

WM2041 – Programme update

December 2020

This WM2041 programme update provides the latest progress on activity since the approval of 'WM2041: a programme for implementing an environmental recovery', which was approved by the West Midlands Combined Authority Board in June 2020.

Background

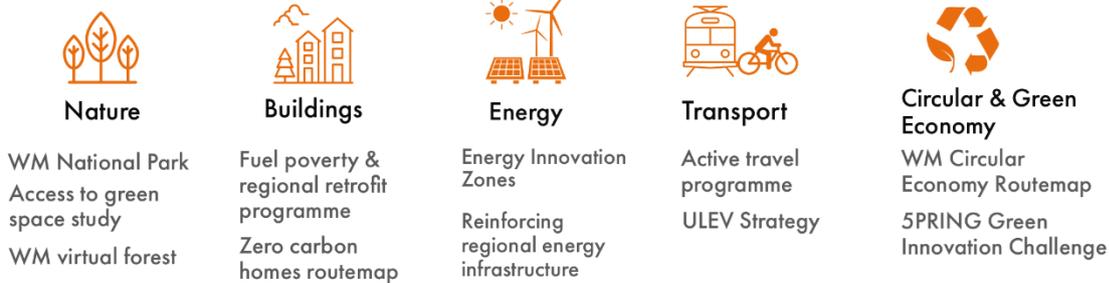
1. In June 2019, the WMCA declared a climate emergency and the Combined Authority Board received a paper from the Tyndall Centre in July, outlining the trajectory that would be necessary in order to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2041. This work includes two interim carbon budgets of 36% reduction by 2022 and 69% reduction by 2027. The focus is on a rapid transition towards a zero-carbon future where action must be 'front-loaded' – we will need to meet year-on-year carbon emissions reductions of 13% to reach that target.
2. Following the production of the target, a 'green paper' was written to indicate how the region could take action in order to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2041, with 73 actions of varying scale, complexity and investment. This was approved by the Combined Authority Board on 17th January 2020 and formally launched at an event on 23rd January 2020, with a period of consultation until 12th March 2020.
3. The unfolding events of the pandemic resulted in the feedback from the consultation being combined into priority actions for a 'green recovery' from Covid-19; *WM2041: a programme for implementing an environmental recovery*, which was approved by the CA Board in June 2020. The paper proposed three categories for action:
 1. **Urgent action for 2020:** activities that will have immediate impact and/or set a clear direction of travel for the kind of recovery we expect in the West Midlands.
 2. **12-month priorities:** activities that need to be pursued over the next 12 months as key priorities within the wider recovery programme.
 3. **Five year plan 2021-26 priorities:** the mid-long term programmes that need to be developed to ensure we are on track to deliver our net zero carbon target.

Updates for each of the three categories are provided below.

WM2041 Programme



2 2020 Activity



3 WM2041 Five Year Plan 2021-26



1. Urgent action 2020

<p>West Midlands Green Innovation Challenge</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This WM Green Innovation Challenge will support the work of innovative SMEs across the region, particularly in finding solutions to some of our most pressing challenges. WMCA Environment Team are working with the 5G Accelerator and have identified a range of challenges relating to WM2041 that will be addressed by SMEs through the 5PRING programme (touching on energy, natural capital, circular economy, build environment and behaviour change). We are finalising arrangements with several private sector partners who also share an interest in the solutions to these challenges. The programme was launched for applications in late September 2020 and will begin in January 2021.
<p>WM Circular Economy</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circular economy and resource efficiency has the potential to create jobs and economic growth across the region. WMCA Environment Team workshop with 40 regional stakeholders took place in early September and an online survey received 54 responses. The results of these engagements has shaped the formation of a regional Taskforce that will oversee the completion of a routemap by mid-2021 (also see section in 12 month priorities).

Active Travel



Active travel came out as most popular approach for tackling climate change in the WM2041 consultation process that took place Jan – March 2020. This is a TfWM-led programme which has recently received a large investment from Department for Transport via the Emergency Active Travel Fund (Tranche 1) and the Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2). Tranche 1 awarded the West Midlands a total of £3.45 million which has delivered:

- 50 infrastructure schemes across all LA's for pop up cycle lanes, pavement widening, cycle parking schemes and road closures.
- To support this infrastructure TfWM have delivered a package of 8 supporting measures including:
 - Cycle parking to approximately 250 organisations with free cycle parking measures (in conjunction with Park that Bike).
 - Love to Ride, an online engagement platform encouraging more people to cycle and walk.
 - Social prescribing pilot in the Black Country looking at using cycling and walking as an incentive for recovery for patients at doctor's surgeries.
- Expansion of the Active Travel Partnerships including a new British Cycling Recreation Officer, a third Living Streets Officer to deliver the Little Feet programme encouraging parents to walk children to nurseries and early years and a third Cycling UK Officer to cover Coventry and Solihull.
- Roll & Stroll, a regional campaign launched to promote Cycling and walking.

Tranche 2 was announced in November 2020 awarding the West Midlands a total of £13.1 million. The funding will be used to deliver schemes across the region.

- 39 Infrastructure schemes including making permanent many of the pop-up cycle lanes and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods delivered in Tranche 1.
- Delivery of the Supporting Measures works in a targeted approach. Aiming to work in priority areas near to new infrastructure as it is delivered. Some projects will be expanded:
 - Expansion of Social Prescribing with Active Travel to 8 CCG's in Birmingham building on the success in the Black Country
 - Continuation of the Cycle Parking for Organisations project adding two new parking options for larger cycles.
 - Promoting the use of the love exploring app across the Black Country

Reinforcing the region's energy infrastructure to support green growth



- One of Energy Capital's main priorities is to ensure that the cost of connecting to energy infrastructure does not inhibit economic growth across the region. In August, the SED Board endorsed Energy Capital's proposed approach to engaging with the regional energy network operators (DNOs), both with and on behalf of, the constituent members, to get a better outcome for the region from current and future energy infrastructure price control negotiations.
- This process recognises that Local Authorities will still need to lead the engagement for their areas and liaise with the DNOs, particularly the spatial planners. Energy Capital will support this process and provide the specialist technical and commercial expertise in energy infrastructure to make sure we get engagement at the right levels and that the data and information provided to

	<p>local stakeholders is discernible and meaningful. They are now engaging with the DNO, Local Authorities and LEPs to formalise this approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the 11th Sept, Energy Capital also presented to the Devolution Sub-Group and obtained support for seeking statutory recognition for the role of local government in this space, through the devolution process. • Our Devolution ask was submitted to BEIS by Andy Street via the minister Alok Sharma in November.
<p>Community Green Grants pilot</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMCA Environment Team commissioned the New Economics Foundation to identify where there is currently deficit of access to green space across the West Midlands region, and how this overlaps with socio-economic characteristics (age, BAME groups and indices of multiple deprivation). The next steps for this work will be used to develop a programme for targeting green grants that reduce the deficit. Defra have expressed interest in this work and it was included in the CSR asks. There has been interest from NGOs to collaborate through funding routes they are able to access, as well as local authority officers. The action plan for taking this work forward has been brought to this meeting.
<p>Communications and behaviour change</p> <p>#WM2041</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WM2041 Communications Plan ensures that progress across WM2041 programmes translates into press releases and engagement with the public and relevant stakeholders to inspire, engage and inform them. A soft market testing exercise is underway to understand how WMCA can most effectively engage people in climate change issues and actions. • WMCA was also a founding partner for the global pledge initiative, Count Us In, that launched on 10th October and seeks to mobilise 1 billion people to take practical steps that when aggregated, will make a significant impact in reducing carbon pollution and challenge leaders to act boldly to deliver global systems change.
<p>West Midlands Green Financing</p>	<p>The Five Year Plans (outlined below) will provide the high level programmes, scale of investment and carbon saved. This will provide us with a better understanding of the financing routes required to deliver on the outcomes.</p>

2. 12-month priorities: acceleration and embedding phase

<p>A regional retrofit programme</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having secured funding from the WMCA Innovation Board, Energy Capital are building a programme across the West Midlands with partners that looks at both the immediate need to tackle regional fuel poverty, and how we scale up retrofit across the region. As part of this collaboration, six working groups have been established to cover these two key work areas, as well as the cross-programme issues of customer engagement, green finance, skills and training, and governance.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partnership has already been successful in bringing new funding into the region to fill gaps in fuel poverty support provision and invest in scaling up retrofit. The partnership is working on how best to support local authorities to access funding streams which have recently been announced by Government and had submitted one consortium bid to date. Energy Capital is also engaging with central Government regarding alternative regional delivery mechanisms through this partnership.
<p>Zero carbon homes charter and routemap</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April 2020, Housing & Land Delivery Board agreed a programme of work to deliver zero carbon homes by 2025. This included three key outputs: a baseline performance gap analysis, zero carbon homes charter and routemap. Useful Projects have been appointed to develop and co-ordinate WMCA's Zero Carbon Homes programme. Additionally, WMCA assembled a Zero Carbon Homes Taskforce and Officer Working Group to oversee, steer and review the programme as it developed. The baseline gap analysis was completed in October 2020 and identified two routes to delivering zero carbon homes in the region. The short term focus (to 2025) will be reducing operational emissions to net zero, followed by embodied carbon and whole life carbon. Using the baseline gap analysis and input from both the Taskforce and the Officer Working Group, a Zero Carbon Homes Charter has been produced and will be discussed by Housing and Land Delivery Board in December 2020. The charter frames WMCA's commitment to, and objectives for, net-zero carbon homes in the region. In this regard, the document will be vision-setting with a focus on delivering co-benefits such as whole life cost savings, supply chain opportunities and social value. The Zero Carbon Homes Routemap is also in progress. This document will provide an implementation plan for the charter as well as other short and medium term actions to deliver the 2025 net-zero operational emissions target, with consideration to meeting net zero whole life emissions in the longer term. Following conversations with both the Taskforce and Officer Working Group, five enablers necessary to deliver WMCA's aspirations to 2025 and beyond were identified and will form the 'skeleton' of the routemap with actions identified across the timeline for each; 1) Policy and Lobbying, 2) Governance and Delivery Processes, 3) Financial Capital, 4) Human Capital and 5) Infrastructure, Innovation and Technology.
<p>WM Circular Economy routemap and action plan</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on the early engagement and formation of a Taskforce, the WM Circular Economy Routemap will outline the opportunities for new job creation and business development in the region, whilst preventing unnecessary waste products and materials. WMCA Environment Team will be commissioning consultants to work with the Taskforce to identify waste flows and new processes to understand the common barriers, opportunities and approaches that create the conditions for collaboration that a circular economy relies upon.

<p>Green neighbourhoods, natural capital and a WM National Park</p> 	<p>There are three different projects within this area of work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community green grants (covered above) – this will begin with a pilot, but we would hope to sustain the work into the longer-term if we can identify a funding source. 2. WM Virtual Forest – the website will be relaunched this autumn to support efforts to reach 4m trees planted across the WMCA geography and help to co-ordinate the work of regional tree planting groups. A soft launch took place with local stakeholders on 24th September and will be formally launched to the public on 4th December. The guide on how to use the site has been included as an item under the natural capital solutions. 3. West Midlands National Park - we have continued to work with BCU to identify a full project pipeline to begin to deliver on the WMNP activity and the governance arrangements around it. A funding ask has been included in the CSR request.
<p>Electric mobility</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) programme being led by Energy Capital and TfWM is developing along two themes; mass roll out and strategic/rapid charging stations. At a strategic level Energy Capital are working with National Grid to position for funding expected to be released by OLEV shortly (Project Rapid). We hope to influence national funding to support schemes in the region such as the strategic/rapid charging station being developed in Ansty, Coventry. Here a number of transport and energy projects are being co-located to maximise benefit to both the system and the locality. Funding to develop the Strategic Outline Case has been obtained through Midlands Energy Hub and a draft report will inform the wider regional strategy. • Energy Capital held a workshop with TfWM on 11 Sept, which mapped all transport transition programmes across the region with the aim of understanding the future impact on the underlying energy system of these projects. This is part of a process to ensure integration of workstreams and cohesion of strategy across Energy Capital, TfWM and #WM2041. • Energy Capital have also been working closely with the data insights team and have compiled the energy and transport data which we have access to, into an online portal, which will showcase the work being undertaken on local energy systems.
<p>Reviewing the West Midlands Transport Plan</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In July 2020 WMCA Board approved the approach and timescale to update the statutory transport plan for the West Midlands in order to reflect the objectives of WM2041 and the regional economic recovery strategy. As part of this Board approved the development and publication for consultation of a transport green paper, which will form part of an on-going dialogue to explore how the transport system can continue to be developed towards an inclusive, de-carbonised and integrated system, connecting lives and livelihoods cleanly and safely. • To support this TfWM have undertaken a programme of market research and engagement to establish the appetite for travel behaviour change, new transport technology adoption, flexible working and uptake of consumer, freight and logistics behaviours in the West Midlands in a post COVID world.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Transport Board are due to consider the Green Paper in January ahead of publication and engagement in January and February 2021. A draft new West Midlands Local Transport Plan is slated for consultation in autumn 2021.
<p>Disclosing carbon emissions to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a global initiative, which includes private and public sector organisations reporting on their activities to address carbon emissions, as well as their progress towards reduction targets. WMCA Environment Team submitted the report in August and were recently awarded a B.
<p>WM2041 Business Pledge</p> <p>#WM2041</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea of a WM2041 business pledge came through the Mayor’s Economic Impact Group (EIG) in summer 2020. • The Environment Team subsequently held an online workshop with ten EIG businesses and business network leaders of different sizes and sectors in September, to help shape the scope of a pledge and to propose actions that would support its delivery. Sustainability West Midlands are now engaged in the finalising the pledge and action plan, to ensure it aligns with other regional business networks and provides real value to businesses in the region, whilst supporting delivery of WM2041. • The Pledge will launch in early 2021.

3. Five Year Plan 2021-26

Background

The five-year delivery plans (four in total) will provide targets, interim carbon budgets and other metrics in support of delivering the zero carbon target for the West Midlands by 2041. The first Five Year Plan (FYP) will provide:



Project Delivery

The Environment Team has commissioned WSP to help produce the FYP. In addition to the above, the work will also include a detailed study of the jobs and skills that will be required to deliver WM2041 and identify the routes to ensure they are in place.

Successful delivery will depend on the engagement of stakeholders in the region. This will include:

- Close collaboration with local authorities. Most local authorities in the region now have their own carbon reduction plans that will form an essential part of understanding the activity across the West Midlands and the FYP will group it into delivery activity.
- We are looking to engage with Leaders and Chief Executives to ensure coordination around strategy and delivery and how WMCA and LAs work together where appropriate.
- Wider engagement will also be required to build an ongoing programme with the people of the region. External engagement will take place largely through existing networks and includes:
 - Delivery organisations – e.g. utilities, other public bodies, private sector
 - Active participants and allies – e.g. those already engaged on environment agenda and working with WMCA
 - Passive / opposers – e.g. those not yet engaged but important to delivery
- WSP have costed the option of running a public assembly to get wider input into the FYPs.

Timescales

Project Stage	Includes	Estimated Target Date
Project start	Kick-off meeting with consultants	September 2020
Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholder mapping	September 2020
	WM Local Authority Working Group	Ongoing
	Internal Cross-Directorate Working Group	Ongoing
	External engagement	October/ November 2020
Draft	Produce draft FYP	November December 2020
Final Document	Produce final FYP	December 2020
Briefings and Approvals	Briefing to Environment Board for update	September 2020
	Environment Board for update	November 2020
	Environment Board for update	December 2020
	CA Board	February 2021