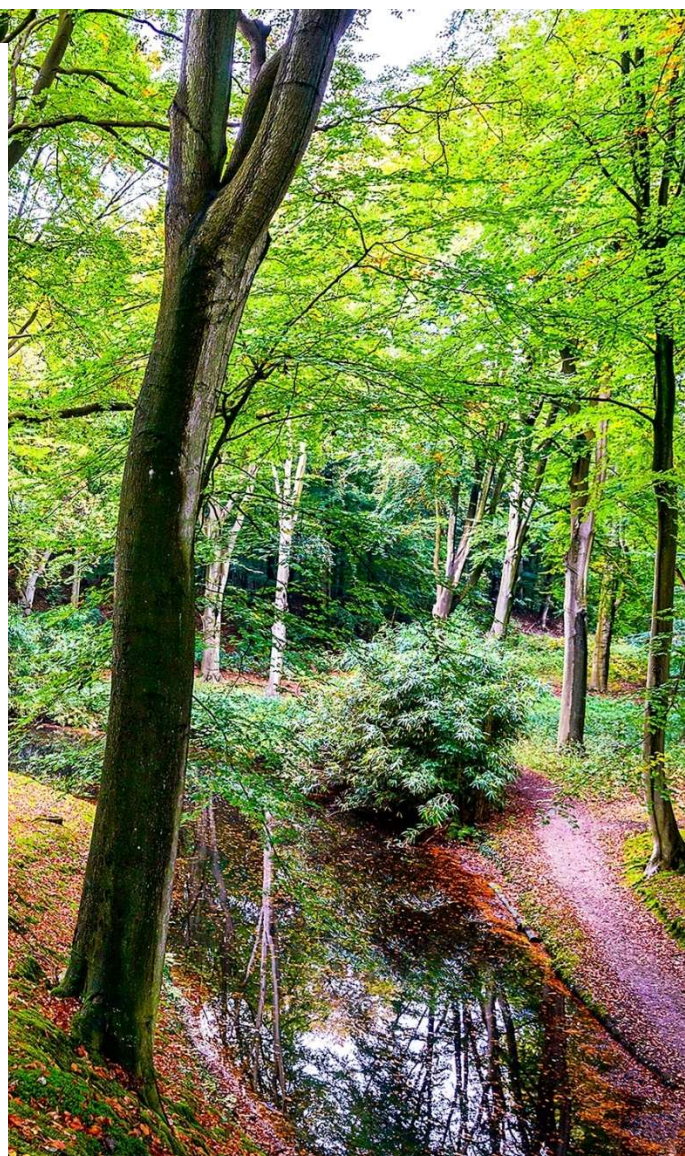


Dorset 2030

Living in a zero-carbon county



Annual Review

April 2023

V0.6

Preface

In early 2022 we published Dorset 2030 Living in a zero-carbon county, a comprehensive report that sets out to understand the crises we face and the possible answers from a Dorset perspective. Not because the county is a self-contained island but because it provides a sense of place, one we can all relate to, an area big enough to implement many of the solutions and contemplate self-sufficiency in energy, food and an environment in balance.

As well as setting out a possible vision of what life could be like, we considered how things are now, what we need to do to address the core issues and identified more than 150 people and organisations who were already undertaking the type of changes we need and setting an example for the rest of the county. We also assessed, on a 1 to 5 basis, where we felt each area was against the vision.

This review returns to the assessments and scores captured last year to assess what progress has been made. It isn't necessary to read the original report to understand this year's assessment although readers may benefit from cross-referencing certain sections if the background to an issue isn't clear.

As with the original report, this review was written with a broad audience in mind. While we hope it will be of interest to those working in relevant subject areas and those engaged in climate activism, its primary aim is to widen the discussion beyond the usual 'bubble' to help build the momentum for the changes required. Also, like the original report, it has been prepared by a team of volunteers over many months. While every effort has been made to ensure everything is accurate and up to date, we accept that we may have missed or misunderstood the occasional fact or piece of data.

We believe the climate and ecological crises mean the only certainty we face is that the future will be very different to the present, whether for better or worse is up to all of us. We don't expect everyone to agree with every solution we propose but we hope you'll join the conversation about how we create a better world for today and future generations. We hope by opening up the discussions it ultimately leads to the people of Dorset being able to choose their preferred path.

Mark Chivers & Neil Smith

Co-Directors - Zero Carbon Dorset

April 2023

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Dorset 2030

Executive Summary



In early 2022, we published 'Dorset 2030: Living in a zero-carbon county', a comprehensive report that set out to explain the climate and ecological crises we face and explore potential solutions from a Dorset perspective. This is our first progress report on how Dorset is faring on the journey to net zero while helping people lead happier and healthier lives.

Progress in 2022

Using a scoring system of 1 to 5 (where 5 is where we need to be in 2030), we assessed where we felt each topic area was against the Dorset 2030 vision. Sadly, compared to where we were in 2021, we cannot find enough evidence to show progress in any of the categories. This is despite clear evidence from around the world, and here in Dorset, that the climate is already changing. In 2022, Dorset suffered heatwaves, wildfires and flooding, disrupting lives and destroying wildlife.

Key findings

- *The latest available data shows a 9% reduction in Dorset's carbon emissions between 2019 and 2020. But, this reflects the impact of the pandemic on travel and business, and the decarbonisation of the electricity grid, rather than a result of local policies. Our view is that political will and action in Dorset are not keeping pace with the worsening impacts of climate change and the destruction of the natural environment. We call on BCP and Dorset Councils to show the leadership needed to help all of us play our part in tackling these crises.*
- *The hoped for green economic recovery following the pandemic did not happen. Indeed it has been made worse by the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis. We detect a small glimmer of green shoots recovery here in Dorset, hinting at what a green economic model and nature-based solutions could achieve. We need more and urgent investment in these areas, which will also help create 'green' skilled jobs.*
- *We have again found many inspirational stories from across the county which provide examples of positive changes at local and community level. Our hope is these will inspire others to make changes themselves. We believe, if enough people take action, our politicians will be forced to follow.*

What's in the report?

Exploring each of the areas covered by the original report we have returned to the original vision statements in the hope these inspire more conversations at community level. The more detailed, technical information about why each area needs to be addressed along with our research and observations about the current scenario in Dorset has not been repeated (this is of course still available to cross reference in the main report). Instead, we have chosen to focus on news from the previous year and new stories and case studies demonstrating the positive impact some individuals and organisations are already making.

We have included the Dorset 2030 artwork (below), created by Arts University Design student, Abi Buckingham, to bring the vision to life in a way we believe will further encourage conversations about the kind of future we wish to create across the county.



Conclusion

We need rapid systematic and behavioural changes to help us avoid catastrophic economic and social disruption from climate and ecological breakdown. The biggest change we can make is to use our votes, choices and voices to engage with local politicians, business leaders and our communities, to build the momentum needed to make the required changes now. To support this, we can attend meetings in person, or online, to talk about our project and how it can help inspire community action.

We hope this report will inspire more to join the conversation on how we can create a climate and nature friendly, happier and healthier Dorset for all.

Introduction



In early 2022, as part of the **Zero Carbon Dorset** project, we published ‘**Dorset 2030 - Living in a zero-carbon county**’, a comprehensive report that sets out to understand the crises we face and the possible solutions from a Dorset perspective. Not because the county is a self-contained island but because it provides a sense of place, one we can all relate to; an area big enough to implement many of the solutions and contemplate self-sufficiency in energy, food and an environment in balance, all encapsulated in our vision. We based the report on the Zero Carbon Britain report and reported progress against a number of categories.

As well as setting out a possible vision of what life could be like, we considered how things are now, what we need to do to address the core issues and identified more than 150 people and organisations who were already undertaking the type of changes we need to improve the environment for people and wildlife. We also assessed, on a 1 to 5 basis, where we felt each area was against the vision. The full report is available on our website www.Dorset2030.com

The intention was always to provide an annual progress report, this is the first of these covering the period through to February 2023.

While we have not repeated all of the background information in each chapter, we have republished our vision statements in the belief that envisioning the future is key to solving many of the problems we face. This review can be read on its own but referencing back to the original report may help set the context if this is not immediately apparent.

Who is the review written for?

As with the original report, this review is primarily written for individuals and community groups, aiming to provide a fact-base and stories which inspire people to act, whether through using their own votes, choices and voices or by joining and developing community groups. However, we hope elected officials and those in leadership positions will also recognise the great work already going on in the county and use their influence to secure the government and other support needed to secure the urgent transition needed.

What’s new?

We have included calls to action for individuals and organisations across Dorset to address the crises in a new ‘**Get involved**’ chapter. We have also added further details on the UN’s **Sustainable Development Goals** in the ‘**Justice for all**’ chapter and by adding a reference to how they relate to each chapter.

Dorset 2030 Vision

We believe that by achieving net zero emissions and repairing the damage to our environment, people in Dorset can lead healthier and happier lives, we encapsulated this in our vision statement:

By 2030 we have risen to the greatest challenge humanity has ever faced and, as well as preventing environmental breakdown, the solutions we have implemented have started to address many of society’s long-standing issues. The overwhelming majority of the population are leading happier, healthier lives. Communities across Dorset are more connected, work-life balances have improved and everywhere the return of nature is evident.

To support the above we have set out the following aims:

- To provide a vision, information and stories to inspire the people of Dorset to take action to tackle the climate and ecological crises;
- To monitor and report on progress on Dorset's journey to net zero and a healthier and happier place to live;
- To act as a critical friend to BCP and Dorset Councils; encouraging them to lead the just transition to a net zero county;
- To use a range of media to reach and connect the many diverse audiences across the county.

The illustration below, created by Arts University Design student, Abi Buckingham, brings the vision to life in a way that can be used to encourage further conversations about the kind of future we wish to create across the county.



A changing climate for people and wildlife

In the original report's introduction we outlined the science behind the climate and ecological crises. 2022 was another year which showed us that the impacts of a changing climate are already with us, with extreme weather events reported around the world and here in Dorset. This year's UK State of the Climate reportⁱ continues to show the impact of global temperature rises on the climate in the UK, reaffirming that climate change is not just a problem for the future. 2022 was the warmest year on record for the UK and is in line with the impacts expected as a result of human-induced climate changeⁱⁱ. Dorset is not immune to these climate induced changes, suffering from extreme heat with temperatures reaching 38°C in Julyⁱⁱⁱ, wildfires, such as the one in April that destroyed part of Canford Heath and which also threatened people's homes^{iv}, and floods, where in August properties in Bridport, Burton Bradstock and West Bay were flooded and roads left almost impassable^v.

Our wildlife is also in crisis. Worldwide there has been a 79% decline in wildlife over the past 50 years and the UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, with more than one in seven native species facing extinction and more than 40% in decline^{vi}, Dorset has seen similar declines. Dorset Wildlife Trust wants to see 30% of land and sea managed for the benefit of nature by 2030^{vii}.

The evidence is clear, we must act now to drastically reduce our carbon emissions if we have any chance of meeting the Paris Agreement average global temperature rise of 1.5°C from pre-industrial temperatures. But carbon emissions continue to rise and even if every country’s carbon reduction commitments were realised, we are heading for at least a 2°C rise by 2050. The existing 1.1°C rise shows us what we can expect.

As UN Secretary General, António Guterres, said at COP27, “We are in the fight of our lives. And we are losing. Greenhouse gas emissions keep growing. Global temperatures keep rising. And our planet is fast approaching tipping points that will make climate chaos irreversible. We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator”^{viii}.

What have we discovered in 2022?

In this report we have summarised progress made during 2022. Overall, sadly, we see no evidence to suggest we have made enough progress to change the scores from those set out in our Dorset 2030 report as set out below (followed by the generic scoring approach which is developed further for each section in the original report).

	2025	2022	2023	2022	2021	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Minimum target for transition >		3	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	5
Education	2	2								
Power Down	2	2								
Power Up	1	1								
Travel Better	2	2								
Buy Better Waste Nothing	1	1								
Improve Land Use	2	2								
Eat Well	2	2								

Figure 1a. Assessment scores from original report with updates for 2022.

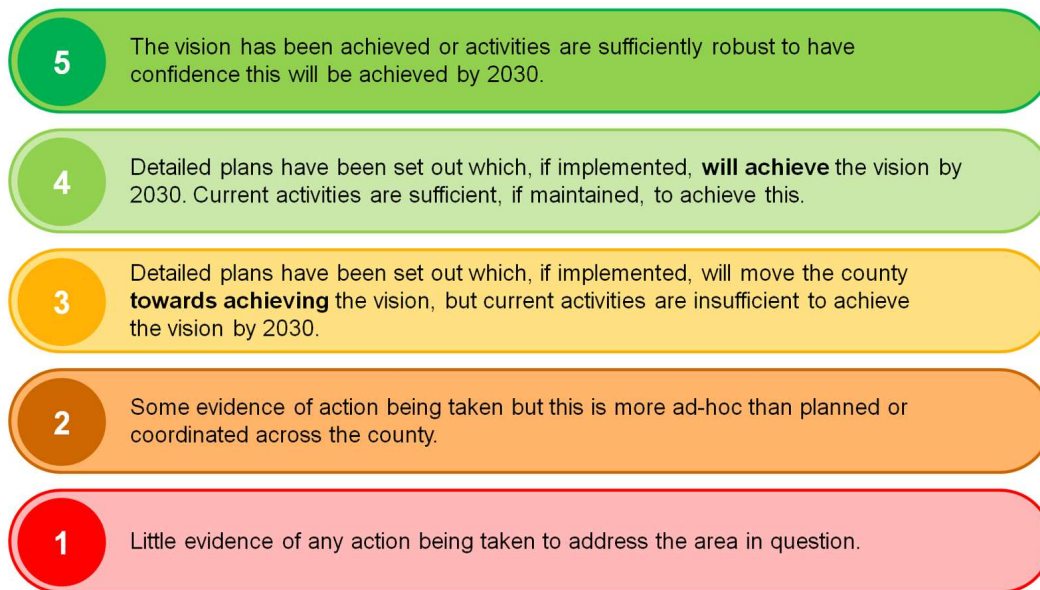


Figure 1b. Generic scoring approach

Key findings

The three key findings from our review are:

Carbon emissions down by 9%

The latest available data showed carbon emissions reduced by 9% between 2019 and 2020 (See figure). But, this is mainly due to the impact of the pandemic on people’s travel habits, the subsequent downturn for businesses and the continued decarbonisation of the electricity grid, not as a result of the policies and actions of BCP and Dorset Councils. As a result, carbon emissions per person declined from 5 to 4.5 tonnes. However, this is not a cause for celebration. It is disappointing more recent UK data is not available, particularly as the post-Covid landscape is showing a rebound of rising global carbon emissions^{ix}. Carbon emissions must fall further and much faster to avert the worst impacts of climate change.

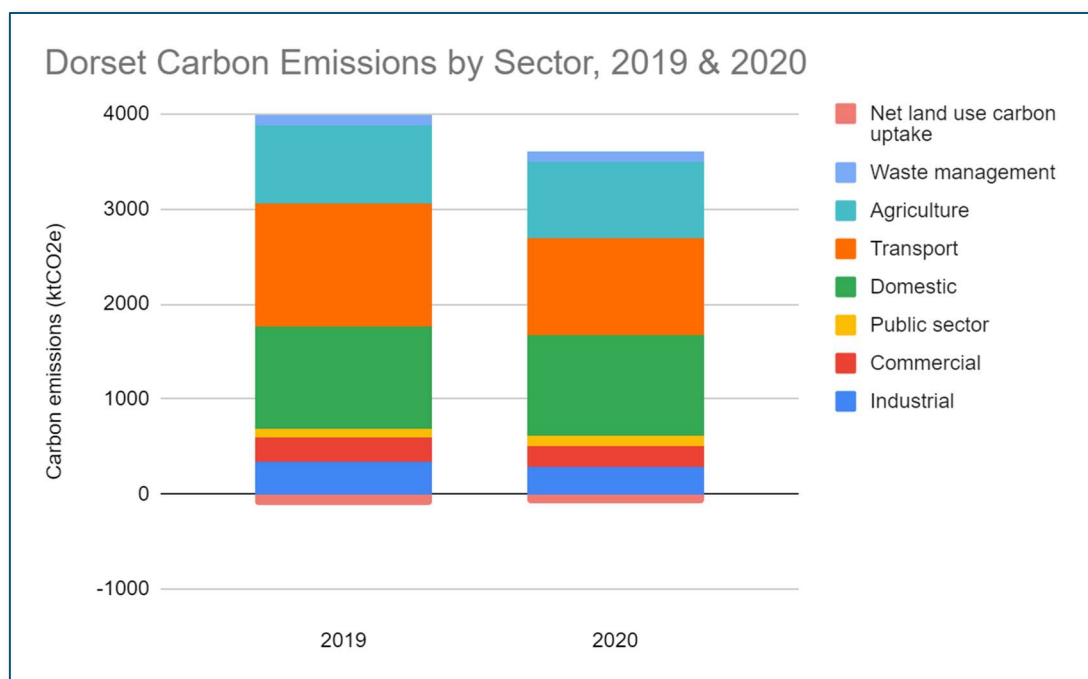


Figure 2. Carbon emissions by sector 2020 vs. 2019 (baseline for Dorset 2030 report)

Two things to remember about these figures. First, the total emissions is an underestimate, as the figures do not include emissions from air travel or those from manufacturing and transporting consumer goods (most of which is now outsourced to other countries, often with dire social and environmental consequences (for example, Ethical Consumer provides information on brand's impacts)^x. Second, the average figure is just that, an average. So some people will emit more and some less. Generally, wealthy people, because of their lifestyle choices, emit way more carbon than those less well off, even though the poorest people in society will suffer far more from the impacts of a changing climate. This is why the climate and ecological crises is also an inequality and justice crisis. In 2021, the top 10% of emitters emit on average 30 tonnes CO₂ per person, while the poorest half of the world's population emits just 1.5 tonnes per person. The rich should contribute the most to curbing emissions, and the poor be given the capacity to cope with the transition to 1.5° C or 2° C^{xi}.

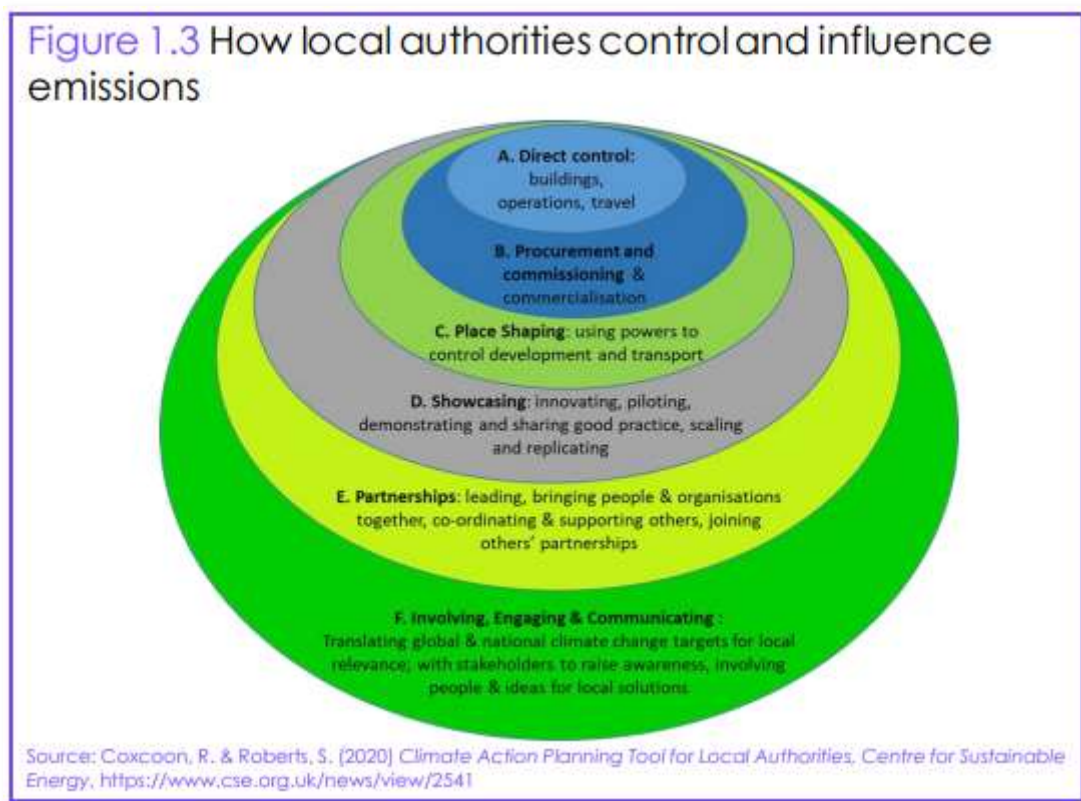


Figure 3. How local authorities control and influence emissions (taken from Climate Change Committee “Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget^{xii})

We need to see strong leadership and we call on BCP and Dorset Councils to act as if we are in the emergency they declared. This critical role was identified in the Climate Change Commission's (CCC) Sixth Carbon Budget report^{xiii}, which stated, "local authorities' leadership role in partnerships and with the public, places them at the heart of the climate conversation and in developing and replicating local solutions". The CCC also concluded that local authorities have powers or influence over roughly a third of emissions in their local areas and they can have a catalytic role in bringing together the businesses, academic, public and community and voluntary sectors together to tackle Net Zero in their local area. They recommended local authorities communicate and engage with local communities, businesses and partners on Net Zero so that a mandate for action is maintained.

The Dorset Deserves Better campaign showed the power of the community voice to affect change by persuading Dorset Council to delay and re-set the Local Plan to cut the number of new homes to be built by 2038 and align with their CEE. ^{xiv}.

Glimmers of a Green economic recovery

We had hoped on the back of COP 26, to see a green and fair economic recovery from the pandemic but this has not happened at the scale and speed needed. Instead the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis have overshadowed attempts to tackle the climate and ecological crises.

In 2021, a study by BU researchers showed there were two clear strategies to address the combined environmental threats of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss^{xv}. A comprehensive 'Green New Deal', which creates green jobs and nature-based solutions, which involve creating new habitats, such as forests, as well as improving management of existing areas.

We have seen some glimmers of a green economic recovery and nature-based solutions in Dorset and this is most welcome. A Poole based company has built and sold its first e-boats. **Poole and Bournemouth College** set up a skills hub to train people on how to maintain such boats. One year on, **Dorset Wildlife Trust Wild Woodbury** re-wilding project near Bere Regis is already seeing increases in wildlife and will help reduce nutrient pollution in Poole Harbour.

We need much more investment to stimulate a green economy, which in turn will help create green, skilled jobs.

Positive Community stories

Again we have highlighted stories showcasing all the good work going on across the county. But we need much more of this kind of action to happen and faster to make a difference.

What can we do to halt and reverse the crises?

In this report, we have again showcased all the great work going on in Dorset to tackle the climate and ecological crises and we hope it inspires you to take action. We need rapid systematic and behavioural change to stand any chance of averting the worst impacts of climate change and the destruction of the natural world.

There is a lot to do. Over 200,000 leaky homes need to be insulated and just 5% of Dorset's energy comes from homegrown renewables. The benefits are crystal clear, energy efficiency measures will cut fuel bills, thereby taking people out of fuel poverty, help improve their health and so reduce the pressure on the NHS. They also provide skilled jobs.

About us

Inspired by the work of the **Centre for Alternative Technology** and their ground-breaking **Zero Carbon Britain** reports, which have set out for more than a decade how we already have all of the solutions we need to address the climate and ecological crises, **Zero Carbon Dorset** was initially established as a general campaign to explore these solutions at a local level.

It was launched as a formal project in March 2020, developed by Mark Chivers and Neil Smith, and in early 2022 established as a Community Interest Company (CIC) with members of the community invited to join an Advisory Board. This provides oversight of the ZCD project to keep the project on track and propose ways to improve.

In Spring 2022, the **Dorset 2030** report was launched at an annual conference at Bournemouth University and during the following year a series of webinars have been hosted to provide an opportunity to focus on each of the chapters in the report, looking at priorities and sharing community stories.

General meetings and webinars (usually held on the last Thursday of the month) remain open, and free of charge, to all members of the public. All work continues to be provided, by all involved, on a voluntary basis.

We can also attend meetings in person, or online, to talk about our project and how it can help inspire community action. - just email us at ZeroCarbonDorset@gmail.com and we look forward to joining your conversations.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to everyone who has provided information on case studies, local stories and background information, especially those who have spoken, or attended and otherwise contributed, at one of our monthly events. Zero Carbon Dorset remains a community-based project and would be nothing without your participation. Thanks also go to the members of our Advisory Board, a cross section of community activists, professionals and elected representatives who have helped keep us focused on the right things and stepped in to help when we've occasionally got stuck.

Finally, we are particularly grateful to **Lizzie McManus** and **Beth Raffell** at **Warrior Agency** whose skills, experience and enthusiasm have transformed our social media presence, to **Matt Sheard** for the many hours he has spent building, creating, editing and publishing videos for our new YouTube channel and to **Abi Buckingham** for her fantastic visual representation of our Dorset 2030 vision.

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