



## Carbon Steering Group Bulletin October 2023

### 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 36 Local Authorities have a major impact in terms of their carbon impact. 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, to contribute, or learn more about MHA+ Carbon Steering Group, please contact MHA+ Support [Ian Bamforth](#) or give him a ring on [07842 034616](tel:07842034616).

### CSG activity over the last three months and looking ahead:

The CSG continues to provide a focus for all things pertaining to carbon reduction & net zero for MHA+. So, what's going on in the CSG?

**MHA+ Annual Event** – Members of the Carbon Steering Group led a carbon workshop entitled 'Achieving Value through Carbon Reduction' at the MHA+ Annual Event held on the 20 September 2023. Stuart Gready, the Managing Director for OCL Regeneration, provided a very interesting and thought-provoking presentation on recycling and the carbon reduction benefits it provides. Alongside a presentation and a tailored 'carbon take' on the national ALARM survey results. A lively debate took place with a group of expert panellists and event delegates.

- **Carbon News** – If you want to take a look back at key items and articles of interest, [previous CSG bulletins are available on the MHA+ website](#)
- **The National Highways & Transport Network (NHT)** - are in the detailed stages in developing their carbon tool to assess the 'Value of Carbon' in Highways for Local Highway Authorities. They provided an update on progress at the last CSG meeting.
- **Carbon & Transport Business Cases, linking to Active Travel** – Atkins gave an interesting presentation on this vital topic. Topics covered included whole lifecycle carbon impacts in projects, managing and reducing carbon impacts at each stage of the project, recording and audit trails. Also discussed was the DfT Carbon Mass Calculator and Atkins own 'Whole Life Cycle' Carbon Impacts tool and active travel projects and recording carbon impacts in reality.
- **Active Travel** – A broad ranging discussion took place about active travel; topics included the ongoing maintenance of active travel schemes, the development of a forward-looking 5-year plan and the need for 'shelf-ready' schemes to move forward quickly when the opportunity for funding allows. In addition, discussions on the [£200m Active Travel England fund](#) and looking to the next meeting for any progress updates relating to this subject.
- **Local Authority Development Design Guides** – Andy Jackson from Leicestershire County Council presented on the review of LCC's highways design guide to include the creation of a materials palette that considers carbon over the whole lifecycle. Encouraging green practice with green infrastructure and firmer specifications together with an environmental assessment element.
- **Devon County Council Carbon Measurement** – Victoria Walsh will be attending the next meeting on 11 October 2023 to provide an update on Devon's ground-breaking approach to measuring carbon in relation to all things Highways.

Presentation slides from the Carbon Steering Group meeting 14 June 2023 can be found on the CSG pages of the MHA Plus ISP

## Key Legislation & Policy

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

## Regional and National Organisations update

**FHRG** – The Future Highways Research Group is holding its next Waypoint meeting for members on the 12 October 2023. The central theme will be Social Value with a range of related topics around innovation, new initiatives and good practice.

The FHRG Carbon Calculation Accounting Standard (CCAS) is progressing well, and it is anticipated that the guidance notes for the standard will be released to members in October. Watch this space for further information.

**ADEPT: Live Labs 2** – The successful Councils are now in the early stages of implementation of their projects. At the recent MHA Plus Annual Event, Tracy Cowley (Transport for West Midlands) provided more details about the proposed UK Centre of Excellence for materials which will focus on providing a centralised hub for research and innovation for the decarbonisation of local roads materials.

**LCRIG** – The Local Councils Roads Innovation Group, Strictly Highways National Conference takes place in early October. It will without doubt have a range of innovations that link to carbon reduction and associated activities. The website contains the latest news and excellent articles.

**Local Government Association** – Hosts an LGA Climate Change Hub covering a wide variety of Net Zero activity in relation to Local Councils across the country including transport and highways.

## Carbon training & related content from MHA+ learning gateway

At the June 2023 MHA+ Programme Board, the issue of carbon-related training was discussed. A range of training content and presentations from MHA + suppliers is available via the [MHA+ Learning Gateway](#). They include:

- Roads Bitesize Training Programme – Partnership to improve Pavement
- Design optimisation Carbon Impact Assessment (ORIS/AECOM collaboration)
- PSP 3 Spotlight Carbon Management Plans
- PSP 3 Spotighting climate change action and supporting documents
- Green Team & Sustainability at home.
- Waterman Aspen – Delivering our net zero commitments presentation by Dave Allen
- Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain Training Module
- Lunch & Learn – Highways: Nature based, low carbon solutions for soil erosion, control and habitat – presentation by Alex Clark from Salix RSK
- An introduction to Sustainability & Carbon Management presentation by Stephanie Upton – Roddy (WA)

- ICE provide [recorded lectures](#) covering a vast range of civil engineering and topics and subjects. Use the search bar to refine – there are 165 carbon related lectures

## News and developing best practice from across the UK



### Electric Vehicles

**The Smart Infrastructure Pilots Programme (SIPP) is launched** - a joint initiative between the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) and the Department for Transport. [LocalGov.co.uk - Your authority on UK local government - 'Smart multi-purpose' lamp post pilots launched](#)

**Green environment EV charging station in Manchester** – [Highways Magazine - Definitely EV: Manchester charging 'Oasis' plans unveiled](#)

**Durham launches pilot EV charging scheme for properties with no driveway** - [Highways Magazine - Durham trials footway channel for EV charging](#)

### Materials/Maintenance

**Oxfordshire County Council finds Graphene increases roads lifespan** – [Highways Magazine - Graphene-enhanced asphalt 165% more durable, Oxfordshire finds](#)

**Article argues for more concrete roads to take EV load** - [Highways Magazine - Concrete roads 'better for the extra weight of EVs'](#)



**Lancashire CC trials new Biogen material** – [New 'greener' bitumen on trial to help cut CO2 in road resurfacing \(lancashire.gov.uk\)](#)

**Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City pick contractor with additional focus on low Carbon and Carbon reporting of maintenance works** – [Highways Magazine - Aggregate Industries gets nod on £47m Leics repair deal](#)

## Active travel

**New 'Sustrans key tool' for planning, policy and research in Active travel – [Highways Magazine - Sustrans releases 'breakthrough' active travel behaviours tool](#)**

**Active Travel England are considering increasing available crossing time for pedestrians at crossings - [LocalGov.co.uk - Your authority on UK local government - Pedestrian crossings lights could stay green longer](#)**



## Climate Change

**NAP3 – Adaptation & Climate Change Risk assessments -** The DEFRA National Adaptation Programme sets the actions that government and others will take to adapt to the impacts of climate change in the UK.

The NAP3 sets out the key actions for 2023 to 2028. This report forms part of the 5-yearly cycle of requirements laid down in the Climate Change Act 2008.

The NAP3 includes the strategy for the fourth round of climate adaptation reporting under the Adaptation Reporting Power. **Chapter 4 of the technical report (link below) sets out a list of 13 climate risks specifically relating to infrastructure (including highways).**

[The Third National Adaptation Programme \(NAP3\) and the Fourth Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Technical-Report-The-Third-Climate-Change-Risk-Assessment.pdf \(ukclimaterisk.org\)](#)

**Met office Climate Data Portal** - Launched in June 2023, this [data portal](#) allows local authorities and other users to explore a range of climate change projection scenarios (based on UKCP18) and how they might affect summer/winter precipitation, summer/winter temperature change, number of frost days and more. Data is available in a geospatial format at a locally specific level (12km squares) which means that climate risk assessments can be made based on local conditions rather than on a national average projection.

## Biodiversity

**Transport for London** are expanding wildflower areas to cover equivalent of over 18 football pitches. [Highways Magazine - TfL expands wildflower verges after trial](#)

**Leicestershire County Council** has reached a key milestone of planting over 250,000 trees as part of its Environmental Plan. [LocalGov.co.uk - Your authority on UK local government - Leicestershire hits 250,000 tree planting milestone](#)

## Air Quality

**Birmingham City Council** has launched its 'Brum Breathes Fund' which intends to invest in projects such as cycle racks, school traffic exclusion plans, sustainable transport measures and a range of other great ideas for delivering the benefits of clean air for its residents. [LocalGov.co.uk - Your authority on UK local government - Birmingham council launches air quality fund](#)

**Air Quality fund bids being sought** – [LocalGov.co.uk - Your authority on UK local government - Councils invited to bid for share of £6m air quality fund](#)

## Government/Guidance/Plans & Policy

**Road Surface Treatments Association (RSTA) Carbon Emissions Report & Guidance** - [RSTA CARBON EMISSIONS REPORT AND GUIDANCE LAUNCHED - RSTA \(rsta-uk.org\)](#) was published in April 2023. "The guidance, developed for local highway authority Asset Managers and other decision makers, will enable them to plan their future maintenance programmes and demonstrate the carbon savings they have made and are making by implementing whole life carbon and cost lifecycle asset management."

**PAS 2080 Carbon Management in buildings and infrastructure** – Was updated in April/May 2023. [PAS 2080 Launch | BSI \(bsigroup.com\)](#)

## MHA+ Service Improvement Groups Carbon Reduction activity

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

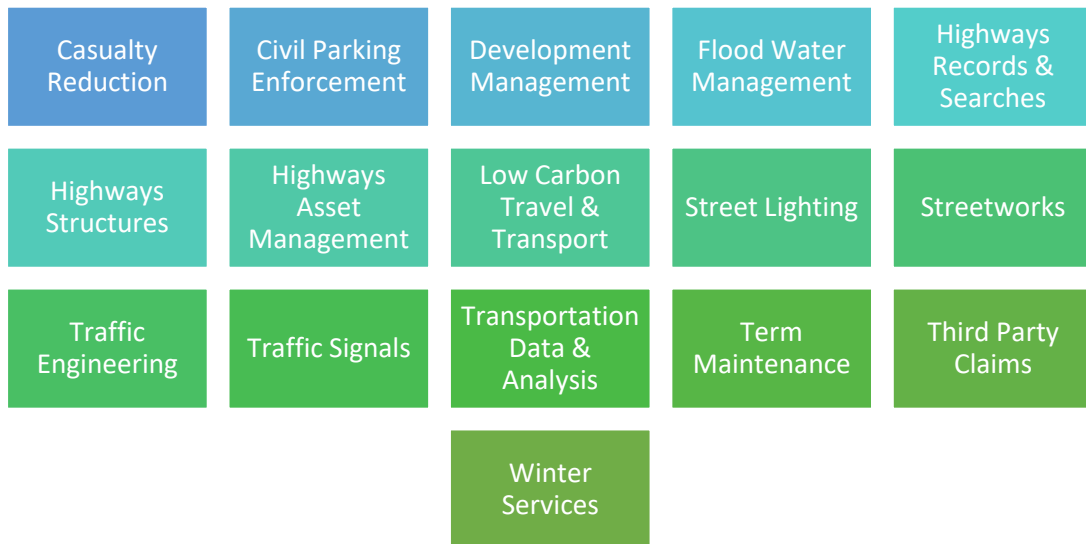
A few examples of carbon reduction related items groups have been working on include:

- **Term Maintenance** – The TMSIG meeting in May 2023 was dedicated to the topic of re-cycling highway materials (with a presentation from OCL), and gully emptying contracts/risk-based maintenance approaches (with a presentation from Lincolnshire County Council about their dewatering facility). By locating a dewatering facility within the county, Lincolnshire have saved 140,000 HGV miles per year and their gully arisings are recycled, rather than going to landfill. Details of the presentations from the TMSIG meeting are available on the [MHA Plus SIG members website](#)
- **Street Lighting** – Representative from [OG2 Lighting \(ogtwo.com\)](#) attended the July 2023 meeting to present on solar powered lighting. Some member authorities are already trialling solar lighting in parks (Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin) and rural areas (Derbyshire County Council).
- **Traffic Signals** – Group members discussed and shared examples of how changes to signals/crossings timing can potentially improve active travel by giving priority to pedestrians/cyclists/public transport. The link to [Smart Streets Use Cases - TTF](#) was



shared with the group as a useful resource which highlights how smart signal control can have a positive impact on air quality, reduce congestion and increase the uptake of active travel.

- **Highways Structures** – At September’s meeting, Cheshire East shared an excellent case study which showed how much carbon could be saved by using alternative energy sources on site (hydrogen/solar-powered welfare unit and Instagrid rechargeable powerpack), recycled/leftover materials, electric plant and tools, plus low carbon transport options when carrying out repairs to a damaged bridge parapet. Details of the presentation are available on the [MHA Plus SIG members website](#).



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