



# City Profile

# Brighton & Hove



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## Introduction

Brighton & Hove is located on England's south coast. It has good transport links with London and the rest of Europe. The city has 273,400 inhabitants and receives around 8.5 million visitors a year. It has a rich cultural offer and hosts the largest annual arts festival in England. The city's main economic sectors are tourism, business and financial services, the public sector, retail and creative and digital industries, and a growing environmental industries and services cluster. Brighton & Hove has two universities and a highly-qualified workforce, but average wages are below the regional and national average.

Quality of life in Brighton & Hove is very high, but there is a shortage of affordable housing. The city is located between the sea and the South Downs National Park, so development sites are limited.

Brighton & Hove is a unitary authority, responsible for all local government functions within the area. The separate city council departments that deal with energy policies are:



- a housing unit (energy efficiency programmes, grants and advice)
- property services (energy efficiency and generation in council buildings)
- city planning (renewable and sustainable energy infrastructure study, sustainability checklist and policies for new development, Eco Open Houses programme)
- a sustainability team that leads on policy and the Climate Change Strategy.

The city council is a member of the City Sustainability Partnership and provides secretariat support and facilitation.

Through the Sustainable Community Strategy, the city commits to reduce carbon emissions by 42% by 2020, and by 80% by 2050, from the 2005 baseline of 5.7 tonnes per person.

Brighton & Hove's Climate Change Strategy was adopted by its Strategic Partnership in December 2011. The strategy provides a framework to bring together and build on city commitments and policies already in place. It will coordinate the city's efforts and work over the next four years and beyond to become a 'low carbon city, adapting well to climate change'.

The Brighton & Hove Climate Change Strategy has set a 4% annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction target to help the city work towards its longer-term commitments.

Brighton & Hove city council adopted the 'One Planet' approach as its model of sustainability in 2012, This was set out and agreed in the authority's corporate plan. It has finalised a three-year Sustainability Action Plan to implement key components of the strategies above. This approach is

a framework that helps to address all major aspects of environmental, social and economic sustainability. It is based on ten principles or focus areas: zero carbon, zero waste, sustainable transport, sustainable materials, local and sustainable food, sustainable water, land use and wildlife, culture and community, equity and local economy and health and happiness.

Brighton & Hove signed the Covenant of Mayors in January 2013.

## Energy Efficient Buildings and Districts

Brighton & Hove is working towards becoming a 'One Planet' region, endorsed by BioRegional. The objective is for all buildings and structures over which the local authority has direct influence to be 'net zero carbon'. This means that by 2025 they should be powered and heated by a renewable energy supply, using fossil fuels only as back up. A detailed plan for achieving zero carbon by 2025 will be put in place within three years of writing the One Planet Action Plan. Projects supported under the plan will help individuals, community groups and companies work towards zero carbon. A zero carbon plan has been developed.

Private Sector Renewal Assistance Policy grants have improved energy efficiency in the city's private sector housing. The grants target vulnerable groups to help tackle fuel poverty. Over £5 million has been invested over the past four years. Significant investments for energy efficiency have been made in social housing stock, including insulation and boiler replacements. Investments have also been made in over-cladding some high-rise blocks.

The city has had to deal with some challenges along the way. Firstly, the public sector portfolio needs significant investment to identify high-impact and rapid-payback improvements. There are also properties which are difficult to influence due to housing profiles and conservation areas. There is also a large private rented sector (30% housing) and funding has not attracted investment in the past. Stakeholder involvement is identified as an important factor.

## Renewable Energy Sources and Distributed Generation

Brighton & Hove has several policies on renewable energy:

- the City Climate Change Strategy incorporates renewable energy and sustainable energy
- the One Planet Living Sustainability Action Plan includes a zero carbon section,
- a planning policy that includes a zero carbon development area on greenfield land since 2008
- a Zero Carbon City Plan

A sustainable energy working group is leading the current work programme and will update this to reflect a city renewable and sustainable energy study. Large solar PV installations are being installed, led by Brighton Energy Co-operative. Shoreham Port is developing a large renewable energy programme including PV and wind turbines. The city is working with E.ON Climate & Renewables on plans for a major (up to 700 megawatts) offshore wind farm. This will be the closest to any UK city.

The main challenges regarding renewable energy are financial and policy restrictions, which compromise the attraction of investment. Other restrictive aspects include limited space and a high level of historic and landscape designation.

## Energy in Urban Transport

Regarding the urban transport sector, the council secured £4 million (approximately €5 million) from UK Local Sustainable Transport Fund for a major transport corridor in 2011. This includes:

- upgrades to public transport facilities, e.g. real-time bus signs, and accessible bus stops
- improvements for pedestrians, buses and cyclists
- improved links to new South Downs National Park
- sustainable travel information/incentives



The council has also installed electric vehicle charging points to encourage a transition. There are currently eight charging points across the city, some funded through CIVITAS. The city has allocated £20,000 (€23,000) for 2012/13 to assist in the management and development of the charging point network. Other developments include increased use of intelligent traffic signals, variable message signs and CCTV (Closed Circuit Television).

Challenges within urban transport include finding adequate progress in vehicle and engine technology development and adoption. An increase in initial investments and a cultural shift are also required to boost the uptake of electric vehicles. Therefore adequate funding must be secured to support projects.

## Financing

UK government funding for private sector housing renewal has ended. A grants and assistance programme maintained over the last two years is also coming to an end as the government's Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation programmes are introduced.

The city finances transport projects through council capital spending against a Local Transport Plan agreed with government. It also secures grants to

deliver key policies, e.g. Cycling Demonstration Town programme and Lewes Road transport corridor improvements. A new policy has set a speed limit of 20 miles per hour (32kmph) for all but major arterial routes in the city centre. Some schemes have been enhanced by developer contributions linked to major new developments.

New renewables schemes including larger solar arrays are being funded by Brighton Energy Co-operative through community financing by members, who see a return on investment due to the government's incentive-based Feed-in tariffs.

Other social enterprise investment routes are being explored through bodies such as the Brighton & Hove Energy Services Company and the Green Building Partnership. Good cooperative working exists between local energy bodies.

The city is exploring new investment vehicles. This is with a view to involving larger energy companies and other utilities in longer-term investment linked to district heating and CSP schemes, including anaerobic digestion and biomass. A new study into potential sites for local heat networks suggests 14 have potential and three are being investigated to feasibility stage.

## Future Visions and Expectations

As a One Planet community, Brighton & Hove will reduce CO emissions by supporting projects across the city that help individuals, organisations, local community groups and companies adopt a trajectory towards zero carbon.

Further visions are:

- the energy hierarchy (demand reduction, energy efficiency, renewable energy) is applied to all areas of consumption and wasteful consumption is avoided
- energy efficiency and low and zero-carbon technology is promoted in new buildings and all existing buildings, where practically and economically feasible

Existing buildings:

- existing domestic and commercial properties will significantly increase energy efficiency via retrofit solutions funded by the Green Deal or similar funding mechanisms

Renewables:

- onsite renewable energy technologies will feature in new build and on existing buildings where economically and practically feasible
- 15% of the city's energy to be generated from renewable technologies by April 2020, using a combination of solar PV, renewable heat, wind, combined heat and power, anaerobic digestion and biomass. This will be informed by results of the city Sustainable & Renewable Energy Study by AECOM in Jan 2013.





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