



The Coal  
Authority



# Business plan 2022 to 2025





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# Who we are

The Coal Authority exists to manage the legacy from Great Britain's coal mining past. So much of our 3 nation's history has been shaped by the natural minerals under our soil.

None more than coal, which has provided heat, steam and power for hundreds and hundreds of years. Coal was nationalised in 1947, which is why the UK Government own the majority of underground workings and remaining coal reserves under England, Scotland and Wales, along with the responsibility for many of the associated challenges and hazards. As domestic coal mining has reduced, and humanity recognises the impacts of burning carbon on our climate, we are seeking alternative ways to maximise low carbon opportunities from closed and abandoned mines such as mine water heat networks. These can provide heat for homes and businesses, while also delivering net zero carbon and levelling up outcomes for communities whose identity was built from coal and who could now benefit from low carbon, social and economic benefits from the warm water in the historic mining assets.

We work with partners, communities and customers to listen, learn and take practical action to support them to create safer, cleaner and greener communities. We are a 24/7 emergency response organisation, with staff across Great Britain ready to respond and take action to keep people safe and provide peace of mind. Extensive coalfields exist across Great Britain and it is estimated that 25% of homes and businesses across Great Britain are located above former coal mines. The vast majority of people will never experience any problems from that, but for those who do we are here to provide support and expertise.

The Coal Authority is a non-departmental public body and partner organisation of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).











“The Coal Authority undertake vital work to keep people, drinking water and the environment safe from the legacy impacts of our mining heritage. At the same time, they work innovatively with people across the public and private sectors to seek opportunity, such as mine water heating, which will deliver low carbon, economic and social benefit to communities across the coalfield and help them to level up.

“BEIS are committed to supporting the frontline work of the Coal Authority and encouraging their innovative work in support of key UK Government priorities including the transition to net zero, levelling up and climate and nature action. Their work with BEIS and with other government departments and agencies, the devolved governments, local councils, and commercial partners helps people make informed decisions, creates value for the taxpayer and contributes to creating a more sustainable vision for Great Britain.”

## ***The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP***

*Minister of State  
(Minister for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change)  
sponsoring minister for the Coal Authority*





# Foreword

We are delighted to share with you our Business Plan, which explains our priorities for our core work including emergency response for subsidence and hazards; preventing mine water from polluting drinking water, rivers or the sea; providing information and reports to help homeowners, infrastructure providers and others make informed decisions. It shows how we will build on the innovation, applied research and action of the last few years to deliver further opportunity and value and focuses on how we will work and continue to improve our service to our customers.

Our previous plan was written to last from 2018/19 – 2022/23, but the board decided to progress our new plan earlier for a number of reasons – the progress we have made against the previous plan; the changing context that we all live and operate in; and the opportunity to align with the UK Government’s Spending Review, which is planned to run from 2022/23 – 2024/25 inclusive. You can see more about our progress on page 12 and in our Annual Reports and Accounts for that period.

This new plan is set in the context of a 10 year vision (see page 10), which has helped us to focus our thinking in the longer term – particularly in our response to the climate crisis and to support the net zero carbon ambitions of the 3 nations’ governments that we serve. The plan itself runs for 3 years from April 2022 until March 2025 – reflecting the current Spending Review period and also recognising the increased pace of change that we have all seen. The COVID-19 pandemic for example has both imposed and enabled change for individuals and families, in society and the workplace. Working towards our 10 year vision in 3 or 4 year bites will allow us to adapt as needed to deliver the most we can for the communities we serve.

Our 2022 to 2025 plan is both ambitious and enabling. Ambitious in aspiration and practical delivery of core work, and innovative and enabling by ensuring that while delivering we also put in place frameworks, research and development that will allow us to understand the complex challenges and opportunities

we face more clearly. This will allow us to put in place the steps necessary to allow us to accelerate towards the ambitions in our 10 year vision over the course of the next 2 Business Plan periods that take us to 2032. This will include the more complex aspects of our net zero and sustainability commitments, partnering with public organisations and private sector companies to accelerate the uptake of mine water heating and maximising the benefit from our information, records and archives.

None of what we aim to achieve would be possible without the dedication, commitment and passion of the people of the Coal Authority who work with our customers and partners 24/7 as needed to help protect life, drinking water and the environment from the challenges of Great Britain’s mining legacy. It is their commitment to improving and innovating that has helped us to be efficient, to deliver creative and bespoke solutions to complex problems caused by coal mining hazards and to develop new opportunities from historic mining assets and wastes.





“None of what we aim to achieve would be possible without the dedication, commitment and passion of the people of the Coal Authority who work with our customers and partners 24/7 as needed to help protect life, drinking water and the environment from the challenges of Great Britain’s mining legacy.”

You can see more in our colleague case studies on pages 34 and 35. In the course of this plan – and certainly looking towards our 10 year vision – we will use our collective expertise, passion and learning culture to become even more effective, and to deliver more outcomes for the communities we serve here in Great Britain and potentially beyond.

We know that we can only achieve our mission of making a better future for people and the environment in mining areas by continuing to listen and learn. We invite you to help, to hold us to account and to challenge where you think we can do better.



**Jeff Halliwell**  
Chair



**Lisa Pinney MBE**  
Chief Executive





# Our mission, purpose and values



Our mission, purpose and values were developed with our colleagues and input from partners and adopted by the board in April 2019. These were revisited as part of our vision and Business Plan development and the board agreed that they remain relevant and at the heart of our work and approach.

## Our values

### Trusted:

- we act with integrity
- we are open and transparent
- we deliver on our commitments

### Inclusive:

- we promote a culture of mutual respect
- we recognise that our differences make us stronger
- we work with others to achieve our mission

### Progressive:

- we are open minded and innovative
- we recognise that the past can help us shape the future
- we listen and learn





# Making a Better Future for People and the Environment in Mining Areas

## Our Vision for 2032

- Diverse
- Representative
- Fit for the Future

- Trusted
- Inclusive
- Progressive

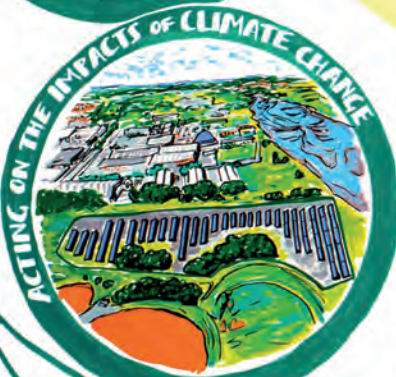


Coal mines as a CORE PART OF THE CATCHMENT



Sharing Knowledge and Expertise

Reducing Waste



CONNECT PEOPLE TO THEIR MINING HISTORY



- Embrace NEW Technology
- Digital Transformation
- Accessible Services



Socially Sustainable Renewables

Bring ALIVE the Story of the PAST TO THE FUTURE

Learning to do BETTER



and Ready to go BEYOND



# Our vision for 2032

Our vision for 2032

Our 10 year vision remains focused on our mission of making ‘a better place for people and the environment in mining areas’ and our Mission, Purpose and Values remain at the heart of what we do.

Over this period we will need to continue to evolve and adapt, recognising that external factors and context (such as climate change, customer expectation and digital developments) will require this. We are mindful of the continued ageing of the historic coal assets we manage, the increasing need for low carbon opportunities and innovation and that things we are currently unaware of that will undoubtedly appear, increase in relevance or change through the dynamic times ahead.

By 2032 we will have made real progress in reducing our carbon footprint and achieved our ambition of becoming net-zero by 2030. We will be ready to go beyond that, maximising the use of socially sustainable renewables on our sites, increasing habitat and space for nature and reducing waste wherever possible. We will have worked with others to make strides in understanding and acting on the impacts of climate change adaptation to continually better understand the impacts of extreme weather on ground

stability, drainage, risk and potential impacts in mining areas. Clear research, evidence and understanding will help us to make any changes needed to our approaches and influence the funding required to implement them.

Mine water heat and energy storage will be a key part of heat network policy and implementation with a number of schemes operational – including at city level and as multi-functional schemes with other types of heat which, maximises low carbon, stable priced and levelling up benefits across the former coal mining communities of Great Britain. We will work with a range of partners and seek innovative funding mechanisms to enable this growth. No iron solids will be landfilled – being used for a range of beneficial uses instead. The water from our mines will be used to support drinking water and industrial provision in water scarce catchments and we will be actively working with partners at a catchment level to consider coal mines as a core part of the

catchment – with flood storage and water use amongst those considerations.

Our services will help people to make informed decisions, provide expertise and peace of mind. We may provide these globally, where relevant, and complementary to wider England, Scotland and Wales ambitions. As coal mining declines across the world we will be well placed to share knowledge, expertise and practical advice on how mining can be decommissioned safely, sustainably and by maximising low carbon opportunities for the future.

We will keep working with partners to use our expertise and skills to reduce the impacts of other types of mining and things beyond our direct remit, building on the work we have done with Welsh Government on tip safety and with other UK government departments to reduce pollution from metal mines.

We will better connect people to their mining history through the provision of information and by making more available the records,

# Our Vision for 2032

Diverse  
Representative  
Fit for the Future

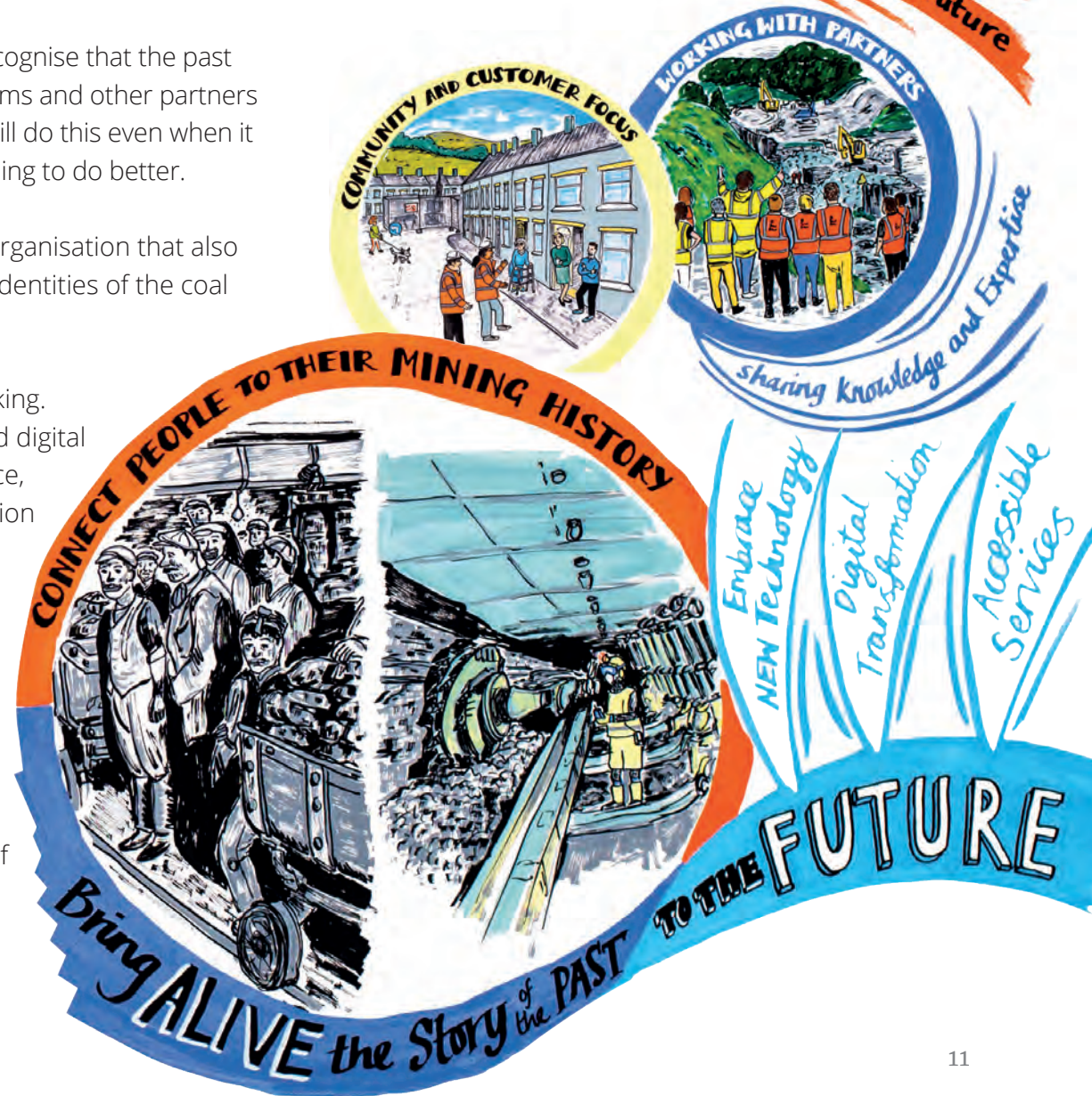
pictures and heritage we hold as cost-effectively as possible. We recognise that the past shapes our 3 nations' histories and we will work with mining museums and other partners to bring this alive and better tell the story from past to future. We will do this even when it is hard, acknowledging the mistakes of the past and using this learning to do better.

We will be a more diverse, representative and actively anti-racist organisation that also recognises the importance of levelling up, social mobility and the identities of the coal mining communities in which we have our roots.

Underpinning all this will be our people, systems and ways of working. We will embrace the opportunity of new technology and continued digital transformation to provide better, more accessible customer service, improved monitoring and operational delivery, make our information easier to connect and engage with and release efficiencies.

We will measure progress in social and environmental terms alongside financial aspects of reporting.

We will work with the UK government to recognise these ambitions, changes and the further evolution of our work through refreshed legislation, which is fit for the future. We will also seek a change to our name which better reflects the nature of our work and ensures we can keep recruiting talented people and are able to work effectively with environmental and innovative partners in the long term.







# Progress against our previous Business Plan

We have delivered strongly against our last Business Plan, which was published in March 2018 and covered the period 2018-19 to 2022-23. We have regularly reviewed our plan as we delivered against it and whilst the 'what' we do has remained largely the same we have made more significant changes to 'how' we work. These are reflected in our mission, purpose and values (page 9), our first people plan 'Great place to work'<sup>1</sup> and our Customer Strategy<sup>2</sup>. We have also continued to learn and reflect and adapt to a rapidly changing world.

You can find more information in our Annual Reports and Accounts over this period.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coal-authority-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2021-2024>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coal-authority-customer-strategy-2019-to-2023>

# 2022-25 Business Plan themes



Deliver for the communities we serve

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Ensure sustainability

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Work with others to create value

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Create a great place to work

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Make us fit for the future

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# Deliver for the communities we serve



**On 25 September 2021, a serious subsidence incident involving 8 flats was reported in Saltcoats, Ayrshire, Scotland.**

**We worked closely with the local council to provide direct support to the residents evacuated from their properties. We continue to proactively engage with the local community to provide reassurance to keep them informed about the remediation works.**

We are a practical operational organisation, which delivers a number of core, statutory duties across Great Britain to help keep people, drinking water and the environment safe from the impacts of our mining legacy. This includes 24/7 incident response capacity.

We are committed to doing this in a customer and community focused way. We act with integrity, do what we say we will and listen and learn so that we can continually improve. Working with and through other partners we can provide a joined up response and maximise the outcomes that can be delivered. This helps us to deliver on our mission to ‘make a better future for people and the environment in mining areas.’

We have made significant progress on this through our last Business Plan as detailed on page 12. One example of this is shown in the box to the left.

# The next 3 years



Since our creation in 1994, we have had a strong focus on technical expertise, professionalism and delivery to solve the more routine and complex problems we face in relation to our mining legacy. Over the course of the last Business Plan, we have strengthened our focus on customer and community engagement and listened to our customers and partners, so that we could prioritise action and development in the areas that make the biggest difference. This approach underpins our thinking for the next 3 years.

We recognise that people and communities have differing contexts and perspectives. When working with communities and residents through engagement, we will treat every case as unique and work with people to reach the best outcomes we can, using the legislation and public money guidance that we have to work within.

We will actively promote who we are and what we do in coalfield areas so that

**“We recognise that people and communities have differing contexts and perspectives. When working with communities and residents through engagement we will treat every case as unique and work with people to reach the best outcomes we can, using the legislation and public money guidance that we have to work within.”**

communities know when and how to contact us and be confident that we will provide timely information, expertise and support whenever it is needed. To support this we will strengthen existing relationships with local partners and stakeholders and look to identify further joint working opportunities to deliver better outcomes.

We will use our estate and information effectively to enable regeneration and development for the benefit of communities. We will build on customer feedback to further improve our digital services, making our information more accessible and increasing the self-serve options we know our customers want. We recognise that all customers are individuals and so our customer processes will consider individual circumstances and changing needs.

We will seek feedback from residents, local partners and wider stakeholders on our services to help us to continually learn and improve.

Underpinning all this is our commitment to provide effective and empathetic incident and emergency response and to deliver our core work to protect life, drinking water and the environment.







# Deliver for the communities we serve

How we will know we are succeeding?



Deliver for the communities we serve  
How we will know we are succeeding?

## Scorecard outcome:

**We improve our frontline delivery services for our customers so that we deliver more outcomes and are easier to do business with**

## By April 2025:

- We will treat an additional 13 billion litres per year of mine water to prevent pollution of drinking water, rivers or the sea by 2025. This is an increase of over 10% on current volumes (128 billion litres/year).
- We will resolve 90% of subsidence hazards and claims within 12 months.
- We will use our information, services and estate to enable 300,000 hectares of regeneration and safe development for local communities in the former coalfields.
- We will achieve ServiceMark accreditation for our service standards from the Institute of Customer Service.

## This will be underpinned by work to:

- Further modernise and professionalise our 24/7 incident and emergency response capabilities. This will include working to become a Category 2 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act.
- Work even more in partnership to deliver wider outcomes.
- Be more visible, so that customers and partners are more aware of our services and how we can help.

**More detailed plans that underpin this theme:** Customer Standards<sup>3</sup> and Strategy<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coal-authority-customer-standards>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coal-authority-customer-strategy-2019-to-2023>





# Ensure sustainability

We are committed to becoming a more sustainable organisation, and want to use our work to help deliver positive change in the communities we support. This includes real consideration of environmental and social sustainability and factoring this thinking into our decision making and reporting.

To do this we will work with others, sharing learning and taking practical action to move towards our ambition to be a net zero organisation by 2030 as has been committed to by our board. We will continue taking action to decarbonise our activities and maximise natural carbon sequestration at our sites. We will also take action to support nature recovery by managing our sites and estate in the best way possible and to take a circular approach to our work, minimising waste and the use of natural resources.

We have made significant progress on this through our last Business Plan as detailed on page 12. An example of this is given in the box to the right.



**We have installed solar panels at several of our sites and now generate approximately 1.4 GWh of renewable energy every year saving £200,000 and 314 tonnes of carbon each year. The learning we have taken will inform further renewable schemes in this Business Plan.**



# The next 3 years



Over the course of the last Business Plan we have taken action to increase self-generation of renewables from our sites and consider environmental benefit through our management. In the next 3 years we will increase the pace of change so that we can make clear, measurable progress towards decarbonisation, using our estate to help nature recovery, increase access to our sites and consider social benefit in our thinking and decision making. We will minimise resource use, retain materials within the value chain and support local economies through our procurement practices.

The majority of this will be done through undertaking our core work more smartly and maximising multiple outcomes wherever possible. We will take action to decarbonise by using less energy to carry out our operations, increasing on site generation of renewable energy and reducing emissions from construction by using lower impact materials and design. We will also use this period to identify and quantify even more challenging

**“We will learn more about the impacts of climate change on our mine assets and estate, so that we can develop and implement plans for cost-effective climate change risk management and adaptation, and be ready to respond to an increased number and/or higher impact incidents. Working with communities, partners and fellow emergency response organisations to be even more prepared.”**

areas – for example uncontrolled fugitive emissions from abandoned mines and indirect emissions generated from the small number of active mining licences.

We will take action whilst also using these 3 years in an enabling way – undertaking further research and development to support our net zero ambitions and benchmarking the habitats and biodiversity across our estate, to inform how our sites can be improved for nature and provide nature-based solutions.

We will learn more about the impacts of climate change on our mine assets and estate, so that we can develop and implement plans for cost-effective climate change risk management and adaptation, and be ready to respond to

an increased number and/or higher impact incidents. Working with communities, partners and fellow emergency response organisations to be even more prepared.

We will evolve our decision making and reporting to more clearly demonstrate our environmental, social and other impacts, challenges and benefits alongside financial aspects. We will take a transparent approach to show our progress and challenges.







# Ensure sustainability

How we will know we are succeeding?

## Scorecard outcome:

**Make further clear progress on our journey to achieve net zero carbon by 2030 and to deliver wider environmental and social aspects of sustainability**

## By April 2025:

- We will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from our estate, operations and travel by 65% from our 2017-2018 baseline.
- We will implement integrated reporting that uses evidence-based and measured targets to show our commitment and progress on our sustainability goals.
- We will understand and recognise the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events on our estate and operations with a clearly defined adaptation plan.
- We will have a nature recovery plan and will demonstrate how our estate and operations are being optimised for nature's recovery.

## This will be underpinned by work to:

- Baseline nature quality and biodiversity assessments across our estate.
- Work collaboratively with our supply chain to maximise environmental, social and local economic benefit from procurement.
- Further plan and adapt for climate change impacts on our assets and to help inform communities, partners and other emergency responders.

**More detailed plans that underpin this theme:** Sustainability Plan – will be published in October 2022







# Work with others to create value

Value creation (financial, environmental and social) is key to our thinking and we are constantly looking for new innovations and efficiency to deliver better outcomes, new opportunities and/or savings for the taxpayer. We are passionate about mining communities both on the coalfield and beyond and use our information, skills and expertise to give confidence to those who live and work in these areas. We enable opportunity and benefit, where possible, from our mining legacy. For example mine water heat schemes can provide heat and hot water for homes and businesses.

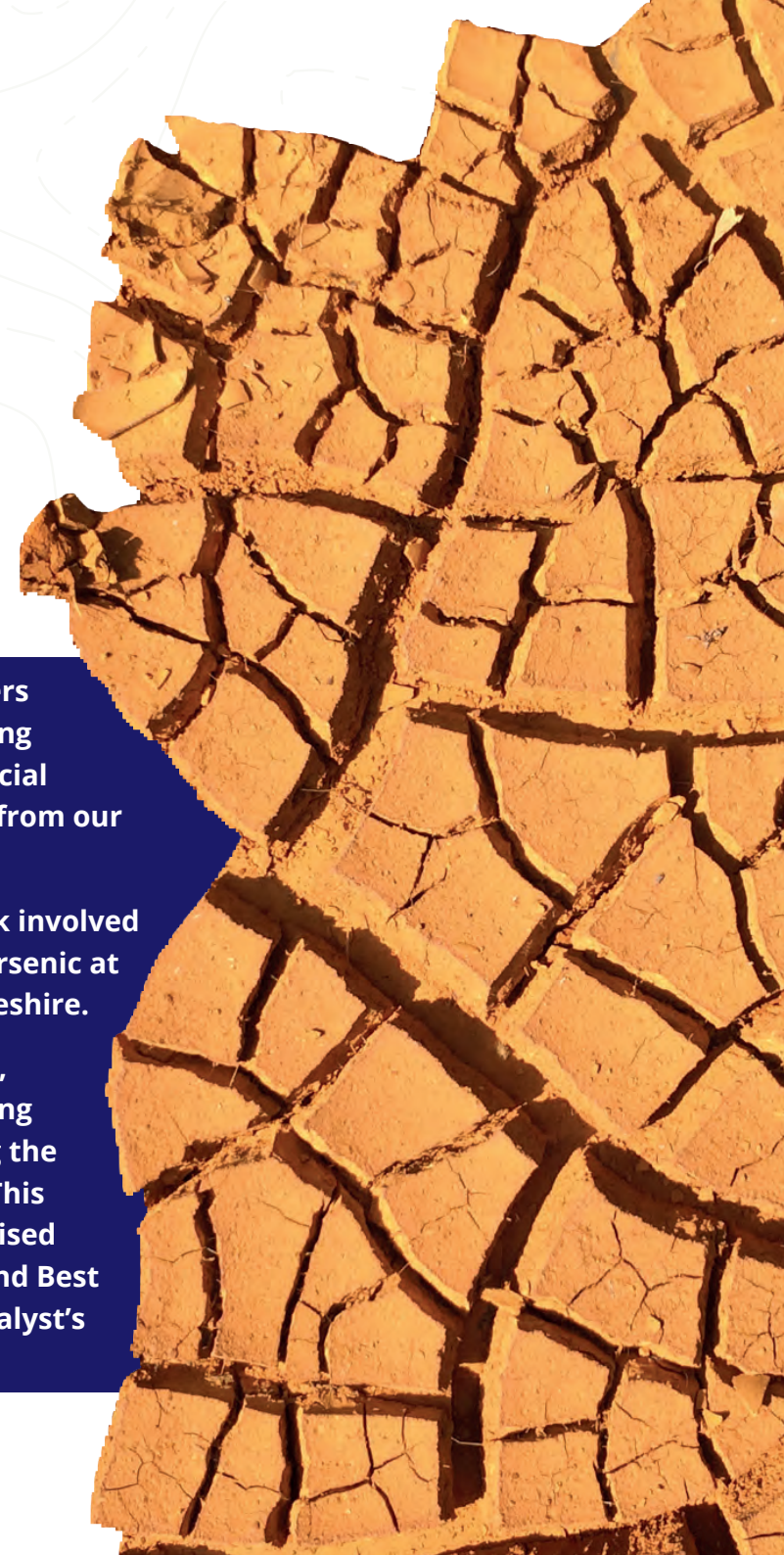
We hold unique knowledge, assets and data, but recognise that we don't have all the skills or direct influence needed to maximise the value we can generate. Our experience over the past few years shows that working with both public and private sector partners on joint projects benefits both parties and can provide better and faster outcomes. We will build on that model as we bring data, products and services to market and develop

new initiatives, ensuring we are always customer-focused and easy to work with. We have made significant progress on this through our last Business Plan as detailed on page 12. One example of this is given below.

**We have worked with a number of partners to explore new options for ochre – changing it from a waste sent to landfill to a beneficial product. Ochre is an iron rich by-product from our mine water treatment schemes.**

**A groundbreaking project with Merseylink involved treating soil heavily contaminated with arsenic at the Mersey Gateway toll bridge site in Cheshire.**

**As well as bringing sustainability benefits, by cutting carbon emissions and preventing landfill, it is estimated that safely reusing the waste material saved around £2 million. This innovative collaboration has been recognised with 2 awards, Best Re-use of Materials and Best Infrastructure Project at Environment Analyst's Brownfield Awards 2020.**



# The next 3 years

Over the course of the last Business Plan we have focused our broad innovation programme of ideas into a smaller number of purposeful projects. In the next 3 years we will work to make more of these a reality and to scale up successful projects we have already delivered. We will continue to seek to deliver value beyond our remit by supporting the delivery of key government priorities across England, Scotland and Wales such as net zero carbon, levelling up, climate justice and equity for future generations.

Mine water heat is our most exciting opportunity with the potential to provide stable priced, low carbon and Great British generated heat for homes, businesses, industry and agriculture. With the first English scheme online and at least one more scheme going 'spade in the ground' this year we have seen significant media and political interest, and have a pipeline of potential projects. To scale this up faster we will need to work with governments and with public and private sector partners. We will also develop and raise

**“Mine water heat is our most exciting opportunity with the potential to provide stable priced, low carbon and Great British generated heat for homes, businesses, industry and agriculture. ”**

awareness of wider mine water opportunities including cooling and heat storage from other green energy sources such as wind power.

We will build on our understanding of the by-products that we create to open new markets and significantly reduce the need for any of the material that we produce to go to landfill. We will expand the services we provide to other organisations by demonstrating the value and expertise we bring. We will consider how we could support wider government work overseas, as countries look to 'power past coal' and decommission their industry as part of their net zero carbon plans and COP26 commitments.

The property and development market is changing rapidly and the future for property transactions is increasingly digital, with lending and legal organisations requiring

access to well-structured data rather than standard reports. We have established strong connections and partnerships in this sector, and working with partners we will continue to update our data and digitise it for use in new and improved ways so that we can be dynamic to the needs of our customers. We will also continue to work with lending institutions, surveyors and solicitors about our work and role to ensure they are aware of what we do, so that we can continue to give confidence to all those involved with buying and selling homes, land and property in coalfield areas.

All of this will be underpinned by continued research and development (R&D) and working with universities and partner organisations, to better inform our work and enable us to make decisions underpinned with science and evidence, to give confidence to our clients and customers.







gateshead

energy  
company

# Work with others to create value

How we will know we are succeeding?

## Scorecard outcome:

**We will generate more value and deliver wider environmental and social benefit from our assets, services and work**

## By April 2025:

- We will influence and enable 4 large operational mine water heat schemes across Great Britain.
- We will re-use or recycle 95% of the iron ochre and iron solids generated from our mine water treatment schemes to prevent disposal in landfill.
- We will increase our service delivery to partners by 30% from our 2021/22 baseline of £2.49 million/year.
- We will assist the lending industry in making faster decisions for homebuyers on the coalfields.

## This will be underpinned by work to:

- Support and encourage government policy in England, Scotland and Wales to facilitate heat networks and mine water heat in particular.
- Explore alternative funding and enabling options and/or pilots working with public and private sector organisations.
- Engage with the property sector to support the housing market on the coalfields. Develop strong relationships with key lenders and work with partners to support the streamlining of conveyancing for the home and retail markets.

**More detailed plans that underpin this theme:** Mine Heat Opportunities Framework and By-products Opportunities Framework – both will be published in March 2024







# → Create a great place to work

Great people are at the heart of what we do – we can only deliver the important work we do to keep people safe, protect the environment and maximise opportunity if we can attract, recruit and retain them. To do that we have to be a truly 'great place to work' that attracts diverse talent across all parts of Great Britain and helps them to feel valued and respected with the opportunity to grow and develop. We want to be an employer of choice that is vibrant, dynamic and modern and promotes an inclusive, wellbeing-centred culture underpinned by our values.

We have already made good progress on these ambitions. Our original 'Great place to work' plan was developed and launched in 2018 with a 5 year action plan to create a sustainable, skilled and developed, more diverse and motivated workplace that better enabled us to deliver for the customers and communities that we serve.



# The next 3 years



Our first 'Great place to work' plan has helped us to create a more people-focused environment with wellbeing, inclusion and our values at the heart of how we do our work. Over the next 3 years we will build further on this, focusing our effort in 4 key areas:

## Leadership and learning

We will develop great managers and leaders, who can make holistic decisions and balance business and individual needs. We will provide the tools, advice and expertise to support them, and learning and development for all to maintain technical skills and expertise and develop new skills for the future. We will continue to work to transfer knowledge from those with first-hand experience of mining industries to other colleagues.

## Safety, wellbeing and inclusion

We will continue to prioritise mental health and wellbeing alongside health and safety in all we do. We want a culture where people feel safe, can belong and are able to bring their whole selves to work. We encourage

diversity of thought, robust and respectful disagreement and an environment where there is no such thing as a silly question. We will encourage a learning culture, where we can learn from mistakes and do better. When we feel valued and included we can better tackle the complex problems and opportunities that our mining legacy presents us with, and provide caring and confident customer service. We will continue to work with partners and a wide range of organisations to support us in achieving this.

## Engagement and employee experience

We will continue to listen and learn from our people, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to be heard. Our staff engagement group, staff forums and networks are important in this. We will run regular people surveys and pulse surveys to allow people to share their thoughts and feelings confidentially and enable us collectively to take action to improve. We will engage regularly and enable staff across the

organisation to share their work, celebrate success and learn from each other and from external speakers and organisations. We will work within the public sector framework to provide the best and more holistic reward and recognition package that we can.

## Modern and dynamic ways of working

We will review and evolve our hybrid working framework to maximise the benefits of flexibility and of recruiting from across Great Britain where possible, whilst maintaining effectiveness, fairness and efficiency. We will be more dynamic in our recruitment, attracting applications from the widest and most diverse areas possible, and looking at different sources of talent, seeking opportunities to help level up and improve social mobility wherever we can. We will keep working with and learning from partners across all sectors to share best practice, benchmark our approaches and learn together.





# Create a great place to work

How we will know we are succeeding?

## Scorecard outcome:

**We will be an employer of choice where our people feel they can belong. We will have an inclusive culture with a strong focus on wellbeing, learning and development. We take pride in delivering important work for the communities we serve and live our values**

## By April 2025:

- We will make demonstrable progress towards our workforce being more reflective of the diversity of the communities we serve across Great Britain.
- We will support levelling up by taking action to improve social mobility and providing apprenticeships for individuals who live on the coalfield and have a family connection to mining.
- We will achieve a 5 star rating in the British Safety Council 5 Star Health, Safety and Wellbeing Audit.
- We will increase our employee survey engagement score by 10% against the 2019 benchmark of 67%.

## This will be underpinned by work to:

- Provide targeted learning and development for managers and staff, reinforcing our mission, purpose and values and maintaining and developing our technical skills and expertise.
- Develop a recruitment and resourcing plan that supports our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan and reflects the changing work environment and hybrid opportunities.
- Review and evolve our people policies and processes to ensure they are effective, empowering and inspire more than baseline compliance.

**More detailed plans that underpin this theme:** Equality, diversity and inclusion plan<sup>5</sup>; Anti-racism Plan<sup>6</sup>, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan – due to be published August 2022.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coal-authority-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2021-2024>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coal-authority-antiracism-plan-2022-to-2025>







# Make us fit for the future

Our plan is ambitious and we need to enable it through effective and customer-focused systems and approaches, which support our priorities efficiently and well. Our information, combined with our people's deep understanding of the risks and opportunities that past mining presents, sits at the centre of everything we do.

We hold authoritative data on over 170,000 mine entries along with surface and underground mine workings that sit beneath approximately 25% of all properties in Great Britain. This data is updated daily from information fed in from our day to day work in mining areas. It underpins all our work and produces approximately 200,000 mining reports annually. This is crucial to our work and can support the work of our partners. Through this period we will continue to update and modernise it for new purposes, and continue to update the supporting IT infrastructure that underpins it and other systems.

We have already begun to migrate our systems to a cloud platform to provide increased resilience and flexibility. We have taken learning from the COVID-19 pandemic and recognise that future systems need to make it easy for colleagues to deliver services and collaborate with each other, our supply chain and our partners whether in the field, at home or in the office.

All of our supporting teams play a critical role in enabling frontline delivery and incident response – whether they are warning and informing local communities; ensuring simple finance systems, that mean a family can be evacuated from a subsiding house at a weekend; or ensuring that we procure services effectively and manage our programmes in the most efficient way to make the most of every pound we spend. Over the next 3 years we will make it easier for them to do their work in supporting the frontline communities we serve.

# The next 3 years

Over the next 3 years we will build on the progress made since 2018 by ensuring that we are fit for the future, focusing our effort in 4 key areas:

## Better services for our customers

We will engage with our customers in the innovation, design and development of our systems and services – working to understand their needs and improving the customer experience by using ‘digital by default’ systems that allow our services and information to be accessed at a time convenient to them. All new transactional systems, services and processes will adopt the GOV.UK design, service and inclusivity standards and we will independently test and assure our services. We will simplify and update our website based on feedback.

## Modernising our data and information

We will continue to develop and update our data and information to meet the needs of

our business and customers and ensure we follow the FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) data principles. Our records management procedures will ensure all data and information has clear ownership and is regularly reviewed. Where possible we will make available online our historic data assets, including our plans and photographs, so that they may be re-used in support of new applications, innovation and education. We will develop a longer term plan for our data to ensure that it remains relevant and able to be used by others to enable wider outcomes for businesses and communities.

## Collaborative tools for our people

We will use technology and tools to create a flexible and collaborative modern working environment, promoting a ‘One Coal Authority’ approach and enabling our people to work smartly wherever they are located. We will evolve hybrid working as we learn from it, adopting smarter working practices that allow colleagues to contribute and feel included

wherever they are and reducing unnecessary travel. Collaboration will also allow closer working with our partners and supply chain.

## Resilient systems and processes

We will refresh our infrastructure with modern technology so our systems are accessible, efficient, resilient and future proof. Technology, system design and intelligent use of our information to drive decision making will support our sustainability and net zero carbon objectives. Our mining information systems will be simplified, updated and operating in the Cloud – ensuring that they are resilient, future proof and offer flexibility to support an increasingly complex organisation and the needs of our customers and partners. We will continue to use commercial off the shelf, streamlined back office systems for our more regular applications. Where appropriate over the next 3 years we will rationalise around the Microsoft 365 cloud platform to provide our people with a suite of joined up tools that promote efficient working and internal and external collaboration.







# Make us fit for the future

How we will know we are succeeding?

## Scorecard outcome:

**We will develop modern, resilient systems and processes that are fit for the future, support our people and make it easier for our customers and partners to do business with us**

## By April 2025:

- We will update 100% of our strategic IT systems and run them in the cloud.
- We will make our digital services and information more accessible, relevant and with increased self-serve options – 100% of services will be digital by default and 100% of our new transactional systems will follow GOV.UK service and design standards.
- We will make demonstrable progress on implementing systems that allow simpler, improved collaboration within the organisation and with partners.
- We will make demonstrable progress in improving our Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR) data self-assessment ratings.

## This will be underpinned by work to:

- Develop and deliver further customer centric, efficient services with pace, building internal and external feedback into our work.
- Maintain and further develop effective governance, risk, records management and business planning processes, and more clearly embed our programme office approach into all projects to improve planning, delivery, benefits and efficiency.
- Learn from other organisations across the public, private and charity and voluntary sectors.

**More detailed plans that underpin this theme:** Our Data and Information Plan – due to be published June 2023







# Our people



**Steve, Mining Consultant and Information Manager and Staff Engagement Group representative, shared with us what he thinks makes the Coal Authority a great place to work:**

“Having worked with the organisation for a long time, the one thing that hasn’t changed is that everyone is comfortable being open and honest about who we are. This enables excellent relationships with customers and colleagues and allows us to enjoy working in a truly inclusive environment.”



**Mathura, Project Manager – Environment Projects Delivery Team and Co-chair of our Race Equality Network, shared with us what changes she has seen since she started working for us:**

“Since I joined, we now have a more inclusive workforce and many networks, which allow staff to share their thoughts in a safe space. Within our sustainable project delivery, it’s great to see us taking more steps towards our net zero carbon goals.”



**Julia, Executive Assistant to the Community and Emergency Response Director, shares how the Coal Authority is evolving:**

“I joined in June 2021, it is constantly changing and progressing. Even in the short time I have been here we have moved from working from home to hybrid, created a new directorate and formed the new Business Plan. It is never static.”



**Sean, Web Developer, shares his pride at being a member of the Coal Authority:**

"I remember the first 'All Staff Call' I attended, and being in awe of the work we undertake to protect local communities – I had a genuine sense of pride to be a part of an organisation that is making a real impact on people's lives."



**Alicia, from our Project Management Office, shares what inspires her about the Coal Authority:**

"Lots of things, but I'd like to mention the more fun little things we fit in, like rounders, quizzes, step challenges, photo competitions etc, and being part of the networks that bring people together from across the organisation that you might not otherwise talk to."



**Darren, Head of Tips Response, shared with us what he most wants to achieve out of his role:**

"To continue ensuring public safety relating to disused coal tips, and to educate others about the importance of this area."





Making a better future for people  
and the environment in mining areas