

WM2041 – Programme update

March 2021

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

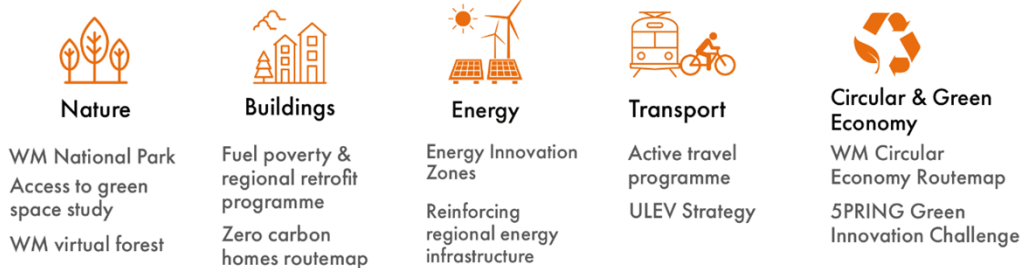
1. In June 2019, the WMCA declared a climate emergency and the Combined Authority Board received a paper from the Tyndall Centre in July, outlining the trajectory that would be necessary in order to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2041.
2. Following the production of the target, a 'green paper' was 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

West Midlands Green Innovation Challenge




- This WM Green Innovation Challenge was set up by WMCA with WM5G's SPRING Accelerator to support the work of innovative SMEs across the region, particularly in finding solutions to some of our most pressing challenges. 10 SMEs are currently working on the SPRING programme (touching on energy, natural capital, circular economy, build environment and behaviour change). The WMCA has been involved in meeting some of the companies on the accelerator to see how their technologies could address some of our net zero challenges. See [Ten start-ups pioneering new 5G tech in West Midlands](#)
- The Environment Team is also working with Birmingham Tech as part of a programme to support scale-ups with an interest in low carbon solutions. WMCA is sponsoring firms focused on net zero as part of an action from the Digital Roadmap. See [New 'accelerator' will grow start-ups that tackle climate change](#)




<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).
<p>Active Travel</p> 	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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



	<p>In addition to the Active Travel Fund TfWM will be delivering a number of community led projects through the Better Streets Community Fund. This £2 million fund is using £2 million of Transforming Cities funding to deliver 31 projects across the West Midlands all of which were suggested by members of the public. To date 9 projects have been delivered including: Upgrading three crossings in Dudley, delivery of Parking Buddies to Clifton Primary School and resurfacing of pathways at Woodgate Valley Park. The remaining 22 projects are all scheduled to be delivered by August 2021.</p> <p>West Midlands Cycle Hire was launched in March 2021 with the first phase launching in Sutton Coldfield with the supplier Serco. There is a phased roll out planned across all 7 West Midland Local Authorities with all areas expected to receive bikes by July 2021. In the initial rollout there will be 1500 bikes delivered 10% of which will be electric bikes.</p>
<p>Reinforcing the region's energy infrastructure to support green growth</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 local stakeholders is discernible and meaningful. They are now engaging with the DNO, Local Authorities and LEPs to formalise this approach. • 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. • No response has been received from Government to date, despite it being widely circulated. This programme therefore remains unfunded. However, in anticipation of resources becoming available from Government in the autumn CSR, the Mayor has agreed to declare the region a Net Zero Pathfinder and establish a net zero delivery board which will focus on coordinating infrastructure and investment in the region to enable net zero by 2041.
<p>Community Green Grants pilot</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data that has previously been provided by the New Economics Foundation has now been turned into a dashboard to support a programme of Community Green Grants across the region. The purpose of these will be to redress the regional inequalities in access to green space. A financial ask for this grant programme is contained within the WM2041 Five Year Plan paper going to the March CA Board.


Communications and behaviour change #WM2041	<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. WMCA has appointed consultants to support this work and produce a behaviour change strategy and action plan by mid-2021. 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.
West Midlands Green Financing	<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. A Green and Social Finance Working Group has been established at the WMCA.</p>

2. 12-month priorities: acceleration and embedding phase

A regional retrofit programme 	<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. 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. The above work will be complete by the end of the financial year, with strategic business cases developed to inform a detailed programme of work to build the foundations to address the huge fuel poverty and retrofit challenge (and opportunity) highlighted by the Five Year Plan. This includes a series of actions and associated resource requirements set out in the March 2021 CA Board Paper on the Five Year Plan.
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<p>Zero carbon homes charter and routemap</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In January 2021, the Housing & Land Delivery Board agreed the principles and contents of the Zero Carbon Homes Charter and Routemap. These documents would guide WMCA's approach to meeting its commitment to delivering a ZCH standard by 2025, and to meet net zero carbon by 2041, with an initial series of priority actions identified for implementation in 2021. • The Charter frames WMCA's commitment to, and objectives for, net-zero carbon homes in the region. In this regard, the document is vision-setting with a focus on delivering co-benefits such as whole life cost savings, supply chain opportunities, improved health and wellbeing, community enablement and future-proofing of economic sectors. • The Routemap provides an implementation plan for delivering the charter's vision. It identifies a number of interim low carbon requirements and aspirational targets to 2025 and beyond. The purpose of these requirements/targets is to ease the transition to net zero carbon, beginning this year. • To support this transition, the routemap also sets out short and medium term actions, including priority actions to begin in 2021. Officers are now exploring options for implementing both the requirements/targets and priority actions.
<p>WM Circular Economy routemap and action plan</p> 	<p>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 has commissioned Useful Projects to work with the Taskforce to produce the routemap, which will identify the social, economic and environmental opportunities under a more circular approach, as well as the enabling and strategic actions to get there. The routemap will also focus in on three significant investment areas for circular economy opportunities. The routemap will be produced by early summer 2021.</p>
<p>Green neighbourhoods, natural capital and a WM National Park</p> 	<p>There are six different projects within this area of work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WM Virtual Forest – the website was relaunched in December 2020 to support efforts to reach 4m trees planted across the WMCA geography and co-ordinate the work of regional tree planting groups. Covid-19 restrictions have limited the amount of trees planted since launch but planting efforts and co-ordination will recommence for the 2021/22 planting season. 2. 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. 3. Natural Capital Plan – WMCA has been working with regional partners to produce a Plan, which is being presented in draft to the Environment and Energy Board in March 2021. The relevant papers are attached for this meeting.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. 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. A funding ask was included in the 2020 CSR submission and also forms part of the funding request to CA Board in March 2021. 5. We are working with Severn Trent to develop the concept of a Commonwealth Games Forest as part of the sustainability legacy from hosting this event. 6. We are also working with the National Trust to support their work on the Eight Hills Regional Park (which will be located in Bromsgrove), which compliments our programme of work on natural capital.
<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. • The result of this work will be an Infrastructure for Zero Emissions Vehicles (IZEV) strategy which will be complete by April 2021, ready for consultation following purdah. Resources to take this work forward will need to be identified.
<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. • 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. We are already in conversation with CDP on this year's submission.
<p>WM2041 Business Pledge</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 March 2021.

3. Five Year Plan 2021-26

Background

The five-year delivery plans (four in total) will show the actions required to deliver the zero carbon target for the West Midlands by 2041. The first Five Year Plan (FYP) will provide:



Project Delivery

The Environment Team 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.

The FYP is being submitted to the 19th March WMCA Board and relevant papers are attached for this Environment and Energy Board meeting.

WMCA Environment News (since December 2020 Environment and Energy Board)**February 2021**

- 25 Feb 2021 - [WMCA funds new training centre for mechanics of electric vehicles](#)
- 25 Feb 2021 - [New 'accelerator' will grow start-ups that tackle climate change](#)
- 24 Feb 2021 - [£30m investment in bus services through Dudley, Sandwell and Birmingham](#)
- 23 Feb 2021 - [Better Streets fund helps Wolverhampton families to get into cycling](#)
- 18 Feb 2021 - [Ten start-ups pioneering new 5G tech in West Midlands](#)
- 16 Feb 2021 - [New Gigafactory planned for Coventry Airport](#)
- 15 Feb 2021 - [Young people launch a vision for the future of the region](#)
- 15 Feb 2021 - [New Dudley bus and Metro interchange given WMCA approval](#)
- 12 Feb 2021 - [WMCA Budget approved and environmental protection given top priority](#)
- 11 Feb 2021 - [HS2 Growth Strategy set to turbocharge recovery](#)
- 9 Feb 2021 - [Plans to restore railway station at Aldridge](#)
- 8 Feb 2021 - [New cycle hire scheme launches in Sutton Coldfield](#)
- 3 Feb 2021 - [Draft 5-year plan published to achieve zero carbon by 2041](#)

January 2021

- 29 Jan 2021 - [WMCA unveils plan for region's digital future](#)
- 27 Jan 2021 - [National Express to run new zero-emissions Sprint bus services](#)
- 14 Jan 2021 - [First glimpse of how Metro extension in Dudley will look](#)
- 6 Jan 2021 - [Coventry bids to become UK's first all-electric bus city](#)
- 4 Jan 2021 - [Black Country takes step towards clean growth revolution](#)

December 2020

- 23 Dec 2020 - [Leading companies come together to set net-zero roadmap](#)
- 22 Dec 2020 - [New homes to be built on brownfield site in Telford](#)
- 14 Dec 2020 - [New hotline to help residents keep warm and cut energy bills](#)