



Carbon Steering Group Bulletin February 2024

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 37 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, to contribute, or to learn more about the MHA+ Carbon Steering Group, please contact MHA+ Support [Ian Bamforth](mailto:Ian.Bamforth@leics.gov.uk) Mob: 07842 034616 or Kay Smith (Kay.A.Smith@Leics.gov.uk).

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?

- **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](#).
- **Journey to Net Zero presentation** – Paul Binks from Lancashire County Council & Vice Chair of the CSG provided a presentation over the journey to Net Zero for Lancashire & some very interesting statistics referencing where MHA+ Member Authorities are in relation to the results from the national ALARM Highways Survey on carbon matters. Also, a key feature was the 'Propensity to Change' for LA's and how this might be pursued in terms of

progression in materials and efficiency etc. For more information, please see below - 'Carbon Spotlight.'

- **The National Highways & Transport Network (NHT)** – Presented on progress with their 'Value of Carbon Tool in Highways' for local highway authorities. In particular, they discussed the results in relation to MHA+ member LA's who are also members of the NHT/CQC, with a view for member LA's to consider sharing their key successes and approaches to how they deliver their services in relation to carbon and efficient management.
- **Live Labs 2** – Tracy Cowley from Transport for West Midlands provided an update on progress with the Centre for Excellence & detailed that there will be an [Expo conference for Live Labs 2 Decarbonising Local Roads](#) hosted in Birmingham on April 17 this year.
- **Devon County Council & the Carbon Calculation Assessment System (CCAS)** – Victoria Walsh from Devon County Council provided an excellent update at a recent CSG meeting on the ground-breaking work Devon County Council have been undertaking on detailed measurement & delivery on carbon reduction across the board in highways and beyond. Victoria (who has been a key party in the development of the recently released CCAS developed by the Future Highways Research Group on behalf of ADEPT), gave her take on the excellent work completed and key issues local authorities needed to consider in moving forward with the CCAS guidance on Scope 3 activity and carbon reduction in general.

Carbon Spotlight

ALARM Survey, Carbon & MHA+.

It's that time of year again when we submit our returns to the ALARM survey. The Asphalt Industries 'State of the Nation' report when it comes to potholes and road condition. In recent years the survey has asked questions about our readiness as local highway authorities to implement Net Zero\carbon reduction measures and most importantly what might hold us back. At the MHA+ annual event held in September 2023 'The Journey to Net Zero' presentation looked at the ALARM Survey and how the MHA+ responses compared with the national picture. On a couple of key areas, the MHA+ responses were quite a bit lower than the national average in taking steps to reduce carbon in highway maintenance; particularly in choosing materials with lowest initial carbon footprint and selecting surfacing materials with longer life.

The supply chain is moving in the right direction in providing low or lower carbon materials and processes. But & an important but, what is our own willingness to try these products and what do our organisations need in order to implement them? From the group discussion, having faith in the product and improving our product

and process knowledge followed closely by the ability to estimate the impacts showed as the main areas individuals would like support over. From an organisation perspective, increased knowledge and funding were the main concerns raised.

The Carbon Steering Group during 2024 will develop an action plan focussing in on how best to address these key issues & work with members to share information on use and the benefits and issues therein.

The NHT Public Satisfaction Survey results 2023 – questions on climate change.



Since 2020, the NHT Public Satisfaction Survey includes three questions relating to climate change; how well-informed members of the public feel about climate change (CMQI018), how well informed they are about their councils' actions to tackle climate change (CMQI020) and how well informed they are of personal actions they can take on climate change (CMQI021). The table below shows how our MHA+ authorities are performing on this aspect of the survey.

Indicator	Best MHA+ performer	Biggest MHA+ improver
CMQI018	Oxfordshire	Warwickshire
CMQI020	Coventry	Coventry
CMQI021	Oxfordshire	Cheshire East

Regional and National Organisations update

FHRG - Carbon Calculation & Reporting Standard (CCAS) guidance for local roads – The FHRG with ADEPT has now launched its CCAS guidance and also has created a CCAS Kick-Start Programme, where they can work with local authorities to complete an assessment to aid the development of its carbon footprint statement for the highways and associated services.

LCRIG – Events for 2024 & Net Zero report – LCRIG have launched their major event dates for this year. The **Innovations & Learning Festival** will be held on July 2 and 3 at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire & **Strictly Highways** is on October 1 - 3. Both will no doubt have a wide range of carbon related items of interest as always. LCRIG's 'Net Zero' report highlights a range of actions local councils can complete to help achieve their Net Zero ambitions.

The [Local Government Association](#) (LGA) have launched their new [Sustainability hub](#). They have also reviewed and updated their '[Renewable Energy Good Practice Guidance](#)' which was originally published in September 2020.

Carbon learning & related content from MHA+ learning gateway

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 pavements
- 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 – (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/equipment

Good practice guide from LGTAG for EV charging points - [LGTAG launches residential EV charging note](#)

Solar powered signals could be game changing - [Solar Signals go ten months without battery change.](#)

Parliamentary all party push on EV transmission infrastructure development - [MP's hear about work being done to speed up connections to the grid and enable EV transition](#)

Transport Tech Forum help local authorities procure electric chargers - [TTF help local authorities procure EV chargers](#)

Manchester & Salford go for non-charging plan with all electric fleet - [Non-charging plan in Salford delivers cleaner air faster than charging zone, modelling shows](#)

Solar road stud solution - [National Highways details Clearview solar stud road solution in Staffordshire](#)

Worlds first fully electric gritter - [Econ Engineering announces 'landmark deal' for worlds first ever fully electric gritter](#)

Materials/Maintenance

Carbon neutral highways scheme in Westminster [FM Conway hits 92% recycled materials record](#)

Tarmac pilots 80% carbon reductions schemes in the North East - [Tarmac pilots 80% carbon cut to achieve 'lowest levels ever'](#)



Lancs & Aggregate Industries trial carbon neutral product – [Lancashire County Council partners with Aggregate Industries to trial carbon neutral product](#)

DEFRA keen to support more use of timber in buildings and infrastructure - [Timber lobby welcomes government support](#)

Dorset, Solar powered depot hotbox - [Sweet recognition for Dorset highways team](#)

New standards for concrete will reduce carbon impacts - [Changes to concrete 'recipe' will help UK construction slash carbon emissions](#)

Call for more surface dressing being a cost effective lower carbon treatment - [Investing in surface dressing saves councils' money in the long-term, says REA](#)

Westminster Council use more sustainable recycled road - [Westminster Council paves the way with new recycled roads](#)

Microcapsules research in potholes prevention could aid carbon reduction – [Microcapsules could prevent potholes, says University of Surrey as it starts new research project.](#)

Active travel

Public Accounts Committee, detail 'slow' progress on Active Travel by Department for Transport - [MP's criticise 'disappointingly slow' progress on active travel](#)

New Green Travel District in Birmingham for healthier communities - [New Green Travel District in Birmingham to create healthier communities](#)



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Transport Planning Society say current parking practice promotes car use and looks to recommendations for lower carbon impacts - [Transport Planning Society takes on 'hotly contested' parking debate](#)

Transport for London hails community projects for cycling and walking - [TfL awards funding to 78 new community groups to try to unlock the barriers to walking and cycling](#)

NHT/CQC & Leeds University 'Value for Carbon' assessment tool released - [NHT and Leeds release 'value for carbon' reporting](#)

NetZero/Government Guidance/Plans & Policy

Council for Net Zero Transport launched - [New body launched to help steer UK transport decarbonisation](#)

London Councils details skills shortage key issue in pursuing Net Zero - [Skills shortage 'putting breaks' on net zero](#)

National Highways 'Low Carbon' competition shortlist - [Four projects enter final stage of National Highways' low carbon competition](#)

Local Government Association launch Sustainability hub - [Sustainability hub](#)

ADEPT/FHRG launch new Carbon Calculator Assessment Tool - [ADEPT and FHRG unveil major milestone in highways carbon calculation](#)

Hydrogen fuel

Tees Valley Hydrogen Hub - [Novuna tasked with delivering hydrogen hub for HGVs](#)

Biodiversity/Climate

ADEPT video helps local authorities look at adaptation & resilience - [New ADEPT video helps councils deal with climate risks](#)

Second warmest year on record - [2023 was second warmest year on record for UK](#)

WMO details climate change impacts in 2023 - [2023 shatters climate records, with major impacts](#)

Met Office Climate portal - [The Met Office Climate Data Portal](#)

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/climate related items groups have been involved which include:

- **Street Lighting** – Group members attended a meeting and factory visit at TRT Lighting in Redditch. TRT (part of FW Thorpe Group) have been independently assessed as carbon neutral since 2012 [Sustainability - TRT Lighting](#)

Leicestershire County Council commenced a streetlight dimming trial in January 2024 which could potentially save 261.8 tonnes of CO₂e over an 18-month period. [Frequently Asked Questions – Street Lighting Dimming Pilot.](#)

- **Traffic Signals** – The Department for Transport has announced [traffic signal funding](#) to replace obsolete halogen bulbs with LEDs and more energy efficient solutions as well as signal improvements to reduce congestion across the network.
- **Third Party Claims** – At the November 2023 meeting, many authorities reported increased claims (up by 50%) due to extreme weather conditions/flooding over the last 6 months. Claim numbers look set to increase as the wet and cold weather continues. In recent weeks, many articles have indicated that this is an issue that is affecting authorities all over the UK. The previous record year for pothole related claims was in 2016 which was linked to the 'Beast from the East' snow/extreme cold weather event and whilst funding for maintenance is still a major factor, it is becoming clear that climate change and more frequent extreme weather is also playing a part in the accelerated deterioration of highways assets.

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		

For enquiries about this bulletin or to suggest any future articles, please contact Ian Bamforth. If you have any colleagues who may not have received this email, please share it with them, so that they can contact us directly to confirm they wish to receive our bulletin. Alternatively, if you wish to unsubscribe from this bulletin, email the Midlands Highway Alliance Plus.

