

Glasgow Centre for Population Health
Consultation response to the Glasgow's Climate Plan

February 2026

1. Please provide the first part of your postcode.

N/A

2. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

On behalf of an organisation

3. Please provide the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of.

Glasgow Centre for Population Health

This response has been prepared by members of the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) team. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to Glasgow City Council's revised Climate Plan and, given our shared ambition for equitable population health through effective climate action, we look forward to continuing our working relationship in the years ahead.

Established in 2004, GCPH is a place-based collaboration focused on tackling Glasgow's health challenges and inequalities. Funded by the Scottish Government, the Centre operates as a partnership between the University of Glasgow, Glasgow City Council, and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Our work has sought to understand the deep-rooted causes of Glasgow's poor health outcomes alongside championing more equitable access to various health determinants. We generate and share evidence across research, policy, and practice, and by working closely with policymakers, practitioners, and academics to inspire fresh thinking. GCPH also hosts the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership (GFPP) made up of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, including Glasgow City Council, which have been working together since 2015. The GFPP developed and now coordinates delivery of the 10-year Glasgow City Food Plan which was launched in 2021. The Food Plan aims to improve coordination and collaboration between partners, and to accelerate progress towards a more sustainable, fair and healthy food system in Glasgow where more environmentally friendly, nutritious food is available to everyone in an equitable way. The GFPP is part of the UK-wide Sustainable Food Places (SFP) network.

4. What is the nature of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?

Public health organisation – research to inform policy and practice in relation to health and health inequalities in Glasgow and the wider region.

5. Do you think that Glasgow’s Climate Plan 2026-2030 provides a clear and detailed plan for climate action across the city?

Not as clear as it could be.

6. Are the Climate Plan and the Quick Guide easy for you to understand?

Not as easy as they could be.

7. Please share any views you have on the accessibility of the plan.

The revised Plan includes a great deal of useful background and detailed information. However, it is hard to say if the Plan is accessible to readers as it is not currently clear who the Plan is intended for. If the aim is to make it accessible to the public, it does not yet achieve this. For example, pages 11–15 contain technical language that may be difficult for readers without prior knowledge to understand. While this context is important, it could be presented in a more accessible way. Producing a summarised, easy-read version could help: this should explain why the Plan is needed, outline the proposed actions, describe how progress will be monitored, and show how people can engage with it over time.

The weblink to further information on climate impacts in Glasgow (p.14) should be included to strengthen the rationale for the Plan.

The progress outlined on pages 17–18 should clearly state that it does not include Scope 3 emissions. These pages should also briefly explain what Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions are, and link this to the later action on improving Scope 3 measurement, which is currently only noted in a single sentence on page 27.

For readers new to climate policy it would be helpful to clearly state the overall aim of the Plan and specify in detail what the Net Zero 2030 target is so that the reader understands what the actions are intended to achieve by 2030. This appears to be implicit in the quite detailed introductory text.

8. What are your views on the ambition and priorities within the Climate Plan?

Relationship to previous Climate Plan and Adaptation Plan

This Plan is presented as an update to the 2021 Climate Plan and 2022 Adaptation Plan. We welcome this review and understand that it builds on and reflects the Routemap and recent Scottish Government guidance that have been produced since 2021.

However, we feel the revised Plan would benefit from an explanation of how the new actions relate to the previous ones, or why some have been adapted or removed. It

would be helpful for the updated Plan to include a reflection on the earlier Climate Plan—summarising progress against its actions, indicators and targets—and to outline the rationale for any changes. In particular, the Plan should clarify which actions have been removed “following review if the challenge faced is too great for the city alone to deal with”, and explain the reasons for doing so.

Climate change, health and social justice

The revised Plan appears to have moved away from the previous Plan’s emphasis on addressing the city’s health and wellbeing needs through climate action. The 2021 Plan addressed these through the inclusion of the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ and ‘Just and Inclusive Place’ themes. The previous Plan included 61 recommendations which were framed around the Sustainable Development goals, which directly and indirectly related to health and wellbeing. Although the SD goals are mentioned in this revised Plan, actions are not framed around them.

As a crude indicator of this shift in emphasis away from health, we undertook a quick search of key terms throughout both documents. This identified that ‘health’ is used 8 times compared to 60 times in the previous plan. Meanwhile, ‘wellbeing’ is mentioned 18 times compared to 4, ‘inequality’ is mentioned once compared to 7 times, and ‘equality’ is not included compared to 14 times in the previous Plan. Climate justice is only mentioned in the glossary and we feel this is a particularly disappointing omission as disadvantaged groups are disproportionately affected in many ways by climate change and associated policy (see [Climate change and social justice: an evidence review | Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) for further information about why health and climate justice are important for climate policy, and examples of how adaptation objectives and carbon reduction targets can be achieved in socially just ways).

Related to this, gender, disability and ethnicity are important aspects of equality that are not mentioned in the new Plan. This is surprising given the wide-ranging evidence on the differential impacts of climate change on various equalities groups. It is anticipated that an EQIA would assess the impact of the proposed actions/objectives in the action plan on protected characteristic groups. If so, it would be useful to highlight this and to detail specifically what this will involve. It might also be useful to consider the use of the [CHIA toolkit](#) to undertake an HIA of the Plan. This could identify several useful actions in relation to health and equity.

Co-benefits of climate policies

We welcome the commitment to further developing public engagement in the revised Plan, recognising that citizens need to understand and support the policies and societal changes required to meet Net Zero that will affect their everyday lives. These changes may involve costs and initial inconvenience but will also bring advantages or co-

benefits in terms of improved health and wellbeing, cleaner air, job creation, and improved well-being. Highlighting the co-benefits of climate policies is likely to be a crucial factor in maintaining support for the climate transition and we welcome their inclusion in this version.

However, we feel that the health, wellbeing and equity benefits are presented in a very general way rather than as clear, intentional health outcomes. Overall, the 2026–2030 Plan recognises that climate action can support health, but it no longer treats health as a central strategic priority. It also lacks the stronger, more explicit health-focused adaptation and resilience measures that featured across the previous Glasgow Climate Plan and the Adaptation Plan. As a result, the city’s response to climate-related health risks feels less clear and less ambitious than before.

More broadly, there is not a clear pathway outlined from the actions and objectives to the stated benefits, or an explanation as to how the actions will generate the intended benefits. Child poverty is an important example of this. Most of the proposed actions refer to delivering other existing strategies, yet reducing child poverty by even 1% would require thousands of Glasgow households to reach an income above 60% of the median. While income-maximisation or cost-of-living measures within GCC strategies may contribute, they are unlikely to produce an impact of this scale. It would therefore be more realistic and transparent for the Plan to describe the likely impact in clearer terms.

Furthermore, while we agree that it is helpful to reference other GCC strategies as mechanisms to deliver actions and objectives and achieve benefits, articulation of how the Climate Plan further strengthens the delivery of those strategies and contributes to achieving the co-benefits would be more impactful. To support this, it would be helpful to provide clearer timelines, indicators or target measures for each objective and action.

Behaviour change

We note the increased focus on encouraging behaviour change and acknowledge that this reflects evidence presented by the [Climate Change Committee](#) that influencing behaviour change is a critical part of successful climate and adaptation policy intervention.

However, we would like to see a greater recognition that information-based interventions tend to be less effective at changing behaviour compared to measures that make green choices and behaviours easier in practical ways (i.e. accessible, affordable and convenient opportunities to implement new behaviours). Much of this can be shaped by the infrastructure provided by GCC. If a behaviour change strategy is

primarily focused on individual choice and decision-making, without removing structural and social barriers, then only some of the population will be able to change their behaviour. For example, an intervention targeted at changing individual attitudes related to recycling will only be successful if most people can easily access recycling facilities, or a campaign to reduce meat and dairy consumption requires more plant-based food options to be widely available. We would like to see the Climate Plan clearly and more explicitly link its information-based objectives to the Council's commitment to building infrastructure and environments that support the behaviour change required and to demonstrate good practice through its role as an employer and a service provider.

9. The Climate Plan highlights wider Benefits of Climate Action. Do these 18 wider Benefits help you understand why climate action is an important thing for everyone to be involved in?

To some extent.

Using the three lists below please select the top three Benefits of Climate Action that are most important to you

We understand that background work has been undertaken that has informed the Benefits that have been assigned to each objective. However, as we outlined in our answer to question 8, it is currently difficult to understand the anticipated pathway to these Benefits from the stated objectives. This would help the reader get a clearer sense of how climate change relates to some of the Benefits in ways that they may previously not have been obvious. As an example, it is not clear how the delivery of this Plan relates to child poverty. It is also unclear in the Plan how an assessment of the impact of the Climate Plan on these Benefits will be undertaken.

10. 1st most important

n/a

11. 2nd most important

n/a

12. 3rd most important

n/a

13. Do you think that the 11 Categories cover the key priorities for climate action in Glasgow?

No.

If you would like to give us more detailed feedback on any of the 11 Categories or any of the Objectives or Actions included within them, please use the space provided.

14. Are there any climate actions that you think are missing from the Plan?

Yes, as described above, we believe ‘health and wellbeing’ ‘impacts on equalities groups’ and ‘food’ could usefully be included as distinct categories.

General comments

Firstly, we think it would be helpful to provide (or signpost to) an explanation why the previous actions included have been changed. It would also be helpful to show progress against these actions, including any justification for not achieving them or why they no longer need to be included in this revised Plan. Given the long-term nature of action on climate change, as well as the long-term target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030, we would have anticipated that many of the previous actions would still be relevant and carried forward.

In the Action Plan, we welcome the inclusion of a column for indicators and target metrics. However, many actions and objectives do not yet have indicators or targets, and in other cases the measures provided do not clearly relate to the stated action. Each action should be measurable, with mechanisms in place to report progress. It would also be helpful for each action or objective—consistent with the previous Plan—to include a column explaining how it will be delivered. For example, the target to reduce car kilometres by 30% is important from a population health perspective, but the Plan does not describe the inputs or delivery steps required to achieve it. Similarly, the action to “improve the bus and rail network” is too broad to measure or monitor effectively. Transport-related actions, such as increasing active travel use, would also benefit from specific percentage targets.

Overall, we would welcome the inclusion of clear, SMART actions to support transparency, accountability and meaningful progress tracking.

Health and Wellbeing

The revised Plan includes less articulation of adaptation health risks. The previous Adaptation Plan placed clearer emphasis on populations that are vulnerable to extreme heat, flooding and other climate risks that have direct implications for health. In the current draft, these pathways are less prominent, which makes health adaptation feel more implicit than strategic.

We also feel that an opportunity has been missed to consider climate action impacts on health inequality. Scotland-wide evidence shows that climate-related environmental

factors (e.g., air pollution, extreme weather) disproportionately affect those with poorer health. This intersection isn't as clearly mapped or prioritised in the new draft's actions as it was in the earlier Plan.

Impacts on equalities groups

While we understand that an EQIA of the Plan may be undertaken later, we would welcome some acknowledgement of this. From a population health perspective, there is clear evidence that several protected characteristics groups will be disproportionately impacted by climate change and will require additional support to ensure a Just Transition. This needs to be articulated in the Plan, including actions which will mitigate these impacts.

Food

Generally, we don't think that food is given adequate focus in this Climate Plan. We don't think that food fits in the Waste and Resources section but that it merits its own section, or at least explicit mention in the section title (renaming the section Food, Waste and Resources).

Current food systems contribute to over 1/3 of greenhouse gas emissions, up to 80 per cent of biodiversity loss and deforestation, generate significant amount of pollution and use up to 70% of freshwater. Further 1/3 of all food produced is either lost or wasted. The planetary crisis to which food systems contribute poses a significant threat to future capacity to deliver healthy and affordable diets for all.

But while the food system is both a cause and casualty of our changing climate, it also has a huge role to play in helping us minimise global temperature rises and reduce our environmental impact, and to help drive positive environmental and social change. [Evidence presented by the CCC](#) states that two important behaviour changes that climate policies should support are reducing high-carbon foods in people's diets (e.g. meat and dairy) and reducing waste (including food waste). We would like to see a greater focus on these in the Plan.

Glasgow laid out its recognition of the important relationship between food systems and the climate and the need for joined-up action in 2021 when the leader of Glasgow City Council launched the [Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration](#) at COP26. As the first of over 100 signatories to this declaration, we would like the role of the food system reflected more, and more specifically (i.e. with clear and measurable actions), in GCC's final Climate Plan. Glasgow is also signed up to the [Milan Urban Food Policy Pact](#) which brings together cities from all over the world committed to advancing on the common goal of sustainable, inclusive and resilient urban food systems.

A sustainable food system has the potential to have a substantial and a positive impact on our environment. Supporting local food production, promoting a dietary shift, implementing sustainable food packaging solutions and supporting sustainable and regenerative food growing are some ways the food system can help mitigate the impacts of climate change. Such actions would also benefit population health and, delivered appropriately, could help reduce health inequalities.

While we support action 2, currently in the Waste and Resources Section to ‘ensure that Glasgow citizens have access to healthy, affordable, fresh food’ we would like to see more specific and measurable objectives related to these. For example:

Action 2: Ensure citizens of Glasgow have access to healthy, affordable, locally-produced, fresh food.

This should be an ongoing action, not time limited.

Indicators of progress could include: amount of locally grown food produced, consumed, procured; accessibility of affordable, nutritious food within neighbourhood; survey measures of food behaviours; self-reported data on diet and food behaviours; measures of food insecurity.

Opportunities to link this action to other GCC work include linking to action: to reduce food insecurity, to increase food growing spaces in communities and new housing developments, to develop market gardening in Glasgow, to the Local Development Plan. It should link directly to the development and delivery of GCC’s Good Food Nation requirements and partnership across Glasgow to improve the food system.

Objective 2.1 - Develop an updated Food Growing Strategy for Glasgow to align the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act with the development of Market Gardening and Community growing spaces.

Implementation should include:

- Delivery of Food Growing Strategy supported by Food Growers Forum and Internal Officers Group (both of which are existing actions within the strategy itself).
- Creation of suitable conditions for market gardens to exist, including mapping of potential sites, feasibility studies, pilot demonstration projects, training in agroecological approaches and development of growing skills (link this to the Just Transition skills development actions) and review of and support for the PMGC procedures for communities to take on land.
- Timescale and indicators: this should commit a full review by 2027 followed by annual reviews each successive year.
- Future food growing strategies should have targets, measures and be reported on annually (similar to the annual review process followed by the Local Biodiversity Action Plan).

- Targets could include: annual reviews of strategy, measurable progress in terms of new growing spaces.
- Glasgow Community Food Network should be a key partner.
- The Food Growing Strategy can help achieve aims and objectives of other strategies within the Council and other strands within the Climate Plan, as well as other high-level strategies (LDP, CDP, Climate Plan) but more detail on how the plans link and how this can break down silos of work and strengthen delivery of other plans should be developed.

Objective 2.2 Fulfil requirements as part of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act to deliver a Good Food Nation Plan for the city.

Implementation should include:

- Establishing and maintaining an internal officers' group to oversee delivery of Good Food Nation requirements within the Council. It should be led centrally with cross departmental representation and collaboration.
- The GFN objective needs to reflect continuation of the food partnership approach already established and support for existing Glasgow Food Policy Partnership and Glasgow City Food Plan learning and structures, coordinated across health, food insecurity and sustainability work to improve the food system. This is important if we are to avoid duplication or conflicting action.
- This should enable links to be made with other key strategies in the Council, for example, linking food growing and establishment of market gardens to market opportunities and procurement.

Objective 2.3 Prioritise the reduction of waste from food through communication campaigns to address appropriate disposal, prevention of waste and with the commercial sector.

- We would like to see this go beyond communication campaigns to commit to action to help prevent food waste with both households and the commercial sector. This should complement any communication campaigns and could take the form of pilot projects in partnership with other organisations, such as Zero Waste Scotland.
- We would also like to see the development of better monitoring of food waste (for example, in association with SEPA) so that there is data that can be used to measure progress on this action.
- Consideration could also be given to supporting composting projects seeking to redirect food waste from general waste streams.

We would like to see other more detailed and specific actions, milestones and measures that reflect the wider food system and its impacts on the climate. Some actions from the 2021 Climate Plan are still relevant and important and we would have

liked to see these revised, updated and included in this revised Plan. These are summarised on pages 50 and 51 of the 2021 Climate Plan and specifically include: Action 30. The city will support Glasgow's local food economy by exploring ways for procurement to support local businesses, ethically sourced, sustainable and healthy food.

Examples of how this could be delivered:

- Commit to the development and implementation of a GCC sustainable food procurement policy.
- Support Glasgow Food Policy Partnership's Catering and Procurement Working Group and collaborate with other public sector partners to build more sustainable food procurement practice across providers.
- Case studies could be developed that demonstrate ways that public procurement can support local businesses, ethically sourced and sustainable food, including increased plant-based options and reduced meat and dairy.
- Maintain Soil Association Food for Life Served Here (FfLSH) Bronze Awards for school and pre-5 meals service.
- Work towards other GCC food services achieving the FfLSH award.
- Encourage Sustainable Glasgow partners/Sustainable Glasgow Charter signatories to work towards the FfLSH awards.
- Support and promote the [Glasgow Sustainable Food Directory - Slow Food Glasgow](#) and actively encouraging food outlets to sign up.
- Partners could include: GFPP, NHSGGC, HSCP, Visit Scotland, NFU, Sustainable Glasgow.
- Indicators could include: GCC sustainable food procurement policy is implemented; No. of food providers with FfLSH awards in Glasgow; No. of food outlets signed up to the Sustainable Food Directory; Evidence from signatories to the Sustainable Glasgow Charter of their action to improve sustainable food provision and reduce food waste.
- Targets could relate to the number of food outlets holding the FfLSH award.

Action 31: Work with partners to develop communications and education campaigns highlighting the health and environmental benefits of sustainable lower carbon and plant-based food options.

Examples of how this could be delivered:

- Work with Glasgow Food Policy Partnership colleagues, including the Communications Working Group to develop and deliver campaigns which the Council and Sustainable Glasgow Partners actively support and promote, including through their food outlets.
- Partners could include: Sustainable Glasgow, HSCP, GFPP, GCFN.

- Indicators could include: Number of organisations (including Sustainable Glasgow Charter signatories) actively supporting the campaigns; public engagement in the campaign (e.g. social media data).

15. What are the most important actions that the Council can take to achieve the outcomes and ambition of this plan? How best can we work with others to achieve this?

In order to ensure that climate action supports health, equity and inclusion, and communicate its aims clearly with the public, we would welcome the addition of/more explicit focus on the following:

- A clear upfront definition of net-zero with an easy-to-understand update on progress and an indication of how net-zero can be achieved by 2030.
- Clear aims and objectives of the Plan. This should go beyond setting the context towards a concise articulation of what you are looking to achieve by 2030 and why this matters to Glasgow citizens.
- Increased roll out of renewable and low-carbon energy, including how those most at risk of poverty will be compensated, or at least not disproportionately impacted financially.
- Expansion of the circular economy outcomes by setting targets for waste reduction, reuse and recycling rates, and resource productivity (e.g., % reduction in municipal waste to landfill/incineration or increase in circular procurement spending).
- Monitoring modal shift indicators such as the percentage increase in public transport use, cycling and walking trips, and growth in zero-emission vehicle fleet shares (buses, freight). We would welcome specific targets on this rather than ‘completion of the active travel network’ or ‘increase active travel’ as share of mode.
- The inclusion of more specific targets around the restoration of green spaces and urban forests as a measure of carbon sequestration, biodiversity enhancement, climate resilience and the wider public benefits of more access to green-space.
- Inclusion of metrics for resilience outcomes such as the number of public buildings and critical infrastructure assessed and adapted for climate risks (flooding, heat), and percentage of communities with local climate adaptation plans implemented.

16. What are the most important actions that the people of Glasgow can take to achieve the outcomes and ambition of this plan? What are the best ways to support them to do this?

It is important that Glasgow City Council and Sustainable Glasgow partners support improved understanding and positive relationships with the people of the city by

building trust through meaningful participation, transparent communication and genuine responsiveness on issues relating to climate change and this Climate Plan. This involves engaging people early in decision-making, explaining the reasons behind policies in clear and accessible ways, and showing how their input has influenced outcomes. As a general principle, any action which causes inconvenience or increased costs to residents should be met with a clearly communicated complementary action. For example, extending parking charges across the city should incorporate measures which make modal shift easier. (e.g. improvements to the active travel network).

Being visibly present in communities and working in partnership with local organisations can help humanise services and reduce distance between the council and its residents. It is also important to maintain a public commitment to climate change in the face of external pressures. It is notable that the climate emergency terminology has been removed in the revised Plan in favour of a less contested language. Disinformation and other global challenges have undoubtedly reduced the visibility of climate change as an issue. However, given the irrefutable evidence on climate change and the [unprecedented threats to health](#) it is creating, we feel that the Council should maintain its more urgent position on the matter. GCC should continue to show public leadership and commitment to the issue.