



# Carbon Steering Group Bulletin

## February 2023

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### Introduction

Welcome to the MHA+ Carbon 'Net Zero' bulletin, hosted by the MHA+ Carbon Steering Group chaired by Chris Green from Leicestershire County Council.

This bulletin is designed to provide a regular focus and update for MHA+ Members about the wide and varied work going on in relation to the carbon reduction agenda across the Highways sector.

The MHA+ and its membership of 35 Local Authorities have a major impact in terms of their carbon footprint. This also provides a strong opportunity to make a difference in terms of reducing our carbon footprint in the highways sector.

If you want more information about the bulletin, contribute, or learn more about MHA+ Carbon Steering Group, please contact MHA+ Support, [Ian Bamforth](#) or give him a ring on **07842 034616**.

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### CSG activity over the last three months:

**Bio- Asphalts project** – The group is supporting the work MHA+ member Lancashire County Council are leading, which is about the development of bio-asphalts, with increased levels of biogenic content. This ground-breaking trial, if taken forward, would see significant benefits for carbon reduction in materials used on highways.



**'Value of Carbon'** – The NHT/CQC team presented their current progress on the development of a forecasting tool for the value of carbon in the maintenance of carriageways, at the last CSG meeting. NHT are working with Leicestershire and MHA+ in the development and verification of what is potentially a new approach to measuring and understanding the impacts of highway maintenance in terms of carbon.

**Member baseline Net Zero info** – The group is gathering info on MHA+ member authority carbon reduction activity, including the declaration of climate emergency, net zero target dates, DfT Incentive Fund response to sustainability questions, carbon reduction policies/strategies, and climate change adaptations, etc. Once this is completed, it will help

MHA+ understand where different members are in their journey and help identify opportunities for sharing good practice.

**Warm Temperature Asphalt** – Working in liaison with the MHA+ Highways Asset Management Group, the CSG is seeking to secure an understanding of the levels of use of WTA and, importantly, the potential barriers to its use. If you would like to contribute, please contact [Ian Bamforth](#) directly.

**Live Labs 2, UK Centre of Excellence for Decarbonisation of Materials for the Midlands** – The CSG and MHA+ have supported the successful bid put forward by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM). TfWM’s Mark Corbin (Director of Network Resilience) said “We are truly delighted to be part of the [ADEPT](#) Live Lab 2 programme.



Our focus over the three years of our Live Lab will be the creation of a UK Collaboration Centre of Excellence for Decarbonisation of Materials. This will provide a centralised hub for research and innovation for the decarbonisation of highways. It will be one programme across two campuses – the north campus will be hosted by [North Lanarkshire Council](#) and we at [Transport for West Midlands](#) will be the south campus.

Together with our industry partners, academic institutions, and public sector bodies, we will develop a knowledge bank, test materials in real-life conditions, share learning and embed new approaches and materials across the highways sector. This is a significant opportunity to shape the future and for the UK to be a global leader in this space and I am truly excited to be on this journey.”

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## Key Legislation & Policy

If you want to find out more about Carbon & Net Zero related legislation & policy, please visit our Autumn 2022 [CSG Bulletin](#).

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## Regional and National Organisations

**FHRG** – The Future Highways Research Group is currently in the final stage of the development of the Carbon Calculator/Accounting Standard for scope 3 activity in highways. With its launch expected this spring/summer.

The aim of the calculator is to provide a consistent approach and methodology for local authorities to use when measuring and accounting for carbon as they work towards carbon reduction across highway-related service areas.

Seven authorities, including five MHA Plus members (Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire, Staffordshire, and Warwickshire) have been selected to take part in the CCAS Pioneer Programme which is helping to test and shape the carbon accounting standard.

Trials are in their latter stages, including a scoping exercise to ensure all highway activities are included. Once a baseline is established, authorities will then be able to begin the task of seeking out carbon reduction opportunities and test various treatment /operational scenarios against consistent carbon accounting metrics.

**[ADEPT: Live Labs 2](#)** - Successful bidders have recently been announced, with seven receiving a share of the £30m funding. Two MHA+ members are a part of the successful bids. Transport for West Midlands have been successful (linking with North Lanarkshire Council) see above. Derbyshire County Council are one of the LA's working with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council on their successful bid to decarbonise street lighting.

**[Home 2022 - LCRIG](#)** - This year's LCRIG conference 'Strictly Highways', was a major success, with a wide variety of topics covered including carbon reduction and net zero. More information can be found on their website by clicking the link.

**[UKRLG](#)** - The UKRLG has set up a new board that will focus on Adaptation, Biodiversity, and Climate. The ABC Board has recently held its first meeting and is being chaired by John Lamb from LGTAG. The aim of the Board is to understand how road networks operate and adapt to changing weather patterns as well as how habitats can be protected. Please see more information on the UKRLG climate board's first meeting [here](#).

**[The Highways Sector Council](#)** - HSC has released its Net Zero Highways Plan, with an initial focus on road users and capital carbon emissions. Find out more [here](#).

**[Weather and climate change - Met Office](#)** - Following a record-breaking year, 2022/23 is set to be another one of the Earth's hottest on record, according to the Met Office annual global temperature forecast. The Met Office has confirmed that 2022 was the UK's hottest year on record, with an average temperature of over 10°C recorded for the first time.

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## News and developing best practice from across the UK

### Electric Vehicles

**Midlands Connect EV charging point success** – Another success with five Councils (all MHA+ members) including Midlands Connect securing funding. See more [here](#).

**Transport Technology Forum support guide for EV on street charging** - The Transport Technology Forum's Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Charging Working Group, with the support of the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), has delivered a simple starter guide aimed at helping local authorities understand the challenges around delivering on-street charging networks for electric vehicles (EVs). Find out more [here](#).

**Highways EV paver first steps to launch** - Dynapac is planning the electrification of its range of city pavers with the first model going on show this month. See more [here](#).

## HVO/Alternative Fuels

**Surrey's Gritters HVO trial run** - Treated Vegetable oil to keep Surrey's gritters moving this winter. Find out more [here](#).

**HVO, views vary** - A key figure in the sector has acknowledged concerns around switching to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) and said that highways firms should not go out and buy lots more diesel vehicles. See more [here](#).

**Scarborough HVO Fleet trial** - To reduce the carbon footprint of the Council and demonstrate leadership locally, regionally, and nationally, Scarborough Borough Council has rolled out hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) into almost two thirds of its fleet vehicles. See more [here](#).

**JCB Hydrogen refueller** - LCRIG associate member JCB has unveiled a mobile hydrogen refueller which will be used to refuel construction machines. See more [here](#).

**Worlds first Hydrogen flybrid generator** - John F Hunt Power has bought the world's first hydrogen-powered generator with a flywheel system. Find out more [here](#).



## Guidance/Action Plans/Schemes and Materials

**Councils call for better Net Zero guidance** – Council chiefs have urged the Government to introduce a clear policy and investment framework that can help councils measure and reduce carbon emissions. Find out more [here](#).

**A new Local Resilience Act?** - England needs new climate legislation to ensure councils protect their areas from extreme weather, a leading local government think tank has argued. See more [here](#).

**Lincs County Council/One Network digital approach to TM and network optimisation** - LCC is working with one network to modernise its traffic management and network optimisation, and in doing so, meet the goals set out in its Local Transport and lower carbon emissions in the county. See more [here](#).

**West Berkshire/Volker Highways, Low carbon highways scheme** - VolkerHighways, in conjunction with West Berkshire Council, have dramatically reduced their carbon footprint by focussing on carbon-reduction techniques and materials. While working on a highway improvement scheme along the A343 Andover Road, Newbury, they have reduced CO<sub>2</sub>e by over 46 tonnes: the equivalent of driving 140,000 miles. Find out more [here](#).

**National Highways, Net Zero progress report** - The first annual report, covering the progress made over the past twelve months in implementing their ambitious net zero plan. Find out more [here](#).

**LCRIG report highlights actions needed for Net Zero** - A report by the Local Council Roads Innovation Group (LCRIG) highlights a range of actions needed to help local councils achieve net zero. See more [here](#).

**Asphalt Now magazine features several articles on carbon reducing materials** - Asphalt Now is produced twice a year and aims to present a comprehensive, balanced review of asphalt industry news and issues. It is an informative magazine, distributed to industry stakeholders and local authority highway engineers. Find out more [here](#).

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## MHA+ Service Improvement Groups Carbon Reduction activity

With 16 SIGs (see below) and over 500 members there is a massive potential to tap into our collective expertise and reduce carbon across all areas of highway services.

A few examples of Carbon Reduction related items groups have been working on include:

- **Casualty Reduction** – Oxfordshire County Council are investing £8m over the next 3 years in a programme which aims to create 'A safer pace for Oxfordshire'. The programme will see the introduction of a significant number of 20mph zones across the County with the aim of not only improving road safety but also encouraging more active travel, reducing noise, air pollution and CO2 emissions.
- **Highways Structures** – A representative from the national Zero Carbon Bridges Group will be attending the next Highway Structures SIG meeting in March 2023 to share their work on reducing carbon in bridges and progressing towards net zero.
- **Street Lighting** – As energy costs continue to rise, many authorities across the MHA Plus region are looking at ways to reduce their energy usage related to street lighting and sign/bollard lighting. Group members are sharing risk assessments that they have carried out around part-night lighting and dimming as they explore further opportunities to reduce energy usage.
- **Winter Services** – Peterborough, Staffordshire and Leicestershire have all installed HVO tanks and will be trialling the use of this fuel over the 22/23 winter season.



Casualty Reduction	Civil Parking Enforcement	Development Management	Flood Water Management	Highways Records & Searches
Highways Structures	Highways Asset Management	Low Carbon Travel & Transport	Street Lighting	Streetworks
Traffic Engineering	Traffic Signals	Transportation Data & Analysis	Term Maintenance	Third Party Claims
		Winter Services		

