



CITY OF MILTON KEYNES

INHABITANTS: 230 000

OBJECTIVE 2020: -40% OF GHG EMISSIONS SINCE 2005

OBJECTIVE 2030: CARBON NEUTRAL

OBJECTIVE 2050: CARBON NEGATIVE

SCOPE: 1 AND 2

Involving citizens with multiple digital tools

Climate policy governance and integration

Milton Keynes has the ambitious objective of becoming “the Greenest City in the World” as set out in their newly published [2019 – 2050 Sustainability Strategy](#). The strategy is a short refreshment of the 2014 action plan [Imagine MK2050 Strategy](#), an energy reduction roadmap compiling several actors’ contributions (academics, private actors, citizens, and community organisations), and as an output of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) initiative IMAGINE, for which Milton Keynes was one of the 10 pilot cities.

Despite the role given to local authorities in the [Climate Change Act 2008](#), the UK legislation does not impose local governments to produce action plans, nor emissions inventories anymore. However, main cities are required to produce an energy efficiency plan supported by [Energy Saving Trust](#). EST is a government-sponsored initiative from 1992 devoted to promoting energy efficiency and reduction for households as well as companies and local authorities.

Climate policy tracking

Despite a relatively small population increase (approximately 2.7%), the total domestic emissions in Milton Keynes have reduced by 87.7kt CO₂ (18%) between 2012 and 2014 to reach near 400kt of CO₂. Similarly, since 2005, emissions per capita decreased faster than total emissions, by 32% from 7.8 to 5.3 tonnes of carbon emissions per person in 2014 ([MK](#), 2018).

The projected total domestic emissions in 2020 is set at 360kt CO₂ in 2020. The city aims to be carbon-neutral by 2030 but mostly focusing on energy efficiency and mobility.

Energy Efficiency – Empowering citizens with a special attention to vulnerable households

The national legislation¹ requires Milton Keynes to report every 2 years on the improvements of energy

efficiency for houses with particular attention payed to poor households in areas off the main gas grid which covers 90% of households. Home Energy Conservation (HECA) Reports involve a production of [energy maps of the city](#), a review of relevant policies and plans, and recommendation for the Council for further effective measures. The last 2017 Progress Report shows that 6% of households (6,500) were still considered to be in fuel poverty, but that two thirds of cavity wall domestic houses (which represent 76% of MK’s domestic housing) have been insulated. To carry out further regeneration, a new company, [Your MK](#), has been formed, as a partnership between Milton Keynes Council and Mears Group PLC. Your MK currently provides repairs and maintenance to the Council’s housing stock (HECA 2017).

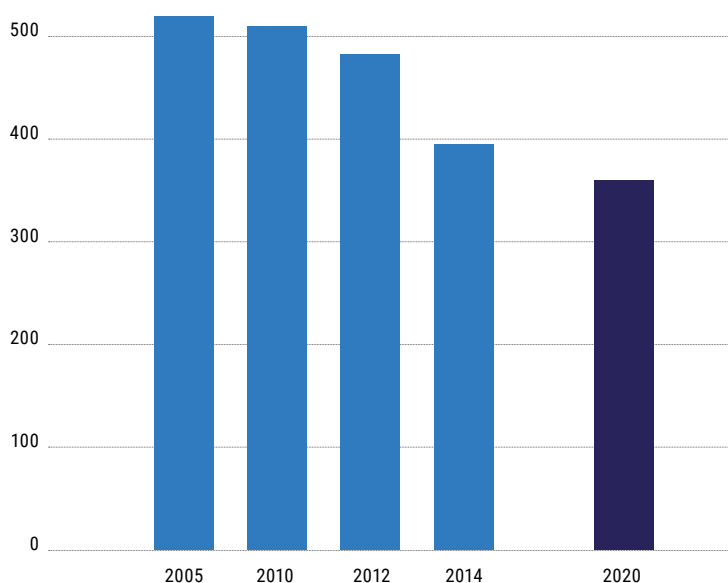
To further address energy poverty, the Council funded the [Green Star Energy Cosy Homes](#) that helps citizens who are most vulnerable, offering expert advice, support services, improvements assessments, and grants for energy efficiency measures. Milton Keynes plans to leverage private sector financing to support the regeneration of its poorest estates.

Lastly, MK acts as an interface between actors and citizens to facilitate energy efficiency projects through several platforms such as [“Efficient Houses Tours”](#) offering public visits, a free helpline [“Keep Warm MK”](#) for energy savings advices. [CAPE](#), the Community Action Platform for Energy project, is the flagship multi-actor partnership between the Council, and various private and research actors. It aims at reducing energy bills for residents and emissions from buildings by developing an interactive website designed to assess energy use for individuals and communities in Milton Keynes. It provides users with data and information on energy choices using satellite imagery. The first community field trial occurred in 2017 on the Lakes Estate district to swap community members’ bulbs for LED lightbulbs ([Community Action:MK](#), 2017).

¹ [The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995](#) (‘HECA’) requires all 326 local authorities in England to submit reports to the Secretary of State demonstrating what energy conservation measures they have adopted to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation within their area.

MILTON KEYNES - CO₂ EMISSIONS 2005-2014 [KTCO₂]

Source: Home Energy Conservation Act Progress Report 2017



Mobility – A preference for soft incentives over restrictions

As a recent city built in 1967, Milton Keynes is designed for cars, making the shift towards sustainable mobility difficult. [The Living Streets Community Project](#), funded by the European Commission's Life programme, is a first step towards car restriction and change of habits. The project temporarily transforms streets into community areas with space for neighbours and families to socialise. The municipality had to cope with residents' opposition, so meetings were arranged with local clubs, residents' associations, to share mutual goals and benefits ([Energy Cities](#), 2018). To bolster the use of the 250 km "redways" dedicated to walk and cycle, "Beat the Street" programme supported by the UK government, turns cities into a game where people earn points as they walk, cycle, and run.

Milton Keynes was part of the consortium [CitiZEN](#), coordinated by Energy Cities along with 5 other cities all over Europe from 2015 to 2017. The purpose of the project funded by the 'Europe for Citizens' programme, is to create a permanent working group on mobility which recent achievements are to be highlighted:

- The electric bus scheme has been successful and in 2016 Milton Keynes was awarded a Government grant to increase the fleet by a further 11 buses;
- [Self-driving small pods](#) (autonomous vehicles) have been tested out in Milton Keynes, as part of the "[Catapult Transport Systems](#)" mobility research programmes;
- The MK:Smart project has produced the [MotionMap](#) app, providing citizens with information on parking availability, traffic congestion, and public transport.

Concluded in 2017, the project was followed up by CityLabs – a collaborative place for SMEs to work with academic and industry leaders (ERDF, The Open University, ZTE, and Fronesys) to develop new digital products and services.

Finally, MK also received 9 million pounds in 2016 for a national grant scheme, "Go Ultra Low City Scheme" of the Department for Transport, which aims to boost electric car. MK has thus created an [Electric Vehicle Experience Centre](#) – a 'one stop shop' providing consumer advice and short-term vehicle loans – which opened up 20,000 parking bays for free to EVs; installed charging hubs; priority in bus lanes. Milton Keynes now has over 250 charging posts and 70 rapid chargers.

ADAPTATION

ADDRESSING AND ANTICIPATING WATER SCARCITY

[POWER](#) (Political and sOcial awareness on Water EnviRonmental challenges) is a 4-year [Horizon2020](#) funded project and coordinated with De Montfort University (2015/2019), covering 4 European pilot cities. In Milton Keynes the project focused on water management. POWER set up a Digital Social Platform where participants will be able to share opinions, progress, best practices, and compare the cities involved. The aim is, thanks to the 'network effect', to enable citizens to make informed decisions and develop local strategies in response to climate change.

Milton Keynes communities now have their own platform, the [Milton Keynes Water Community](#), where events, competitions, and pieces of information are shared.