



Impact Report 2022/23



Creating a Sustainable City

Charity Registration Number 1177761



**Creating a sustainable city
via transport, food, energy,
education and advice.**



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Introduction

At the end of ecobirmingham's fifth year, we experienced our first full year without COVID restrictions. New challenges, however, included an energy and cost of living crisis, as well as one of the hottest summers on record, as the climate emergency continues. This impacted our operations and drove demand for increased support from our communities. We piloted a new food programme, Power to Eat, provided energy audits to community organisations, and developed walking and cycling routes as part of 69wards, helping individuals and organisations to reduce cost, fuel and energy use.

We were also recognised for the excellent work we do. Our digital growth earned us a Global 100 award as a sustainable community organisation, and CEO monthly's UK's sustainable charity award. More down to earth was the Queen's last honours list, where our Food and Gardening Coordinator was awarded the British Empire Medal for her tireless work supporting local communities.

We would like to thank our founders, The Central England Quakers, for their continued support, as well as our other funders and our dedicated team of trustees, staff, volunteers, friends and champions.

Dr Simon Slater, CEO and the ecobirmingham team





By **2030** Birmingham residents will have the tools we deserve to live healthier and happier lives.

Our Goal

We will be cycling and walking more, giving us greater opportunity to enjoy our city's shared nature, culture and community, as well as eating diverse and nutritional diets that keep us feeling well. We will spend the time and money that we can in ways that encourage fair, local and environmentally friendly products, jobs and volunteering. We will live in homes that protect us from extreme weather, powered in new and renewable ways, and we will harness the power of our local democracy to set a clear path for our city and our world.

Aim

To help 25% of Birmingham residents to start or continue a more 'sustainable living' journey guided by their values, priorities, and resources by 2030.

Our mission

Supporting greener, fairer and healthier communities in Birmingham.



Highlights 2022/23

1,937
attendees



There were **1,937 attendances** at our **241 events** and courses to improve people's ability to live sustainably.

4,000,000
people



We reached over **4 million people** through our media interviews.

431,600
views



Our digital resources were downloaded **2,485 times** and our content was viewed **431,600 times** over the year.



We worked with over **70 organisations.**

5,288
beneficiaries



We delivered events and activities in **28 wards** across Birmingham, helping **5,288 beneficiaries** from across **37 wards.**



As a team, we contributed **74 hours** to **24 different events** promoting sustainable living to **866 people.**

594
volunteer hours



17 volunteers donated **594 hours** of their time.



Our impact

We use Bioregional's *One Planet Living®* framework to measure the impact of our work across the city. These are simple principles which make it easier to live happily and more sustainably.

We ask a sample of all of our participants the same impact questions across all our activities.

Health and happiness



80% of participants felt their health and wellbeing was improved due to taking part in our events and activities.
81% of children were inspired to explore their local green spaces more.

Local and sustainable food



2,591 beneficiaries improved their knowledge of reducing food waste, reducing meat consumption, eating sustainably or growing their own food.

Equity and local economy



899 beneficiaries found our activities helpful in finding work or a voluntary opportunity.

Travel and transport



72% of participants more likely to walk or cycle as a result of taking part in ecobirmingham's activities and **65%** of participants improved their ability to cycle. Participants intended to reduce their car journeys (of less than 1 mile) by **48%** on average.

Zero carbon energy



2,115 beneficiaries improved their knowledge of managing energy use.

Land and nature



60% of participants improved their knowledge, skills and confidence in nature.

Materials and products



1,745 beneficiaries improved their knowledge of reducing and reusing materials or buying eco-friendly products.

Culture and community



65% of participants were inspired to take positive environmental action. **90%** of participants were inspired to change their own lifestyle, find out more, share this knowledge with friends and family or give time helping or volunteering in the community.

Zero waste



2,380 beneficiaries increased their confidence, knowledge and/or skills to reduce waste.



Wards worked in during 2022/23

We deliver grass roots activities, events and programmes that engage, educate and stimulate communities and volunteers; supporting, advising, challenging and training organisations and influencing wider social change.



Sutton Trinity
Energy audit



Bromford
Community
Engagement Session



Bournville
3D design for Bournville
Parish Church garden



Northfield
Cycling tuition



Sparkbrook
Wild Holiday Bunch





Our Work

Through the following projects on food, education, transport, energy and sustainability we gave people the tools to take positive environmental action and help others do the same.

Power to Grow

Through Power to Grow, we provide free mentorship to community growing spaces in Birmingham to help support the health and happiness of residents and improve local biodiversity.

In 2022/23, we provided planning, funding, and budgeting advice for community spaces in Hawksley, Garretts Green, Bournville and Billesley. In Frankley, we worked with the RSPCA to create a seasonal

growing plan which would help provide a sustainable way to feed the animals cared for on-site. We were also able to offer advice on installing beehives, supporting the organisation's plans to set up a bee education hub. As well as providing mentorship, we took part in Northfield & Kings Norton Beach events, helping local families to connect with nature by planting herb and flower seeds.



Power to Eat

In response to the cost-of-living crisis, we delivered a six-week Healthy Eating Workshop at St Bart's Pantry in Allens Cross, through our new project, Power to Eat.

Participants learnt how to use a slow cooker to make nutritious recipes that saved food and reduced energy use, helping participants to eat well while tackling increased living costs.

At the end of the sessions, The Pantry was able to provide each attendee with a slow cooker and a recipe book so they could continue practicing the skills they had learnt.



We engaged **11 organisations** through Power to Grow, helping each to build a shared growing space for their local communities.



26 participants took part in the launch of Power to Eat, gaining life skills they can pass onto friends and family.



It gave me a better insight into ingredients and how to use them, communicating with people and a more open mind to food.

Power to Eat participant





Creative Learning

We continued to connect young children to their local environment through school workshops, Forest School sessions, and partnerships.

We worked with Albert Bradbeer Primary School in Longbridge to deliver an energy workshop, celebrated Earth Day with Sense, and, thanks to funding from Natural England, created a mini booklet packed full of easy, nature-based activities for families.

Discover more 



Wild Holiday Bunch

Our all-outdoor holiday club, Wild Holiday Bunch, gave children the chance to build confidence interacting with nature by getting involved in woodwork and crafts, as well as cooking together over the campfire. Sessions took place throughout the seasons led by qualified Forest School practitioners.

We hosted activities at Masefield Community Garden in Northfield, with visits to Kings Norton Nature Reserve so that children could get to know different habitats, and Ashiana Community Project in Sparkbrook. ecobirmingham believes everyone should have access to the natural world, which is why we continued to provide free places for children from low-income families.

Stories for Nature

After transforming our centre garden last year, we were pleased to host 30 nature-inspired story-telling sessions for families with young children, providing many with an initial introduction to the natural world.

Activities incorporated interactive nature crafts and gave children the opportunity to explore the garden, discovering first hand where fruit and vegetables come from. Families enjoyed the sessions so much that Stories for Nature continued at the centre as a volunteer-led initiative.



Our **105** educational and arts sessions were attended a total of **1,191 times** by **466** children and young people.



Before we'd get outside to breathe the air but now, we're more open to what's around us, what's on the floor or in the trees.

Debbie, parent





Active Travel

We continued to support Birmingham residents to choose active travel as a means of transport.

We took part in Bournville Park Commonwealth Games, working with Birmingham Bike Foundry to deliver Dr Bike sessions, led rides, children's cycling tuition and family bikeability.

At Fircroft College, as well as St Bart's Pantry, we delivered route-finding sessions to help students, staff and beneficiaries discover new ways to walk and cycle around the city.



Brum by Bike

We worked with Ashiana Community Project in Sparkbrook to deliver cycling tuition, bike maintenance and led rides. Together with the organisation's women's group, we explored Stratford Upon Avon using the Bromford Cycle Hire Scheme and public transport, showing that days out by bike are still possible for people without their own set of pedals.

Through Brum by Bike, 382 participants said they were more likely to walk or cycle after improving their skills and confidence through our activities. Commuter rides hosted in Bournville and Erdington set up their own groups, and we trained two participants as ride leaders, helping them to pass on the skills they have gained.

69wards

As part of our 69wards project we tried, tested and launched our first walking and cycling route connecting Birmingham north to south, with 12 more routes to follow in 23/24.

The routes highlight key spots such as green spaces, visitor attractions and places of worship, encouraging residents to choose active travel over car use for shorter journeys. We're grateful to the local community for sharing their thoughts on the routes and enabling us to make helpful adaptations before its official launch.



We hosted **84** active travel sessions with a total of **2,733 miles** ridden – that's the equivalent of cycling Birmingham's entire canal network 78 times!



It's nice to be able to cross the city traffic free. Very much enjoyed seeing different parts of Birmingham that are very beautiful that I'd not seen before.

Active Travel participant





Energy Audits

Through our work with the Birmingham Council of Faiths Footsteps Programme, we delivered energy audits and events to Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Sikh places of worship and community centres across Birmingham. Discussions covered improving lighting and heating to reduce costs, supporting these organisations to deliver foodbanks, education, and warm places during the cost-of-living crisis.



We delivered **19 sessions** to **15 organisations** and places of worship across the city, helping each to provide vital services to their local communities.



The audit has been incredibly helpful. They have been very comprehensive and insightful, analysing the existing situation and making practical suggestions for phased improvements to retrofit the buildings and make them more efficient and cost-effective.

Energy Audit participant

Sustainability Action Plans

We piloted sustainability action plans incorporating *One Planet Living*® principles. These helped a range of people and households identify where they wanted to make a difference over the next 12 months in their homes, work and communities.



We gathered feedback on the idea and format of the plans with over 100 individuals, then tested it with 15 households. The results included a potential reduction of **70 tonnes** of CO₂e from changes to diet, cooking, travel, purchases and energy use.



This is fab, it's very user friendly and simple which I like.

Sustainability Action Plan participant

Discover more



Headline benefits

In total, we calculate our activities have delivered the following headline benefits:

3,062 tonnes

Over the year **3,062 tonnes** of CO₂e saved (21/22: 817).

512 years

512 extra years of healthy life expectancy (21/22: 836).

£12+ million

£12,585,476 of social value benefit produced by our activities (21/22: £14,078,148).





Looking forward

Our future plans include:

- Deliver **Power to Eat** at another five pantries across Birmingham
- Launch of **69wards**, a collection of 13 free walking and cycling routes
- **One Planet Living@** online resources to help individuals and households create their own sustainability action plans
- **Energy audits** and events for more places of worship, community centres, and households
- Host **community conversations** to understand the needs and issues of local areas to help with future projects
- **Work with community development organisations** to build Birmingham's capacity around active travel, food growing, education, energy audits, and sustainability advice



Get involved

Together we can make Birmingham a greener, fairer and healthier place to live.

There are many ways to support our work. By volunteering, becoming a friend, supporting us with a donation, booking us for a training session, or joining us as a member of staff, you will be helping us to deliver important projects across the city and become part of a passionate and committed team.

Donations from people like you are essential to ensure we can continue our important work for Birmingham and its residents:

Donate now 

£5 a month

could help us run a cycle route-finding session to get more people in the city out of their cars and cycling as part of our Active Travel project.

£10 a month

could enable us to run outdoor education sessions which encourage children to value and connect to the natural environment.

£25 a month

could help us deliver a session with a community group to help them improve their community food growing project as part of Power to Grow.

Find out more about our work, how you can take part, [sign up to our newsletter](#) and donate via [our website](#).

If you would like to talk about working together, please [get in touch](#), we'd love to hear from you.

Thank you

Thank you to all of our volunteers, trustees and staff, as well as the individuals, organisations and partners who have donated, contributed to, and shared our work. We would also like to thank the funders who have supported us in 2022/23, in particular:

- The Garfield Weston Foundation
- International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
- The Worshipful Company of Grocers
- Central England Quakers
- Swire Charitable Trust
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- The Society of the Holy Child Jesus
- William A Cadbury Charitable Trust
- Roger and Douglas Turner Trust
- South Birmingham Friends Institute
- Players of the People's Postcode Lottery
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Cycling UK
- Roughley Trust
- Grimmitt Trust
- Harry Payne Trust
- Michael Marsh Charitable Trust
- John Lewis Spedan Foundation
- Edward Cadbury Trust
- Saintbury Trust
- Social Farms and Gardens
- Hedley Foundation
- Nineveh Charitable Trust
- Natural England
- Alpkitt Foundation
- The National Lottery Community Fund





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