

# Mayor Dan Jarvis sets out plans for greener future, including zero-emission public transport fleet by 2035 for South Yorkshire

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South Yorkshire is set to have a greener, cleaner and more sustainable future – and boost the economic recovery from COVID – under plans approved by the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority.

The SCR's Energy Strategy outlines how the region could achieve its ambition to be at net-zero carbon emissions by 2040, ten years before the goal set by Government. The target was set following Mayor Dan Jarvis's declaration of a Climate Emergency in South Yorkshire in November 2019.

Among the ambitions includes zero-emission public transport fleet by 2035.

"The climate crisis is ultimately a greater threat to us than COVID, and we are fast running out of time to deal with it," Mayor Jarvis said. "Meanwhile air pollution costs our country billions and causes tens of thousands of premature deaths. We have to start treating these problems with the urgency they deserve, and this plan will help us do that."

The Strategy is based on collaboration between academia, businesses and South Yorkshire communities, and includes plans to ensure no new homes use fossil fuels by 2025, a zero-emission public transport fleet by 2035, and at least five mine water schemes, which use water from former mines to heat nearby homes and communities, by 2040.

It also includes ambitions to create 3,500 jobs and training opportunities in the low carbon and renewable energy sector, and to cut car miles by a quarter – a goal supported by a separate plan from Active Travel Commissioner Dame Sarah Storey to create more than 1000km of cycling and walking routes in the region over the next 20 years.

Mayor Jarvis said: “We are in the midst of the biggest public health crisis in generations, which is also a major economic crisis. Getting people cycling and walking can help with public health challenges and reduce the risk that lower public transport capacity will lead to gridlock and pollution on our roads. And green investment can create jobs and boost the local economy while ensuring that the massive public spending we will need in the next few years helps actually produces a lasting public good. This crisis is an opportunity for renewal, not just a return to the status quo.”

Investment in the green economy, low-carbon energy and Active Travel are all included in Sheffield City Region’s Renewal Action Plan, which sets out a roadmap for economic recovery from COVID and is designed as a down payment for an ambitious ‘New Deal for the North’ that Mayor Jarvis has proposed for the wider region. But both the RAP and the Energy Strategy rely on investment from both Government and the private sector.

“I am pleased that the Government has announced more than £350million to fund a green recovery for the UK after coronavirus, but that is a fraction of what is needed if we are really to tackle the climate crisis head on while we re-boot our economy,” Mayor Jarvis said. “This is a critical moment for our planet and for our region. The Government has to step up to the scale of the challenge – because the costs of failing to act will be far greater.”

The Strategy is also designed to support local enterprises and build on South Yorkshire’s powerful assets as a heartland of British industry.

Local Enterprise Partnership Chair James Muir said: “The Sheffield City Region is built on a strong heritage of excellence and innovation that began during the Industrial Revolution. Now we are ready to power the future, and leading the North’s Clean Energy Revolution. This strategy outlines how investment can turbocharge growth in the low carbon and clean energy sectors, create thousands of skilled jobs while building a clean, efficient and resilient energy system for our region, and help pave the way for the transition to a low carbon economy not just in South Yorkshire but across the world.”

South Yorkshire is already home to a hydrogen refuelling station, with research taking place that could lead to a hydrogen-powered, zero emission bus network of the future. Meanwhile, the University of Sheffield Energy Institute’s new Translational Energy Research Centre, which will open later this year, will give start-ups, regional and global companies access to advanced facilities for low carbon energy research.

In February representatives from the region’s local authorities, universities, trade unions and the Police

and Crime Commissioner's office met for the first time to discuss a joined up approach to tackling the challenges of the Climate Emergency in South Yorkshire.

The group, known as SCR:NZ will work with local businesses, community and environmental groups and the SCR's Youth Combined Authority to work towards the 2040 net zero target. They are working in partnership with environment and energy experts to draw up a detailed plan on how the region can achieve its net zero targets.

For more details on the SCR's Energy Strategy visit [sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/energystategy](https://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/energystategy)

*Photo credit: Sheffield City Region*

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