

# Leicester City Council's Salix Programme



Leicester  
City Council

April 2022

## Communication to all stakeholders

We are seeing some excellent progress with the Salix programme which is fundamentally assisting with the decarbonisation of our estate and improving the environmental quality of Leicester. The £25m of investment in the last year has enabled the retrospective fitting of carbon reduction measures, is providing financial savings, and improvements to the internal environment of the schools and Council buildings. The switch to low carbon energy and reduction of gas reliance will help the Council mitigate the volatility in the gas marketplace which is well reported and has been compounded by the unfortunate events in the Ukraine.

The UK government has responded by publishing its plan to decarbonise the UK power system by 2035 ([Plans unveiled to decarbonise UK power system by 2035](#)) which is a commitment that the department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is tasked with delivering. Salix is a government owned company that administers this commitment on behalf of BEIS and have announced a further £1.25bn of investment into the public sector.

This newsletter focusses on the considerations that must be made when selecting Salix funded schemes and explains how the Council's capital programme works alongside this to enable continuous investment into our estate.



## How investment decisions are determined

**The Salix programme is a carbon reduction programme measured by carbon cost**

This means that the programme is measured by lifetime cost of the carbon it will save, which is fundamental to the local decisions we have made about our investment. In our first scheme this was set at a non-negotiable £500 per tonne. In practice this makes the decision of what to invest into very challenging and places on emphasis on the Council to supplement the scheme to address any shortfall where works undertake do not achieve this figure.

## There are limitations on the measures that can be affordably undertaken to achieve carbon savings on mass.

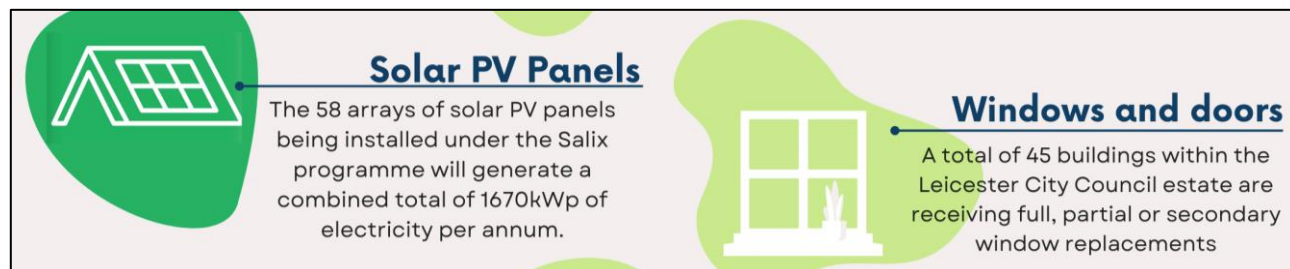
Carbon reduction can be achieved many ways, several of which can be funded under Salix;

- 1) Remove the reliance on natural gas (replacing a boiler)
- 2) Reducing the loss of heat from a building by fitting new glazing or secondary units.
- 3) Reduce heat loss by improving the insulation of a building
- 4) Reduction of the local energy usage by installing LED lights
- 5) Installation of Photovoltaic panels to self generate electricity.
- 6) Installing better heat controller technology (BMS or BEMS systems) and introducing a heating policy

### Rising material costs have affected the scope of works

The Council was fortunate to receive a large grant from Salix but in the period since the application to the scheme in 2020 the UK construction industry has experienced significant cost increases and a shortage of materials which has unfortunately meant our local scheme has been subject to a reduction in scope to remain within budget and time. Each measure undertaken in the programme is subject to constant review to ensure we are locally receiving the optimum carbon benefit per pound spent. In some cases this has meant removing or adding works at short notice.

Where this happened, we are endeavouring to ensure these works are included in our capital maintenance programme starting from this year. It is also important to remember that a big carbon impact can be made through changing human behaviours such as educating to switch off lights, or considering the timings of usage to avoid unnecessary heating.



The infographic consists of two panels. The left panel features a green circular icon with a white outline of a house roof with solar panels. To its right, the heading 'Solar PV Panels' is underlined. Below it, text states: 'The 58 arrays of solar PV panels being installed under the Salix programme will generate a combined total of 1670kWp of electricity per annum.' The right panel features a green circular icon with a white outline of a window. To its right, the heading 'Windows and doors' is underlined. Below it, text states: 'A total of 45 buildings within the Leicester City Council estate are receiving full, partial or secondary window replacements'.

### Time bound programmes

The Salix programme is subject to strict delivery timeframes which the Council must adhere to. This cannot be achieved without effective communication and coordination. The first Salix scheme has demonstrated what can be achieved in a very short timeframe. The programme will run in until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 after which there will be further investment into similar measures through other programmes.

### Investment for carbon reduction now and in the future

The Council has made a considerable investment into independently surveying its estate with the objective of understanding the potential to reduce its carbon footprint. It is this evidence that is needed to support bids to Salix and to enable the Council to plan for its future capital investment. For sites where an Air source heat pump (ASHP) has not been installed, these surveys included the production of Heat Decarbonisation Plans (HDPs) for each site to map out the local potential in the coming years. It is also planned to invest into better 'smart' metering technology in the 2022/23 year which will provide enhanced performance statistics across the estate.

## Using the Council's Capital Programme in conjunction with Salix

Salix is a decarbonisation programme; the Council is bound to Salix's funding criteria, and these firmly constrain the investment to those items that offer the greatest carbon reduction potential. The capital programme can be used at the Council's discretion to target investment into the estate without constraint. It is this that is used to fund the replacement of poor condition items such as windows and roofs across the estate whereby the carbon savings or cost per carbon ton does not meet the Salix funding criteria. In February the Council announced a £7.4m programme of capital investment into the school's estate for this purpose.

It is becoming increasingly common for the Council to undertake works from both programmes on a site, for example some of a building's windows may be replaced from Salix funds and the remainder from the capital programme. This happens when the entirety cannot be compliantly replaced using Salix funds and is an effective means to see impactful improvements in our estate.

In both schemes the potential to reduce the carbon footprint of the estate is a key consideration.

<h3>Air source heat pumps</h3> <p>A total of 28 sites are receiving Air source heat pumps under Phase 1 of Leicester's Salix decarbonisation scheme.</p> 	<h3>Glazing</h3> <p>A total of 7500 squared metres of glazing is being installed at across these 45 sites where window works are taking place. This total is larger than the area of a football pitch!</p> 
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## Finding the balance – school and service needs of maintenance versus carbon reduction

The Council strives to improve the quality of all school learning environments. School's immediate maintenance needs are captured by the Development Consultant Officers of Children's services and shared with us to plan for capital maintenance. The Council prioritises these against the two sources of funding to get the best outcome for schools and services. There have been examples of 'switching' schemes between funders in the interest of retaining compliance to their specific criteria, but the commitment to undertake the work remains the same nonetheless.

## Testing new technologies – how the industry is changing, and we learn as we implement.

It is important that as we respond to our Climate Emergency Declaration that we embrace new technologies. In most cases these are already tried and tested outside of the Council and are therefore only new to us. As we introduce these, which include Solar PVs and Air source heat pumps (ASHP) and Smart meters, we will ensure that we support these technologies by training our teams, training users, creating 'green' jobs and sharing as much information as we can. It is important that schools share this approach with us by engaging in our training programmes, tutorials, and maintenance arrangements.

The success of this scheme is now very noticeable across our estate and captured regularly in this newsletter. I thank you for your ongoing support in making this possible.

**Sean Atterbury**

Head of Operations and Facility Management  
Estates and Building Services