

BRISTOL city leap

2025/26 five-year business plan

Executive summary



Foreword

IN THIS SECOND YEAR OF THE BRISTOL CITY LEAP PARTNERSHIP, WE ARE DELIGHTED TO HAVE ACHIEVED SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES, BOTH WITHIN OUR ORGANISATION AND ALONGSIDE OUR RESIDENTS AND DEDICATED PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND BUSINESSES. TOGETHER, WE ARE FORGING A UNIQUE PATH, A COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT TO LEAD BRISTOL ON CLIMATE ACTION AND TO ENGAGE WITH OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY ON BRISTOL'S IMPORTANT JOURNEY TO BECOMING A DECARBONISED AND EQUITABLE CITY.

Climate change is one of the most pressing global challenges we face today. As we navigate the changes needed to decarbonise our daily lives, we must also support our communities with this transition. Our focus on social value underscores this commitment, as we harness opportunities to create jobs, provide financial support and deliver funding that empowers communities to take meaningful climate action. We take pride in the strides we've made this past year towards fulfilling our promise of delivering £61.5 million in social value.

The innovative decarbonisation initiatives undertaken by Bristol City Leap continue to attract national attention, drawing interest from councils across the land as well as central government, climate networks and other regions. We believe our efforts will serve as a blueprint for cities and regions striving towards similar goals.

Despite our progress, we face formidable challenges. Rising energy prices and the cost of living are straining households and organisations, while escalating construction material costs in the process. Nevertheless, I am particularly proud of our efforts to implement energy conservation measures for those who need them most. Our

retrofitting initiative, a project that has made significant progress this year, has completed work on 450 homes and properties across Bristol and has enhanced the sustainability, warmth, comfort and safety of our social housing stock.

This 20-year collaboration between Bristol City Council, Ameresco and Vattenfall Heat UK exemplifies how public and private organisations can unite with communities to revolutionise their energy systems, transforming how a city generates, distributes, stores and uses energy. Our inclusive, city-wide approach empowers every individual to engage in and benefit from the vital actions necessary to combat the climate crisis.

In partnership with the diverse communities of Bristol, we are dedicated to establishing a legacy of enduring, positive change that fosters a fair and sustainable future for generations to come. This past year also saw a notable increase in financial support for local energy projects, alongside remarkable progress in our Local Renewables initiatives.

Ultimately, only through the collaborative efforts of individuals and organisations can we effect the transformative change needed in the limited time we have to avert catastrophe. The world is watching, so let us unite to ensure that Bristol is a beacon of sustainable hope.



Mark Apsey MBE

Managing Director of Ameresco
and Bristol City Leap



Vision and strategic goals

To effectively deliver on our commitments to the Bristol City Leap partnership, we have clearly articulated our vision and strategic goals, which serve as the foundation for all our actions. These guiding principles ensure that our efforts are not only aligned with our mission but also focused on fostering sustainable development and enhancing the well-being of our community. By anchoring our initiatives in a well-defined framework, we aim to create meaningful and lasting impacts that resonate with the values and aspirations of Bristol and its residents.

The vision

Position Bristol as a global leader in sustainable urban transformation and decarbonisation through the deployment of cutting-edge energy solutions, community empowerment, and strategic partnerships.

Five strategic goals

- 1.** Expand renewable energy infrastructure
- 2.** Enhance energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty
- 3.** Deliver heat networks
- 4.** Develop a smart and connected city
- 5.** Deliver real social value

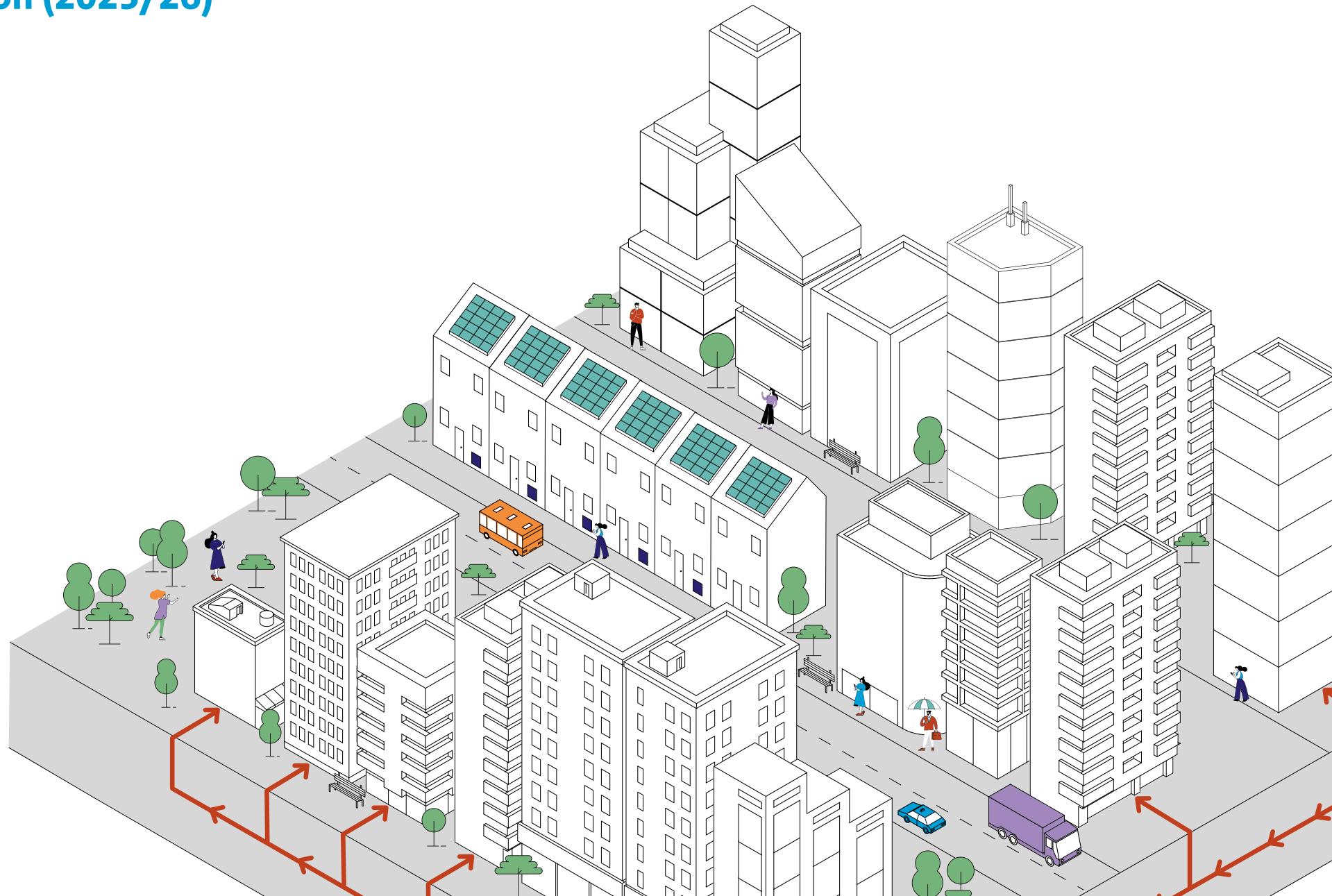


Second year of operation (2025/26)

AS WE COMPLETE OUR SECOND YEAR OF THE BRISTOL CITY LEAP PARTNERSHIP, WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO UNCOVERING AND IMPLEMENTING FURTHER DECARBONISATION OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE CITY. THIS INITIATIVE IS PART OF THE ONGOING COMMITMENTS ESTABLISHED BY AMERESCO AS THE STRATEGIC PARTNER FOR BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL.

We are delivering on a robust pipeline of decarbonisation projects, many of which will focus on the council's corporate estate, social housing and vehicle fleet, alongside the further expansion of the Bristol heat network. Additionally, we are collaborating with key local organisations, commercial partners and communities to invest in local projects that not only promote decarbonisation but also generate social value, all in alignment with the city's sustainability and ecological objectives.

This business plan outlines our accomplishments in the second year and provides an update on our strategies to help the city achieve its goal of net-zero emissions by 2030.



Low-carbon energy infrastructure projects

Since 2023, Bristol City Leap has been working with Bristol City Council and partners across the city to deliver a broad range of decarbonisation projects for Bristol.

We currently have projects worth more than £51 million in contract with Bristol City Leap across a range of technology types. This includes 11 connections to the Bristol heat network.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Over £1 million worth of projects into contract with Bristol City Leap.

SOCIAL HOUSING

Delivery of approximately £24.2 million worth of energy-efficiency measures, such as wall and loft insulation, window and door replacement, and air source heat installation to improve our social housing stock.

CORPORATE ESTATE

Decarbonisation measures at Bristol City Council's offices at 100 Temple Street.

LED lightbulb replacement project across 14 libraries in Bristol, which is reducing energy bills and Bristol's carbon footprint.

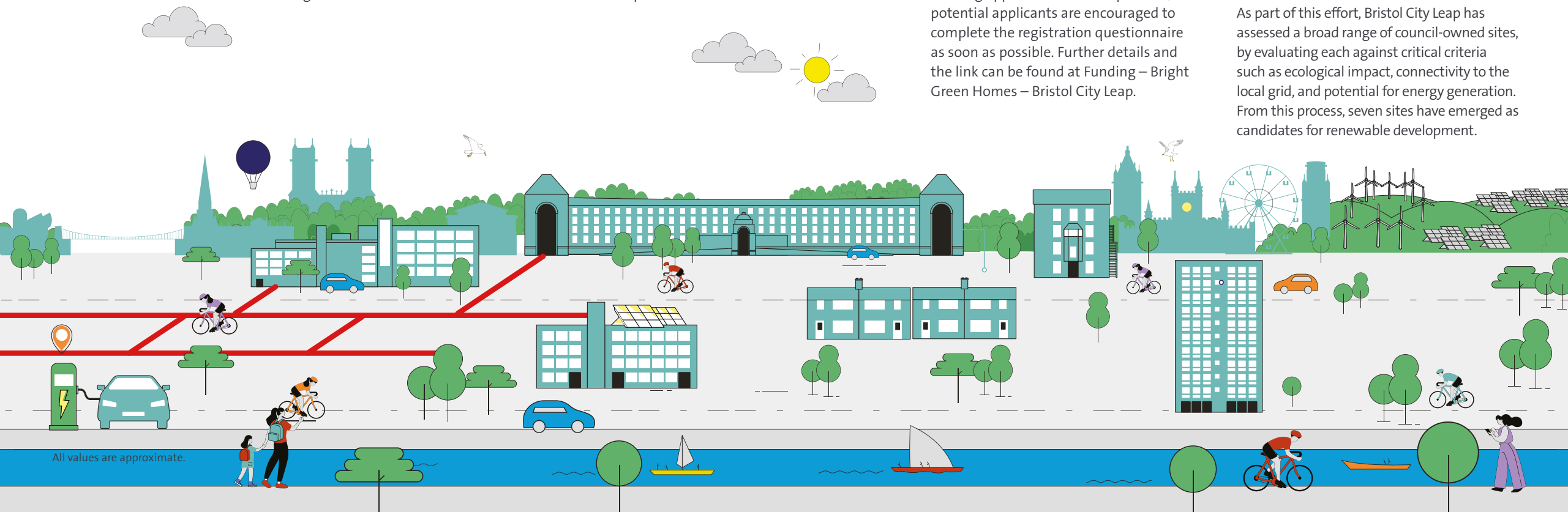
OWNER-OCCUPIED RETROFIT

Delivering approximately £10 million worth of energy-efficiency measures to private homeowners in or at risk of fuel poverty around Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, and North Somerset. Funding applications are still possible, and potential applicants are encouraged to complete the registration questionnaire as soon as possible. Further details and the link can be found at Funding – Bright Green Homes – Bristol City Leap.

LOCAL RENEWABLES

The local renewable scheme is a core commitment of the Bristol City Leap partnership, which is dedicated to supporting the city's objective of reaching net zero by 2030.

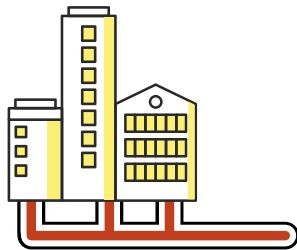
As part of this effort, Bristol City Leap has assessed a broad range of council-owned sites, by evaluating each against critical criteria such as ecological impact, connectivity to the local grid, and potential for energy generation. From this process, seven sites have emerged as candidates for renewable development.



All values are approximate.

Heat networks

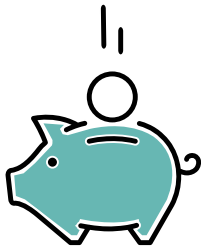
IN 2024, VATTENFALL EXPANDED THE BRISTOL HEAT NETWORK BY:



Delivering low-carbon heating and hot water to 11 new buildings in Bristol



Breaking ground on a **fourth new heat network area** in Bristol – the Temple heat network



Securing £21.3 million in grant funding to support the delivery of the Frome heat network area

LOOKING FORWARD, VATTENFALL IS SET TO INVEST AROUND £227 MILLION IN THE BRISTOL HEAT NETWORK BETWEEN 2025 AND 2029, TO:

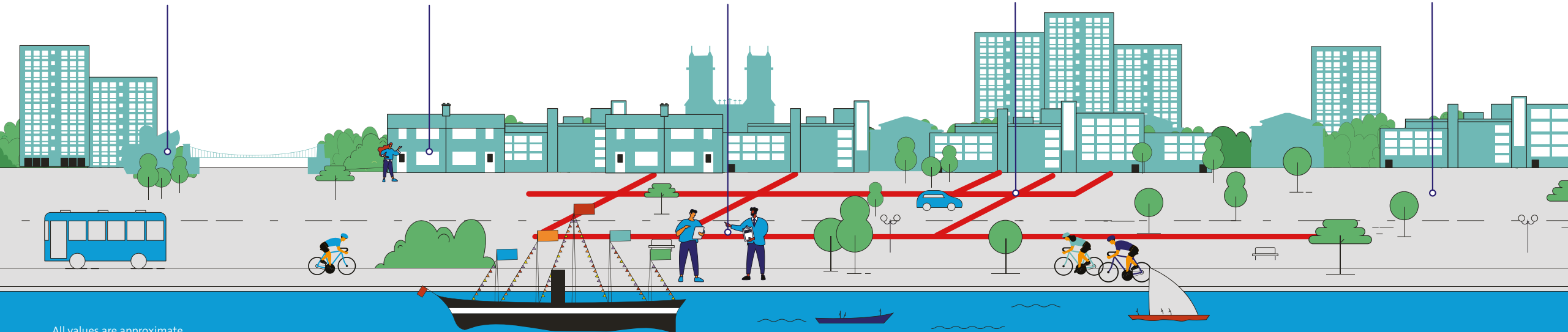
Upgrade historic heat network pipes in Redcliffe to improve operational efficiency

Expand Vattenfall’s operational heat networks in Redcliffe, Old Market and Bedminster

Build out the Temple heat network, connecting plots in the Bristol Temple Quarter regeneration area

Develop of the Frome heat network area (which includes Frome Gateway Regeneration area, St Nicolas and Canons Marsh), University of Bristol and Bristol Royal Infirmary

Interconnect of the heat networks across the city centre



All values are approximate.

Spotlight on social housing

Approximately £24.2 million worth of energy-efficiency measures, such as wall and loft insulation, window and door replacement, solar and air source heat pump installation, are being delivered to our social housing stock.

This initiative marks a significant step towards improving the sustainability, warmth, comfort, and safety of social housing in the city as part of our ambitious Bristol City Leap project.

The projects will support the most vulnerable during colder winter months using a range of technologies as part of the initiative to reduce energy consumption and enhance efficiency.

These works not only contribute to a more sustainable Bristol but also deliver immediate benefits for residents. The improvements will lead to significant reductions in energy consumption, lower heating costs and a more comfortable living space, while also enhancing the safety and appearance of the housing.

Bristol City Leap is aiming to improve the energy efficiency of more than 28,000 social homes within the city and continues to support residents through its funding of the Centre for Sustainable Energy's free energy advice helpline which is available to residents across the West of England.

This work we do for homes in Bristol's communities reflects our commitment to decarbonising the city and achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, while improving the quality of life for local people and ensuring that everyone can benefit from more affordable, clean energy in their homes.



Social value

Bristol City Leap is not just about achieving the transition to a low-carbon economy – it's about achieving a **just transition** that works for everyone. This ethos is central to our approach and drives our commitment to delivering social value in all our practices.

In the past year, Bristol City Leap partner Ameresco and its subcontractor Vattenfall have again exceeded our social value targets, actively delivering **£17.5 million** to date.

Over the last twelve months, we have been proud to provide:



£15.78 million spent through contracts with local supply chain including micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME)



£66,000 spent in the local voluntary, community and social enterprise sector



102 local jobs created through BCL projects



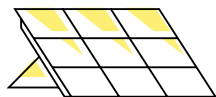
44 weeks of work experience delivered for young people



54 weeks of apprenticeships delivered



361 hours of career support sessions delivered



£312,000 of grants delivered to community organisations as part of our Community Energy Fund



670 volunteer hours delivered for local causes

We have also supported a number of external initiatives such as signing the Bristol Equalities Charter and providing £20,000 to the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) operated advice hotline that provides free energy advice for Bristolians.

All values are approximate.



Spotlight on the Bristol City Leap Community Energy Fund

A standout achievement of the past year has been the **expansion of the successful £1.5 million Bristol City Leap Community Energy Fund**, which enables community-led energy projects.

Last year saw the first substantial awards made as part of the programme, with over **£312,000 delivered** in grants to more than 20 voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations.

This included grassroots initiatives at the heart of Bristol, such as:

- working with Bristol's SS Great Britain, where external experts will process data to develop a full understanding of the heat and energy flows to optimise heat efficiency in this iconic Bristol landmark;
- supporting Windmill Hill City Farm in Bedminster to retrofit their Old Dairy volunteer space with insulation to futureproof it; and
- Zero Carbon School, which empowers young people to explore climate change while designing and implementing projects aimed at reducing their schools' carbon footprints.

Thanks to the Community Energy Fund, these and other pioneering initiatives are securing Bristol's status as the UK's community energy capital while actively decarbonising the city.

Grant and loan awards as part of the Community Energy Fund will be made throughout 2025 and beyond as we continue to support more communities to reduce their energy consumption and reliance on fossil fuels.

Additionally, in 2026, we will be launching our Community Catalyst Fund to complement the Community Energy Fund. The Community Catalyst Fund is expected to make an estimated £2.8 million available over the 20-year lifetime of Bristol City Leap for a wide variety of community projects.

“The grants that were available from Bristol City Leap were completely transformational in our decision-making process because it became a no-brainer for us.”

Derek Gray, Bristol Wood Recycling Project

All values are approximate.



Five-year plan

Having built a substantial project pipeline, we will start delivering key decarbonisation programmes focusing on the Council's corporate estate and social housing, Bristol heat network, large-scale renewables and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. We have good visibility of the projects within each of these areas and, as a result, we have a high degree of confidence that these will be delivered.

Over the next five years, over £500 million will be invested, exceeding the previous commitment of £424 million.

£89 million in local renewable projects

£227 million in the Bristol heat network

£37 million in social housing retrofit

£50 million in owner-occupied retrofit*

£8.7 million in electric vehicle infrastructure

£18.7 million in potential council corporate estate delivery

Shifts in national policy and regulatory frameworks, alongside the current and anticipated economic environment, are influencing the landscape. However, Bristol City Leap is well placed to take advantage of any new opportunities and adapt to events as they arise.

All values are approximate.

*Subject to grant funding.



We will also continue to create social value alongside our investment in decarbonisation projects, by:

- **committing £6,500 per year** to support local charity Grassroot Communities who work with young people from disadvantaged communities and support them to realise their potential;
- **supporting the Energy Department at Sparks Bristol** by providing a space where visitors to this unique department store can learn about Bristol City Leap and how they can reduce their energy bills;
- **working closely with our local supply chain** to support the delivery and measurement of their social value;
- **volunteering for local community projects** to engage with and contribute to wider Bristol community projects as well as areas we are delivering in;
- **engaging with the Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership** to raise Bristol City Leap's profile and support us with engaging new businesses and community groups;
- **supporting the Green Skills agenda locally** through engagement with partners such as Bristol City Council, West of England Combined Authority and City of Bristol College;
- **launching a Community Catalyst Fund for non-energy-related community projects into 2026** to complement our Community Energy Fund; and
- **committing to £20,000 a year through 2025** to the Centre of Sustainable Energy's Energy Advice Line for residents of Bristol.

We will continue to invest in growing our team, with the aim of making Bristol City Leap a great place to work and enabling us to live up to the values our team has identified as being important to them.

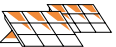
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Bristol City Leap Key Performance Indicators

2028 Forecast

Bid



Zero-carbon-generation assets deployed, MW

142.2

181.6



Zero-carbon energy generated, GWh

111

327.3



Energy efficiency measures deployed, million £

57.1

22.1



Emissions avoided, tCO₂e

162,014

139,120

Please note that project delivery of programmes and assumptions in this business plan relating to the Council's estate are subject to the Council's budget-setting processes and approval by Bristol City Council.



Thank you for reading our 2025/26 business plan

This business plan was published in April 2025 as a refresh of our initial business plan published in December 2022. This is a rolling five-year plan which will be updated on an annual basis. Bristol City Leap's next annual business plan is expected to be released in early 2026.

This summary of the Annual Business Plan will be published on the [Bristol City Leap website](https://www.bristolcityleap.co.uk) alongside other associated data such as progress against the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and individual social value metrics such as number of jobs created.

Stay up to date with the latest projects and developments on the Bristol City Leap website: www.bristolcityleap.co.uk or via our social media channels overleaf.

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VATTENFALL 



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