

## **Bath and North East Somerset Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy 2016-2020**

2020 Vision

**'The Environmental Sustainability Partnership will lead the B&NES community to an environmentally sustainable, healthy, low carbon future that is resilient to the expected changes in our climate. We want B&NES to be a leader of innovation and achievement in this field.'**

## Foreword – Cllr Martin Veal, Cabinet Member for Communities

This updated Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy 2016-2019 does two things: highlights the significant progress the ESP has enabled over the last few years, which we should acknowledge and be proud of, and provides the framework for future action to build on that good work.

But it's important not to become complacent and to be aware of the bigger picture. Bath & North East Somerset is not a very big place, but we have an essential role to play if national and international efforts to tackle climate change – in my opinion, the biggest threat to future prosperity, health and well-being – are to succeed.

This strategy reminds us of that bigger picture and then explains what that means for our area and what we plan to do next.

Environmental sustainability is not something separate, just for green-minded people, a political strategy or a luxury. It's important, integral to the future we all want for B&NES and involves some big numbers and whole systems, like food and energy supply, housing, waste and transport. This is why this administration is so committed to building on the good work already undertaken and ensuring we truly achieve 'cleaner, greener, healthier communities'.

Every year, residents and businesses in B&NES spend £153million on energy bills. Most of this leaves the district, with profits largely going to the 'big six' energy suppliers. By generating and supplying more of our energy locally, we have

an opportunity to retain more of that money in the local economy, whilst reducing the environmental impact of energy consumption. By supporting more and more householders and businesses to make their buildings more energy efficient, we help to keep energy bills low, reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions, whilst protecting the value of those buildings.

Around £382million is spent by local people on food, the majority of which also leaves the local economy. By increasing and supporting local food production and supply, we will reduce the local environmental impacts of the food sector, increase food resilience and security locally, keeping more of this expenditure in Bath & North East Somerset..

There is also potential for work on these issues to bring the rural and urban parts of our community closer together, for example through growing more food in rural areas to be sold in markets in our city and towns, just as it was in the past.

**Cllr Martin Veal, Chairman of the Bath and North East Somerset Environmental Sustainability Partnership**

# The Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy

## Our Vision

Bath and North East Somerset's **2020 Vision** is that:

**'Bath and North East Somerset will be internationally renowned as a beautifully inventive and entrepreneurial 21<sup>st</sup> century place with a strong social purpose and a spirit of well-being, where everyone is invited to think big – a 'connected' area ready to create an extraordinary legacy for future generations.'**

The Bath & North East Somerset Environmental Sustainability Partnership (ESP) has a key role to play in helping to deliver this extraordinary legacy. Future social and economic well-being is dependent on achieving the sustainability of the natural processes that enable life and provide all our resources from fertile soil to produce food, fresh drinking water, clean air, renewable energy and sustainable materials on the one hand to a stable, liveable climate on the other.

The ESP's vision is that:

**'The Environmental Sustainability Partnership will lead the B&NES community to an environmentally sustainable, healthy, low carbon future that is resilient to the expected changes in our climate. We want B&NES to be a leader of innovation and achievement in this field.'**

Tackling climate change is identified in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2016-2020 as a significant challenge and is the ESP's top priority. We have set an overarching carbon reduction target for the area of 45% by 2029, in line with the government's target to cut national emissions by 80% by 2050.

This ESP Strategy 2016-2020 sets out our high level plans for leading and inspiring action in B&NES that will take us closer to achieving our vision, such as more local renewable energy, more energy efficient and cheaper to run homes, businesses & services, more locally grown, accessible & healthy food, more sustainable transport, improved air quality and less waste.

## Strategy Structure

The rest of this strategy document is arranged over the following three sections:

1. Context & strategic approach

2. Progress highlights 2010-16

3. Outline plans 2016-20

4. Glossary

## Section 1: Context & Strategic Approach

### Context

The UK Climate Change Act (2008), the first of its kind, commits the country to cut nation-wide carbon emissions by 80% from 1990 levels by 2050. The community leadership role of local authorities and their partners in enabling real change on the ground is seen as vital to delivering national climate change policy and targets and contributing to international commitments.

**Paris, December 2015:** Historic new global climate deal struck, committing 195 countries to act on climate change and limit temperature increase to below 2°C. The deal agrees to:

*‘mobilize stronger and more ambitious climate action by all .... Including civil society, the private sector, financial institutions, cities and other subnational authorities, local communities ....’*

Locally, we have been playing our part in tackling climate change for a number of years, making it the ESP’s priority with the adoption of the first Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy in 2010.

During the last ESP plan period, the partnership has helped to create a supportive strategic framework for action in B&NES. And, the need to move towards an environmentally sustainable and low carbon future now runs through key local plans such as the Council’s recently adopted Corporate Strategy.

*“**Corporate Strategy 2016-2020:** ‘Climate change poses significant challenges for the area.’ ‘Making homes more energy efficient and investing in local renewable energy is important to achieving our carbon reduction target and to tackling fuel poverty.’ ‘Our approach will be to ..... support the transition to a low carbon economy.’ ”*

The area’s long-term spatial strategy for the area, the Core Strategy 2014, contains planning policies on renewable energy, including district wide targets, and on energy efficiency and sustainable construction, to enable action to protect the environment and tackle climate change.

In addition, during the last plan period, the ESP oversaw the development of two further delivery strategies to provide the framework for action on the key issues of energy and food. The Community Energy Strategy 2015-19 and the Local Food Strategy 2014-17 were both developed in consultation with key stakeholders in the community and, in the case of local

food, led to the setting up of an important new ESP sub-group, the B&NES Local Food Partnership.

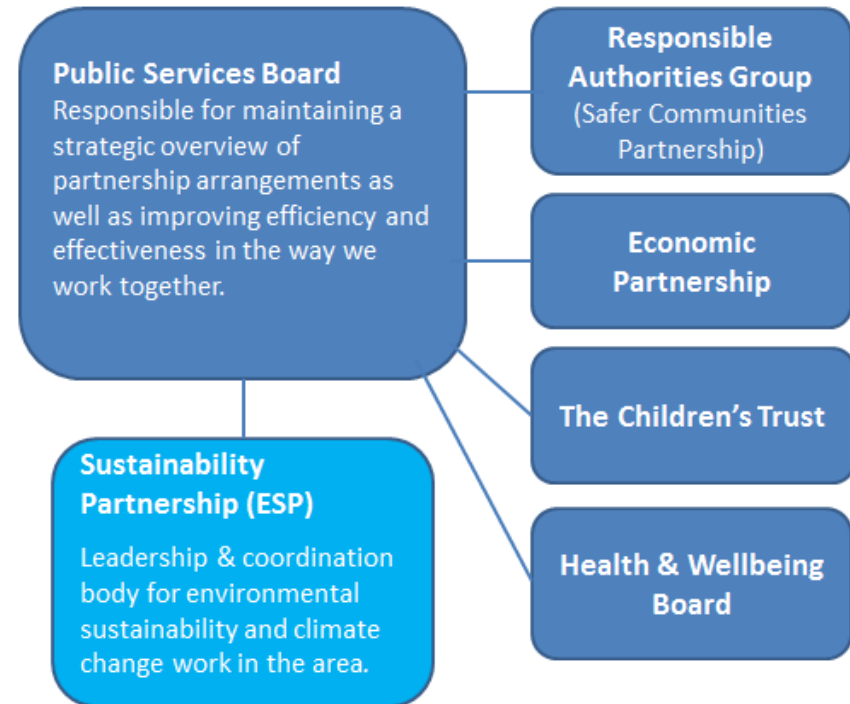
The ESP also contributes to and supports delivery of related local and West of England strategies such as the Local Development Plan, Core Strategy (and associated plans), Joint Spatial Plan, Local Transport Plans, the Green Infrastructure Strategy, Waste Strategy, Fit 4 Life Strategy, Air Quality Action Plans and Think Local Procurement Strategy.



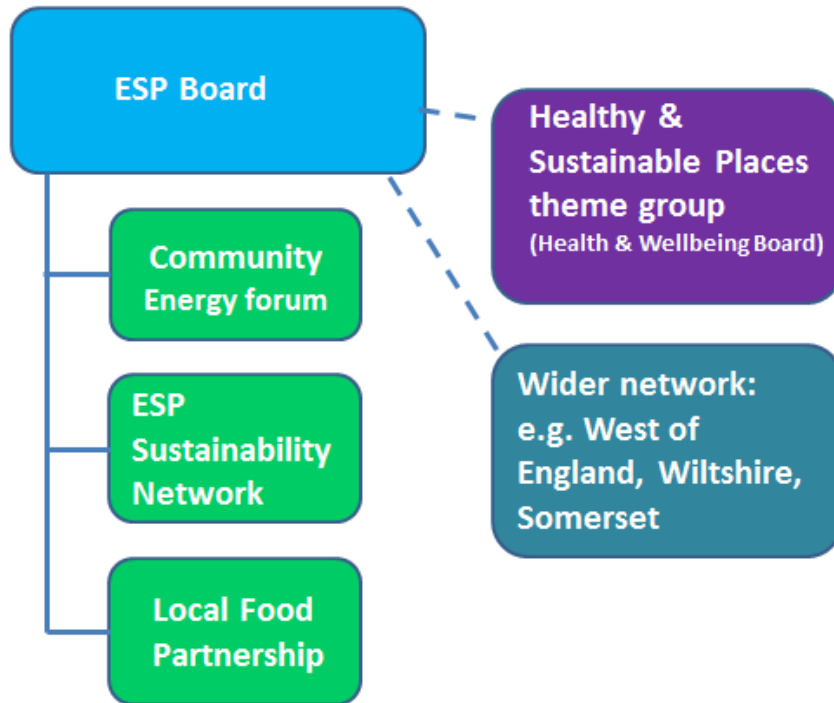
## B&NES Family of Partnerships

The ESP is a member of the family of partnerships coordinated by Bath & North East Somerset Council and reports to the Public Services Board. It also has strong links to other partnerships in the family. The ESP's priority strategies and the work that flows from them, together with a range of other ESP work-streams, contribute to the delivery of the Public Service Board's 2020 Vision and relevant objectives of both the Health and Well-Being Board (Healthy & Sustainable Places theme) and the Economic Partnership (Sustainable Connected Communities) and other strategies, such as the Council's Think Local procurement strategy. For example:

- Helping to reduce the misery and health impacts of cold homes and fuel poverty through the Energy at Home scheme (cold homes are estimated to cost B&NES health services around £3.8 million per year)
- Supporting local building trades to access energy efficiency training and accreditation, so they can trade under Energy at Home
- Improving public procurement practices to increase the procurement of healthy, sustainable and locally produced food



ESP structure and relationships



## Strategic Approach

The ESP's strategic approach to leading and supporting action can be summarised by the following three principles:

**Partnership Working: Bringing together the right people to make things happen.** Tackling future challenges requires a concerted effort from all organisations within the district. No single organisation has the resources, networks or knowledge to achieve these aims alone, so we must work together.

**Community Enablement: Enabling residents and community groups to achieve their sustainability aims.** There are over twenty groups that work on sustainability issues in B&NES. These groups have ambitious aims, talented members and the ability to reach out through local networks. By supporting residents and community groups to accomplish their aims, we can create an effective, local response.

**Leading by Example: Bold action from the Council and our partners.** Throughout our area, organisations are demonstrating strong leadership on sustainability, using their own resources and influence to drive the transition to a low carbon future.

B&NES potential for renewable energy generation by 2026:

165MW of renewable heat



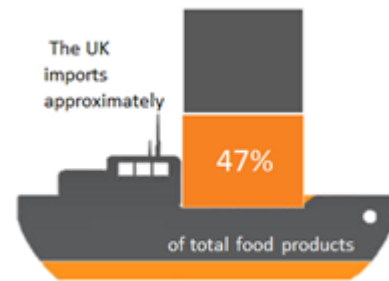
110 megawatts (MW) of installed renewable electricity capacity



Fuel poverty – 17.3% of B&NES households are living in fuel poverty; cold homes cost the local NHS an estimated £3.8m every year.

£153million spent on energy per year, by residents and businesses, which leaves the local economy.

Domestic food expenditure in Bath and North East Somerset is around £382m/yr. More of this could be retained in the local economy. The UK imports 46% of its food and 77% of fruit and vegetables, potentially leaving us vulnerable to disruptions in global food supply. Expenditure on local food generates an economic return of £3 for every £1 spent for the local economy.



energy **at** home  
activity since September 2014





## Section 2: Progress Highlights 2010-16

The delivery of the strategy to date has created a range of positive benefits economically, socially and environmentally. For example:

### **We have increased community owned energy in B&NES:**

- Local renewable energy generation in the district has increased by 154% between 2011 and 2015, and 43% of this is community owned. This means a high proportion of the economic value is retained locally.
- These community owned projects are delivering community-wide social and economic benefits. The Bath & West Community Energy Community fund has invested £60,000 over two years in local community projects such as: improving the energy efficiency of community halls, providing solar powered irrigation on a community growing plot and providing support to elderly people suffering from the effects of cold homes.

### **We have delivered more energy efficient public buildings:**

- The University of Bath and Bath Spa University have both built new teaching, research and accommodation space to BREEAM Excellent standards with a key focus on low carbon energy systems.
- The Council's new Keynsham Civic Centre (containing offices, a new library and one stop shop) has been built to very high energy performance standards, winning the RIBA SW Sustainability Award 2015.

- Inspired by the Civic Centre's standards, Avon Fire and Rescue have built a new fire station in Keynsham to high energy performance standards.



**We have made more homes energy efficient and improved local skills:**

- The B&NES Energy at Home scheme, launched in September 2014, has dispersed an £800k grant pot to local residents, helping to improve comfort and reduce bills in almost 300 homes to date.
- In parallel, the Council also ran a project to support the local building trades' supply chain with training to develop energy efficiency retrofit skills. Over 200 people received advice or training and 600 people in the trade attended the 15 showcase events. Many local contractors are now gaining work through the Energy at Home scheme.
- Four new jobs have been created in B&NES in the specialist solid wall insulation trade as a result of this work.

**We are coordinating action and creating opportunities on local food:**

- The new B&NES Local Food Partnership was launched in 2015 with over 80 local stakeholders committed to working together to increase the production and provision of local food and to make healthy, fresh local food more accessible in order to achieve greater economic, health and environmental benefits.
- The Partnership has helped the area achieve Fair Trade re-accreditation, and to become one of the first areas in the UK to be accredited by the Soil Association Sustainable Food City Bronze award.

**We have made it easier to get about sustainably:**

- Improvements to walking and cycling routes have been made, for example: the 12.5 mile Two Tunnels shared path from Radstock to Bath; and improved walking and bike access to Bath Spa University.
- Ten electric vehicle charging points have been installed in public car parks, facilitating greater use of cars that do not contribute to local air quality problems.
- The Council, both universities and Avon Fire & Rescue have introduced electric vehicles into their fleets.
- We were the first council in the country to switch to LED street-lighting on our main highways – 4000 street lights now converted – saving £200k each year on the electricity bill, £50k a year on the maintenance bill and reducing Council carbon emissions by 3%.

**We have made it easier to reduce waste and recycle more:**

- The Council has continued to provide a comprehensive doorstep recycling and waste collection service, with food waste introduced in 2011.
- These services coupled with frequent campaigns and community engagement has resulted in:
  - Only 18% of waste being sent to landfill in 2014/15, with
  - 48% of household waste reused, recycled or composted in the same year.
  - Coordinated the West of England-wide Feed me and Win food waste campaign



**Feed Me  
and Win!**

**We have improved the links between the natural environment, tackling climate change and improving health and well-being:**

- The ESP River and Energy group has helped to ensure that renewable energy opportunities are included in essential riverine flood defence development.
- The wider Water Space Study looking at the River Avon and Kennet and Avon Canal corridor will take into account environmental sustainability issues, such as biodiversity, energy generation opportunities and flood defences alongside the drive for regeneration and growth.
- Drawing on national and local planning policy, the new local Informal Guidance Note: Renewable Energy in the Green Belt, provides guidance on how renewable energy planning proposals should respond specifically to the Green Belt designation.
- The ESP Board and the Local Food Partnership are contributing environmental sustainability elements to the emerging Bathscape bid, such as projects on local food around the city of Bath.

## Section 3: Outline plans 2016-20

### Introduction

The delivery of the ESP's vision comes from a wide range of activity, only some of which is directly managed or co-ordinated by the Council's Corporate & Community Sustainability Team, such as the priority Community Energy and Local Food Strategies and action plans.

This work sits alongside or is interwoven with projects and actions delivered by ESP member organisations, local groups and individuals, as well as through a number of other Council-led strategies and plans that have been referred to elsewhere in this document covering relevant issues such as, transport, waste management, air quality, the natural environment and planning.

In this section, the main purpose is to outline at a high level our intentions for the priority ESP-driven strategies on energy and food over the next plan period, whilst noting the related strategies and plans that the ESP seeks to influence and support delivery of.

The content is organised under the four priority action areas of the B&NES Corporate Strategy: A strong economy & growth; A focus on prevention; A new relationship with customers and communities; An efficient business.

### A strong economy and growth

The successful transition to a low carbon economy is an essential element of a strong local economy and growth in the future. For example, the 'green' sector is now one of the fastest growing in the country, growing at an average rate of 7% a year between 2010 and 2015, with the number of jobs growing by 3.8% a year (DECC, March 2015). The new Paris 2015 mandate is expected to accelerate growth on low carbon goods and services further.

In addition, we want to retain more of the £153million local energy spend and the £382million domestic food spend that largely leaves the local economy at present, by increasing the amount of food and energy that is produced and consumed locally.

Building on the success of the good work across the area in the last few years, but recognising the real challenges of changing government policy, market volatility and reductions in public sector finance, the ESP will provide the leadership in order to support:

- Delivery of the ESP's Community Energy Strategy to develop local energy services further, which includes the following intentions:
  - enabling more local energy production, including community owned projects that will maximise benefits to the local economy and increase community resilience

- promoting a B&NES local energy tariff that enables the fuel poor, in particular, to get a better energy deal
- planning for emerging smart technology and finding innovative ways to develop local smart energy infrastructure that will enable greater energy demand management, lowering costs and enabling more renewable energy production
- ensuring that the expected growth in both the renewable energy and retrofitting markets delivers new skills and job opportunities for local people
- Delivery of the ESP's Local Food Strategy to develop a stronger and more prosperous local food economy, which includes the following intentions:
  - enabling and encouraging the procurement of more local and sustainable food by both the public and private sectors
  - working together to address gaps in local food market infrastructure
  - co-ordinating opportunities to develop and promote the local food supply chain
- Delivery of the suite of local Transport Plans that are designed to reduce per capita road traffic CO2 emissions by 10% by 2020 (from 2006). A key part of achieving this is to make it easier to travel sustainably and encourage, in particular:
  - an increase in electric vehicle charging infrastructure (as part of the West of England network), including fast and rapid charging, linked to local smart energy technology development that can enable synergy with renewable energy production and storage
  - an increase in the use of smart technology to improve public transport convenience such as smart tickets
  - increase in sustainable fuel powered vehicles in public and private sector fleets
  - supporting modal shift from single occupancy private vehicles to shared use and public transport

### A focus on prevention

It's easy in a relatively prosperous nation to forget that we too are vulnerable to the climate change that is already having a more serious impact in other parts of the world, causing geo-political instability that is predicted to disrupt the overseas food and energy supply chains on which we currently depend.

Much of the action that we take to improve environmental sustainability and reduce carbon emissions locally also helps to increase community resilience, such as through greater

local energy and food security, which in turn will help us to cope with some of the impacts of a changing climate.

In addition, some of these actions also make it easier for people to lead healthier lives and prevent the ill health that can come from a poor diet, a lack of physical activity or a badly insulated, cold and damp home.

Over the next plan period, the ESP will provide leadership to support:

- Delivery of the ESP's Community Energy Strategy, in particular:
  - enabling more householders to make energy efficiency improvements to lower energy bills and increase warmth, comfort and health, especially for the fuel poor and the vulnerable
  - ensuring an increase in local energy resilience and independence from increasing local energy production
- Delivery of the ESP's Local Food Strategy, in particular:
  - facilitating better access to healthy, local and sustainable food
- Delivery of local Transport Plans, in particular those aspects that make it easier to walk and cycle and which help to reduce air pollution and contribute to wellbeing
- Delivery of relevant aspects of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy such as:

- Fit 4 Life physical activity behaviour change
- Increasing Health Service frontline awareness of benefits of green space social prescribing
- Increasing awareness of link between more extreme weather incidents and mental health
- Delivery of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, in particular:
  - protecting natural services to prepare for climate change
  - managing flood risk
  - providing quality green spaces for physical activity, socializing and improving health and well-being
- Increasing awareness of the need to consider climate change adaptation issues in key strategy development and service planning.

### **A new relationship with customers and communities**

Nearly nine out of ten people in B&NES want to help out more in their local area. The ESP has already benefitted greatly from this with the enormous amounts of time, energy and commitment that has been dedicated by so many in our community to sustainability issues.

The talent and energy in our community led to the formation of, for example, Bath & West Community Energy, Keynsham Community Energy, Transition Bath, Energy Efficient

Widcombe, Community @67, Bath Area Growers, Bath Foodcycle. This community action and engagement has enabled the area to play a leading role, for example, in developing community owned energy projects and is helping to make the new Local Food Partnership a success.

We have over 560 members of the B&NES Environmental Sustainability Network and 1200 @GreenBathNES Twitter followers. The Network and Twitter feed are used by the community to share news and discussions, to promote events and encourage participation.

We want to continue to build relationships with communities, support local people to take their own action on sustainability and increase engagement in the delivery of the ESP Strategy.

And working with the community to market the new Energy at Home scheme, coupled with responsive customer service has enabled the new home energy retrofitting service to meet its initial targets, including meeting the needs of more vulnerable and fuel poor customers.

Over the next plan period, the ESP will provide leadership to support:

- Maintenance of good partnership working through the ESP Board and Network, the Community Energy Forum and the Local Food Partnership

- Development of further community engagement in sustainability action through social media, ESP events and the Connecting Communities programme
- Delivery of the Community Energy Strategy, in particular the customer relationship aspects of local energy services
- Delivery of the Local Food Strategy, in particular:
  - Improve opportunities for community food growing by supporting provision of new allotments and good growing space
  - Improve food and nutrition learning opportunities
- The Waste team's work to help residents, businesses and organisations to engage in action to reduce, redistribute and recycle their waste.

### **An efficient business**

All key stakeholders in the ESP have worked hard to reduce inefficiency, waste and environmental damage through improved energy efficiency in buildings or vehicle fleets, the installation of renewable energy, in-house waste reduction and recycling schemes and better procurement. But, we all recognise that there is more to be done.

It is also recognised that there is more to be done to support local businesses to reduce their carbon emissions, through improved energy efficiency, more sustainable transport, waste minimisation and management.

We have a large hospitality sector in Bath and North East Somerset, most involving food. With a third of all food produced in the UK being wasted and contributing to landfill and methane emissions, we'd like to work more with this sector to reduce food waste and redirect excess food away from landfill.

We will explore further opportunities to collaborate more with other public sector partners and businesses throughout the area to continue to improve efficiency, create savings and reduce environmental impact.

Over the next plan period, the ESP will provide leadership to support:

- Continued improvement of public and private sector procurement activity to ensure, for example: procurement of more locally sourced food; use of whole life costing to drive environmental improvement.
- Revisiting energy efficiency of public sector buildings across the partnership to keep up with technological advances, such as LED lighting, to continue to drive down energy use
- Delivery of the Waste Management plan's best environmental outcomes, in order to

- reduce carbon emissions from waste management
  - increase reuse and recycling
  - reduce landfill charges.
- Increasing numbers of alternative fuel powered vehicles in commercial fleets and personal vehicles, linked to the ESP's Community Energy Strategy and smart energy infrastructure delivery.

### ESP Workstreams and action plans

As with the previous Strategy, progress on the above outline plans will continue to be developed and monitored via the following work-streams:

- Sustainable Energy:
  - Energy Efficiency (Retrofitting – B&NES Energy @ Home scheme)
  - Generation & supply
- Local Food (B&NES Local Food Partnership and Strategy)
- Transport (including Air Quality, via local and West of England Transport Strategies & Air Quality Action Plans)



- Waste (via local and West of England Waste Management Strategies)
- Low Carbon Economy (via the Economic Strategy, Think Local Procurement Strategy and most of the above workstreams)
- Natural Environment (via Green Infrastructure Strategy, Green Space Strategy, River Strategy)
- Adaptation (through service planning)
- Public Sector and Services (through collaboration and partnerships)

In a change from the first ESP Strategy, the format of this strategy is not arranged by workstreams, which are instead incorporated under the four B&NES Corporate Strategy priority headings in order to demonstrate the alignment of the ESP's work with the overall vision and strategy for the area.

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