / flexibility for priorities and issues arising, for example from other boards or changes to One City Plan / timelines

Water Working Group: Save our Waters

Working Group was formed in response to a recent Council Golden Motion. A series of 6 actions have been identified.

Update from Wessex Water (DG):

- First full meeting of working group will be held on 26 March and to include a visit to Saltford Sewage works and work underway to expand capacity of the site.
- DG will circulate JO's details for anyone else interested in joining the group.
- It is great to see this work in partnership and holistic approach, looking at the water cycle from cloud to sea, which recognizes that the problems with the sewage system start when rainwater lands on impenetrable ground, as well as sewage blockages caused by flushing wet wipes and/or when misconnections happen combining foul water with rain-water drainage
- Wessex Water have created an [interactive GIS site](#) which allows you to look at region's storm overflow schemes that are scheduled, and in which sites/locations, in 5 year blocks between now and 2050

Housing retrofit landscape – current opportunities & challenges

City level introduction & One City Climate Strategy - Alex Minshull, BCC

The One City Climate Strategy set out ambitions for decarbonisation and homes are an important part of this. Reductions in emissions have largely come from decarbonisation of electricity, due to national measures. In Bristol, we are still burning a lot of gas in buildings and we need to stop. The solution is better insulation and transitioning from gas boilers over to district heating and/or individual heat pumps. To progress it is important to understand and respond to people's existing priorities: bills/costs/fuel poverty. This is a key consideration for a Just Transition – and for many will be 'the measure' of whether we achieve one or not. This sector will bring a lot of new jobs, but these may be precarious (emerging market, boom and bust, scepticism in the industry and quality issues).

These issues and questions are being explored via the current Mission Net Zero project – which is exploring how to match demand from households, with the supply chain and finance/funding, all underpinned with data.

The following presentations explored different aspects of home decarbonisation and housing retrofit.

1. Bristol City Council/Bristol City Leap Housing Retrofit Plans - Jamie Abbott & Hannah Spungin, Bristol City Leap and Sam Robinson, Energy and Renewables Manager for BCC Housing

Hannah Spungin, Implementation Manager at Bristol City Leap explained that Bristol City Leap is well positioned to pioneer area-based approach to decarbonisation. BCL's work has primarily been delivered via funded programmes (e.g. BCC work on housing estate, and government funded programmes for

vulnerable households) with 750 home retrofits underway (mix of BCC rolling programme and national government grant funded programmes).

Coming soon:

- **Warm Homes Local Grant:** this is first step of journey (only received 25% of funding in Year One) – BCC lead
- **Area based schemes in next 3 years as part of BCC Social Housing Fund** (via WECA consortium): A street by street / area-based approach focusing on benefits to communities, jobs and skills.

BCL's retrofit work includes any energy efficient measures and low carbon heating. The measures are determined by a retrofit assessment and what is possible within that house. This could be scaled up to street by street of similar housing types leading to economies of scale.

MF: noted that the two complementary funds will enable that whole street approach, as the different funds would be able to meet different types of tenures within a street)

BCL is interested in connecting strategically with One City partners (via Environment Board and other boards) to progress these projects.

2. Retrofit West – Janine Michael, Centre for Sustainable Energy

Building on retrofit workshops held over 2 years ago CSE identified the need/potential to accelerate decarbonisation of 'able to pay' households. This led to the creation – 18 months ago - of a new CIC, Retrofit West, in partnership with WECA.

Retrofit West is focused of West of England region and delivering retrofit, but articles of association also enable it to potentially work more widely in the future. Currently the CIC delivers:

- Advice and support for individual households, helping people understand what measures they could do – and developing the routes for these services / information to reach them. Vouchers for assessments are subsidised by WECA, substantially bringing down the cost of home surveys - making them accessible to middle income groups.
- Developing the local supply chain – builders and construction industry is already busy and not necessarily incentivised by Retrofit. This is being encouraged by light touch info days, skills training, encouraging existing companies to expand, signposting companies up to Retrofit West services.

Retrofit West is working with community groups to build trust in local areas. It is becoming evident that not everyone will do retrofit in one go – what they want is step by step process and a 2-3 year journey.

The CIC is over 200% ahead of initial targets – demonstrating the large appetite for energy advice. Barriers are currently lack of access to the finance and trust/nervousness about the supply chain (and what guarantees there are on quality and standards) and making this investment decision for their household.

3. Regional developments - Steve Ransome, WECA

Overview of strategic regional work, noting upcoming pre-election period and caveat about changes to agenda considering manifestos / priorities of newly elected Mayor.

Strategic direction has targeted commissioning and investment rather than grant funding e.g. cornerstone investment into Green Growth Impact Fund and aim to leverage £90 million from £10 million investment.

Noted National Clean Power Plan (published last December) – reflects that 8gw been generated through local authorities and opportunity to reclaim waste heat from AI, links back to retrofit (some modelling done on how many house can be supplied by AI).

Specific schemes:

- Social Housing Fund coordinated by South West Net Zero Hub working with Bristol and Curo
- Green Skills related to funding to 2026
- Retrofit west – to June 2026
- Other programmes to March 2026

Lack of certainty in long term due to upcoming election. Business cases for next 3-year cycle will go to new Mayor in the Autumn.

4. Net Zero Neighbourhoods Investment Model (Mission Net Zero) – Alex Massie, Living Places

Emerged from work of Core Cities and London Councils, exploring how to fund individual household decarbonisation challenge – aiming to create a viable model for retrofit which has: 1) zero upfront costs and 2) creates zero debt for householders and 3) is accessible to all tenures.

Exploring sources of money: 1) government grants – which are limited 2) individuals – which is limited and 3) private investment – potentially viable.

To get private investment, we need to generate income to raise the initial investment.

Many energy efficiency measures do save energy and save costs – but these savings are modest in relation to the upfront costs of doing works.

Pension firms, however, are willing to explore 40 or 50 year repayment terms and we started to explore this more 'patient' and longer term finance.

The solution proposed creating a payment obligation, which is paid back overtime, but is not debt. The risk is held by a vehicle, rather than householders or individuals.

There are so many complicated questions to explore. We've worked up a concept and are now attempting to prove out how it would work. In order to get this to work, we need to aggregate to scales of 1,000s of properties and £100 millions. If we are aggregating, we might as well do other things that make sense in the area at the same time that help to transition a neighbourhood 'in one go'.

Within Mission Net Zero we are not going to solve this entire issue as the concept is yet unproven but we are: 1) looking at what reasonable small scale demonstrator projects would look like – in three neighbourhoods and exploring how much money could be raised theoretically and 2) Delivering three pathway projects that create and demonstrates key components – a) property linked contract and mechanism, b) defining the retrofit offer to residents and c) understanding legal entities which enables the model to work.

Our aim is that this concept can unlock challenges, provide proof that they work and support progress to bigger demonstrators – 1 street or 2 streets.

This is a model that is being explored by a number of authorities nationally and has significant interest from DESNZ, as it brings potential to deliver at scale.

Points raised in discussion:

- Noted water efficient retrofit need – IMg would like to discuss a previous project / model explored for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems with AMassie
- Offer / suggestion about whether One City Environment Board members (and other One City partners) could promote Retrofit West to employees, and whether households could be reached through their employers (example scheme, e.g. Cycle to Work scheme).
- Offer from Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership to help tell this story across the Board – who needs to know what.

- Jackie Louise (invitee) noted work in BANES on Green Heritage Homes and Planning, offer of support for Bristol listed buildings and conservation areas – and noted that there are a lot of myths about what you can and cant do. Bath has Supplementary Planning Guidance build on a guide that CSE developed for BANES and noted that training conservation officers has been really important.
- Discussion benefits of either cross-signposting or having one inspector/surveyor looking at energy/retrofit and water efficiency measures at the same time, which is potentially more efficient and would be preferred by householders. For water, however, interventions are quicker and cheaper and straightforward. Suggestion for CSE and Wessex to explore opportunity for working in Partnership.
- Bristol City Leap noted they are going into 900 homes – an opportunity for distribution of water packs for example. Suggestion for BCL and Wessex to explore opportunity for working in Partnership.
- The action plan is going to BCC's Homes Committee on 4th April and will be published.

One City Plan refresh updates & One City Plan Gathering

- **One City Plan refresh update – Jude Langton, City Office**

See slides for emerging plans for the One City Plan refresh.

The governance board gave a steer to think deeply about the structure of the plan and is supportive of substantive changes to support the best model for delivery. However, it was felt that the revised plan should retain continuity and build upon work to date.

A working group has been set up to undertake a review and make recommendations. So far partners have advocated for a format that enables them to align behind and gives sense of direction, with appropriate measures to know we can measure progress against collective ambition.

City office will be coming to OCEB at many points throughout this process – key milestone is gathering on 23 April. The final deadline is September.

All Boards going forward will have the opportunity and an invitation to contribute.

Next steps: Following governance board meeting, a proposal will go out to all Board members. One City Environment Board members are welcome to respond, even if their term as members will be ending. There will be a follow up meeting on 30 April and the One City Plan priorities will be further explored at June's One City Gathering.

- **One City Gathering – 23 June**

Working group is shaping the agenda and will be focused on refreshing the plan.

One City Environment Board – impacts & reflections

Board members were asked to consider whether:

- Being a member of the environment board been beneficial to personally or professionally, or how being a member has helped them to contribute to climate and ecological goals?
- What do they feel has been the One City Environment Board's most positive contribution to delivery of the One City Plan?

Responses:

- Contributing skills, expertise and input to the creation of the One City Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategies was noted as a particular achievement
- Raising awareness and dot joining between organisations represented on the One City Environment Board has felt effective – improving design of projects and initiatives – particularly

efficient particularly as board meetings are occasional and enable discussion and connections to be explored.

- Noted that finding tangible examples of delivery was difficult – but strategies would likely have been less ambitious without OCEB’s input.
- Sitting on board as an organization or an individual was felt to be valuable in a lot of ways – increasing knowledge, capacity and expertise on issues like climate mitigation, ecological emergency and Just Transition. Organisations may not implement these instantaneously but, thanks to One City, do have new institutional knowledge and recourse to a peer network to progress these agendas incrementally over time.
- It was noted that being represented as an individual alongside organisations has felt challenging and required translation of themes and topics. Individuals can’t deliver in the same way as organisations and perhaps the role has been different (i.e. to provide feedback and perspectives). Useful feedback as the member refresh approaches.
- Board noted that individual members insight and critique has been incredibly perceptive and helpful.
- Bristol is noted as one of the only places that has invested in this organizational infrastructure – and CSE reflected that you can see the lack of this in other places who are approaching similar challenges, such as strategic energy planning and engagement at all system levels (citizens, businesses, communities etc).
- Thanks was given to the Partnership for acting as secretariat and enabling the board to operate effectively and thanks to the Co-Chairs, particularly Ann Cousins for providing continuity during her 5 year term.

AOB

- Thank you once again to all Board members past and present!