

KENT ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Year 2 activity monitoring report

August 2017 – July 2018



INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the progress that has been made during the second year of implementing the Kent Environment Strategy. Each chapter gives an overview of the key achievements and emerging risks for each theme, and then describes the progress that has been made under each activity in the implementation plan. The report also highlights the activities being undertaken by district and borough councils in Kent.

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THEME 1: BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR DELIVERY

Theme one activities are focused on providing an evidence-based understanding of our environmental risks and opportunities and developing the mechanisms that will enable delivery of actions on the ground. The activities seek to address gaps in our understanding; influence local, national and EU policies; and plan to manage and build resources, capabilities and change behaviours across all sectors.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Recognition of the natural and historic environment's value to residents and the economy continues to grow. Partnership working between health, planning and environmental professionals is strengthening our understanding of how greenspace can be used to encourage healthy lifestyles, address social issues and boost the local economy. Kent's green infrastructure requirements were included within the revision of the Kent Growth and Infrastructure Framework, and work is now underway to understand how Kent's natural capital could be included in the South East Local Economic Partnership's Economic Strategy.

There have been significant achievements in supporting sustainable economic growth across Kent. The Water Task Group has played a strategic role in the development of a new pilot system for harvesting rainwater from polytunnels, which will bring environmental and economic benefits to Kent's agricultural and horticultural sectors. Two European Union funded projects; LOCASE and Inn2Power, are supporting accelerated growth of Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) and the offshore wind supply chain respectively. Both these sectors have been identified as having significant growth opportunities in Kent.

Progress has also been made in developing an Energy and Low Emissions Strategy for Kent and Medway. This key piece of work, which builds on partners' understanding of local air pollution and incorporates future energy demand, will be vital for determining targeted actions that will put Kent and Medway at the forefront of the clean growth sector.

Implementation of the Kent Environment Strategy is progressing well. Of the 25 actions in this theme, 17 are on-track or complete and 8 are rated 'amber', indicating moderate delays or issues. This is an improvement from 2 'red' and 9 'amber' last year. The most commonly reported risk in this theme relates to a lack of resource, with activity leads focusing on finding alternative and innovative ways to make progress. Brexit is also cited as a risk, as many activities are currently reliant on European Union funding and there is uncertainty as to how new initiatives will be funded in the future. This has the potential to significantly stall progress in year three, if alternative funding is not found.

<p>0 RED (decrease of 2 since last year) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery</p>	<p>8 AMBER (decrease of 1 since last year) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of KES</p>	<p>17 GREEN (increase of 3 since last year) Activity on track or completed</p>
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Table 1: Theme 1 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2017 Implementation Plan)

DETAILED PROGRESS

PRIORITY 1: BRIDGING GAPS IN UNDERSTANDING OUR RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO IDENTIFY ACTIONS

BF1.1: Strengthen our understanding of the health, social and economic value of our natural and historical assets

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Improve understanding of the value of Kent's natural environment by undertaking natural capital assessments for key services and areas, identifying opportunities for investment and supporting decision making.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Nature Partnership</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This activity has been revised to focus on key services/areas, rather than undertaking a full assessment for the county. In time, this will build a fuller picture of natural capital in Kent. The strategic priorities for the Kent Nature Partnership (KNP) published in late 2017, included "Embedding Natural Capital into planning and decision making". However, the publication of Defra's 25-Year Environment Plan in January 2018, outlined the government's ambition for Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) to have a key role in the development of local natural capital plans. Consequently, KNP have since raised their ambitions around natural capital. During 2018, KNP has worked with Surrey and Sussex LNPs and other experts, to understand which approaches to natural capital should be taken across the region. The three LNPs are also working with the three Local Economic Partnerships; exploring joint approaches to natural capital and net gain. The aim is to submit a Tri-LEP/LNP proposal to Defra in early 2019, to pilot methods to create, evaluate and demonstrate net gain to include natural capital. This work will also help to establish the LEP/LNP role in local natural capital plans as they are developed. <p>RISK: Natural capital assessments are resource intensive activities, requiring specific skills. The KNP is currently looking at how this resource could be secured, including looking at opportunities to fund a shared natural capital officer post for the South East.</p>	<p>AMBER (improved)</p>
<p>Working with health and social care professionals, identify and promote where the natural environment can support healthy lifestyles.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Nature Partnership</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A needs assessment relating to the provision of natural greenspace in areas with low levels of physical activity was completed in 2015-16. However, the study was not taken up as a decision-making tool. In 2018, analysis was undertaken to understand why the green space needs assessment was not being used. Work is now focused on ensuring the needs assessment is able to be used as a prioritisation tool; for both encouraging access to existing accessible greenspace and for highlighting the need for action in areas where provision is poor. As part of this work, Folkestone and Hythe District Council will be piloting its use. <p>RISK: There has been little progress in developing the health and nature agenda with Kent Public Health due to a lack of resource during a period of restructure.</p>	<p>AMBER (worsened)</p>

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Identify the health, social and economic opportunities that Kent's heritage provides and integrate into district wide Heritage strategies and specific project development.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Heritage Conservation)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A health and heritage paper has been produced as part of Folkestone and Hythe District Council's Heritage Strategy. This is due for completion by the end of 2018. • Other district planning authorities are being encouraged to include heritage and health outcomes in their Heritage Strategies. This has already been completed by Dover District Council. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities are undertaking activities to support this sub-priority; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HLF Kearsney Park Project is supporting weekly junior park runs and has trialled 'yoga in the park'. 51 volunteers took part in community archaeological digs, which identified a prehistoric round barrow and the prehistoric landscape. 429 children from 10 schools took part in forest school lessons and 187 took part in a forest school group for toddlers. • The White Cliffs Countryside Project offered an annual guided walks programme designed to get people active, including some bespoke health walks. The project also holds a minimum of four volunteer conservation days per week. • Betteshanger Country Park (a former coalfield site) has been transformed into a nature reserve and leisure/sporting venue, offering a range of cycling, walking, running and orienteering activities, and hosts healthy walking groups. • The Up On The Downs HLF Project engaged low-income/unemployed families in family conservation days throughout the summer holidays and two forest school programmes were held with 16 unemployed adults who have low-level mental health issues. The activities promoted a connection to the local natural environment with the aim to enhance wellbeing, involvement and participation. The project has also identified and recorded 27 sites of historical significance in the village of Kingsdown and produced a walking tour map identifying and describing each site. It is hoped the project will enhance the sense of pride within the village, support tourism and benefit the local economy.
Gravesham Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy New Towns and other project work is underway in partnership with Ebbsfleet Development Corporation to identify and promote where the natural environment can support health lifestyles.
Swale Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working closely with other strategic partners, Swale Borough Council has developed several Frameworks which strengthen understanding of health, social and economic value of the natural and historic environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The recently adopted Visitor Economy Framework 2018-23 and supporting action plan

Local authority	Activity
	<p>identifies priorities to strengthen the economic value of the natural and historic environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A consultation on a new Cycling and Walking Framework closed in October and was adopted by the council in 2018. It takes into account air quality and health issues. ○ The Active Lives Framework sets out priorities to reduce physical inactivity, reduce obesity and improve mental health and wellbeing.

BF1.2: Continue to assess the economic, health and social impacts of climate change on our businesses, services and residents and take action as appropriate

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Refresh the Kent Climate Change Risk Assessment and identify priority adaptation and mitigation actions.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kent Climate Change Risk Assessment has been commissioned and is due to be published in early 2019. 	GREEN (improved)
<p>Review and update the sustainability assessment of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to ensure that commissioning decisions are sustainable.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Public Health)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity has been superseded. Kent Public Health are working with the Sustainable Transformation Partnership (STP) to consider the areas of overlap between the JSNA, STP workplan and the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Outputs from this will inform how and where sustainability is best incorporated into commissioning processes. A public health specialist has been recruited to assist with this work. • Work is also underway to review and strengthen the STP's Sustainable Development Plan. 	GREEN (improved)
<p>Evidence of the impacts of severe weather on public services will continue to be assessed and used to inform service delivery and decision making.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Severe Weather Impacts Monitoring System (SWIMS) continues to be used and reports for 2016 and 2017 have been compiled and published on www.kent.gov.uk/SWIMS • A review of SWIMS usage was undertaken. It revealed that although the system has been constantly used, an increase in usership and data quality would help ensure the results can be used in business planning and decision making. <p>RISK: The SWIMS IT system needs to be significantly updated in order to improve the quality of the data and increase usage. Without this update, the use of SWIMS data will be limited.</p>	AMBER

A number of local authorities are undertaking activities to support this sub-priority; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	Through the Kearsney Parks Project, Dover District Council are working with the Environment Agency to assess flood risk and update business continuity plans at the site.
Swale Borough Council	Climate change risks and resilience is being embedded into the draft corporate plan.

BF1.3: Identify economic sectors with significant opportunities in relation to environmental change

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Identify sectors with significant growth potential in relation to environmental change and identify support mechanism as appropriate.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply chain opportunities were identified for the wood fuel and offshore wind sectors, with EU funding secured for projects until 2019 and 2020 respectively. Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) have been identified as a key growth sector. Key stakeholders from car manufacturers to energy companies, have been engaged to accelerate growth in this sector. <p>RISK: Current support mechanisms such as LOCASE are due to end as early as March 2019, with uncertainty around what will replace them.</p>	GREEN
<p>Support improvement in water efficiency and availability to Kent's horticultural and agricultural sectors through delivery of the Kent Rural Board Water Task Group Programme.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Rural Board Water Task Group</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current 2016-2018 programme is on schedule. A key activity in this reporting period has been the establishment of a new pilot system for harvesting rainwater from polytunnels to provide an additional water resource and to reduce the risk of muddy flooding incidents. 	GREEN
<p>Through Kent's Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF), establish a county wide framework for green infrastructure and identify opportunities for delivery and investment.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Natural Environment and Coast)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2017 a review to understand how Kent local planning authorities plan for and deliver green infrastructure (GI) was completed. The results were used to support the revision of the Kent Growth and Infrastructure Framework. The review also identified the need for additional analysis to understand GI functions and opportunities. GI and functionality (ecosystem services) mapping started in late 2017 and will be completed in autumn 2018. The outputs will be used to determine the next steps in developing a GI framework. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities are undertaking activities to support this sub-priority; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Swale Borough Council	The council are currently exploring grants for electric vehicle charging points for taxis.

BF1.4: Improve our understanding of risks and opportunities related to specific resource constraints such as water and energy and land

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Build energy security across Kent and Medway through delivering recommendations from the KCC Energy Security Select Committee.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations from the Energy Security Select Committee have been incorporated into the KES implementation plan. The recommendations are also be used to support the development of the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy. Ongoing discussions with the National Grid and the local District Network Operator (DNO) have shown the potential for increasing flexible energy mechanisms eg. battery storage. The potential for more localised energy generation has been discussed and the Maidstone District Heat Scheme is being developed towards commercialisation, with grants from central government (BEIS). <p>RISK: New Infrastructure needs to be built in order to cope with changes in energy demand and supply. There will be a big reliance on National Grid and the DNO's to do this.</p>	GREEN
<p>Undertake a Water for Sustainable Growth Study to inform and support planning decisions.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Flood and Water Management)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This study has been completed. The evidence is being used in water company drought plans and water resource management plans. Local planning authorities are using the evidence in new water cycle studies to support their Local Plans. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities are undertaking activities to support this sub-priority; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	The council is preparing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, as part of the new Local Plan. Discussions with infrastructure providers are underway to understand how planned new development can be linked to provide new infrastructure.

BF1.5: Build on our understanding of local air and noise pollution and associated health outcomes to determine targeted actions

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Develop a low emissions strategy <i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement has been secured to develop an Energy and Low Emissions Strategy for Kent and Medway. A working group has been established and consultants commissioned to develop the strategy. Work to develop the policy drivers and evidence base is underway and a full draft is expected to be completed by early 2019. A public consultation will take place later in 2019, followed by final approval and ratification. 	GREEN
<p>Raise awareness of the health impacts of air pollution, and actions that can be taken to reduce emissions and personal exposure. <i>LEAD: Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual local authorities have been undertaking activities to raise awareness of air pollution impacts and the actions that can be taken to reduce exposure and emissions. Further information on air quality in Kent and Medway is available at http://www.kentair.org.uk/ and Care for KentAir. <p>RISK: Although work to raise awareness is being undertaken at a local level, there has been little coordinated activity at a county scale. The development of the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy should help determine whether actions to address this issue are required.</p>	AMBER
<p>Review of the environmental and health implications of aircraft noise on communities in Kent and Medway, and identify levels of risk and recommendations for further actions as appropriate. <i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Transport Strategy)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent research was commissioned by Gatwick Airport, via its Noise Management Board. The Board is a partnership represented by Gatwick Airport, Local Authorities (including KCC) and Community Groups. Recent research studies from the Civil Aviation Authority and University of Sussex also reviewed the perceptions of aircraft noise and the impact exposure can have on health. The studies found that participants underestimated the height of aircraft and overestimated their size. It also found that annoyance increased with noise exposure and that annoyance, rather than noise exposure, correlated with health and wellbeing. A small number of aircraft were observed to be flying lower than there were 5 years ago, and a trial is being designed to correct this issue and improve the noise environment. Kent County Council will continue to feed into any national policy or research where appropriate, but no further action is felt necessary for this activity. 	GREEN (improved)

A number of local authorities are undertaking activities to support this sub-priority; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Canterbury City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Canterbury Air Quality Management Area was extended, and a new Herne Air Quality Management Area was declared in April 2018. A consultation on a new Air Quality Action Plan took place May – June 2018 and was published in November.

Local authority	Activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An air quality awareness campaign and an art project in two primary schools was completed to encourage anti-idling at school gates.
Gravesham Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council have received approval to revoke three of the seven Air Quality Management Areas due to significant improvements in air quality in those areas.
Medway Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Medway Air Quality Communication Strategy was adopted in December 2017 and launched in June 2018. The strategy aims to stimulate changes in the way people and organisations view air pollution and increase awareness of the health impacts.
Swale Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revised Air Quality Management Strategy is in development.
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tunbridge Wells Air Quality Management Area was revised in 2018. A consultation on a revised Air Quality Action Plan took place September-October 2018. The plan sets out the revised approach to achieving and ensuring ongoing good air quality for Tunbridge Wells.

PRIORITY 2: INFLUENCING STRATEGY AND POLICY

BF2.1: To support decision makers, work with partners to establish a central evidence base, addressing Kent Environment Strategy priorities

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Establish a central data and information hub for KES priorities to support and inform decision makers.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is slowly progressing to develop an online information and data hub for infrastructure and environment data through the digi-GIF project (an online resource to host data relating to the Growth and Infrastructure Framework). In the interim, data lists are being collated centrally and work is underway to update the State of Environment Report. <p>RISK: The digi-GIF project is progressing slowly, and it will be some time before it is ready to act as a central data hub for KES.</p>	AMBER

BF2.2: Use our evidence to influence local, national and EU strategy and policy as appropriate

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Develop targeted policy briefings based on evidence and data hub established under Priority 2.1.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an ongoing activity with briefings developed as evidence/priorities require. Completed policy briefings include an unconventional gas briefing and air quality briefing. 	GREEN
<p>Support commissioners to incorporate, where appropriate, KES priorities into the delivery and acquisition of services and products.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All KCC services now have an environmental specification identifying the environmental outputs the service is required to deliver. This includes relevant KES priorities, with details of service level actions and the responsible lead officer. Further work to agree a suitable approach for the commissioning of services and products has been deferred until the restructure and appointment of new management teams has been completed. <p>RISK: Staff changes and restructuring has limited progress under this activity, but work is expected to restart in late 2018.</p>	AMBER (worsened)

BF2.3: Review national and local strategic priorities to identify local policy gaps and implications on delivery of our priorities

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Establish a bi-annual review of national and local strategic priorities, identifying gaps and implications, and developing policy briefings as appropriate.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an ongoing activity and will be informed through reviews of the KES and implementation plan, and the Kent State of the Environment report. 	GREEN

PRIORITY 3: BUILDING RESOURCES, CAPABILITIES AND CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

BF3.1: Develop knowledge networks, sharing best practice and training to build capacity for informed decision making

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Identify training and development needs in relation to delivery of Kent Environment Strategy priorities and establish recommendations for skills and knowledge development.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Climate Change Network</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Climate Change Network began to undertake a skills and knowledge audit in 2017/18, but through the process it became apparent that a lack of skills was not the main barrier to delivery of KES priorities. A review of the Climate Change Network was undertaken to ensure it was still fit for purpose. The revised terms of reference strengthen its use as a knowledge network and promote capacity building. This activity is no longer a priority and should be reviewed and amended as necessary, as part of the review of the implementation plan. 	GREEN
<p>Identify options and/or establish opportunities for volunteering, placements and apprenticeships to build skills and support sustainable economic growth for delivery Kent Environment Strategy.</p> <p><i>LEAD: None</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Defra 25-Year Plan announced that 2019 would be a 'Year of Green Action'. Work is now underway to identify any opportunities to use this national campaign to promote environmental volunteering in Kent. A list of environmental placements and work experience opportunities is available at kent.gov.uk/jobs/starting-your-career/environmental-placements. However, there is currently no resource to maintain this list. <p>RISK: There is currently no resource to take a strategic look at volunteering, placements and apprenticeships specifically related to KES delivery. However, the Year of Green Action provides an opportunity to review current gaps and opportunities.</p>	AMBER (improved)
<p>Provide support and guidance to decision makers to champion and promote Kent Environment Strategy priorities at local and national level.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an ongoing activity. Support and guidance is provided as priorities require to KES governance groups, local authorities and wider KES partners. A KES celebration and networking event was held in December 2017 to champion KES priorities with local influencers and decision makers, and to raise awareness of the impact KES activities are having in Kent. A second event will be held in December 2018. The KES impact report, summarising key challenges and achievements is produced annually in December. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities are undertaking activities to share best practice and build capacity to inform decision making; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	As part of the preparations of the Local Plan, three workshops have been held to help identify strategic objectives and the vision for the Local Plan.
Swale Borough Council	Swale Borough Council continues to support the Green Grid Partnership, which brings together strategic and environmental partners and community groups. The partnership reviews challenges facing the rural sector and also produces a quarterly rural e-bulletin.

BF3.2: Establish a coordinated approach to identifying and maximising funding opportunities, establishing mechanisms for co-delivery as appropriate

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Establish a central mechanism for identifying and applying for partnership funding opportunities.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brexit and uncertainty over future funding opportunities has meant that this action, and the ambition behind it has had to evolve. Consequently, action during this period has focussed on understanding the aims and objectives of such a mechanism and developing the project mandate. <p>RISK: This is a highly uncertain and evolving area of work and any mechanism will need to be flexible enough to adapt to future changes.</p>	AMBER

BF3.3: Develop an environmental communications and engagement strategy, improving awareness of priorities and supporting behaviour change

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Develop a targeted environmental communications and engagement strategy and plan.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A communications strategy was developed in 2017 to highlight the range of activities happening to support KES priorities and the impact they are having in Kent. It also aims to raise awareness of the KES priorities with politicians, decision makers and the public. A series of best practice films were produced in December 2017 showcasing the work of businesses, charities, public sector projects and volunteers from around Kent. 6 further films have been commissioned for release in December 2018. A KES celebration and networking event was held in December 2017 to champion KES priorities with local influencers and decision makers, and to raise awareness of the impact KES activities are having in Kent. A second event will be held in December 2018. A 'public friendly' version of the KES priorities is hosted on Explore Kent. The KES twitter page has been refreshed and a new KES You Tube channel set up. A social media programme will be developed for 2019, tied to the Kent Year of Green Action. 	GREEN

PRIORITY 4: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

BF4.1: Establish and monitor key performance indicators

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>KES Key performance indicators will be reviewed, updated and developed where required.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The KES indicators were reviewed and updated in early 2018 and are included as an appendix to this document. Several new indicators will be developed 2019-20 as projects progress. The indicators will be reviewed and updated annually in line with KES monitoring. 	<p>GREEN (improved)</p>

BF4.2: Evaluate progress and identify future risks, opportunities and actions aligned to the Kent Environment Strategy priorities, informing current and future actions

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>To ensure that the Kent Environment Strategy is delivering priorities and remains fit for purpose, annual monitoring and reporting will be undertaken.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing through this monitoring report, informed also by a review and update of the 2015 Kent State of the Environment Report. A summary impact report is published annually in December. 	<p>GREEN</p>

THEME 2: MAKING BEST USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES, AVOIDING OR MINIMISING NEGATIVE IMPACTS

Theme two activities are focused on ensuring that all sectors are aware of their impact on the environment and know how to avoid or reduce this, such as using resources more efficiently and reducing waste. The emphasis is on existing infrastructure, assets and resources across the public, private and domestic sectors; ensuring that these are managed efficiently to deliver net benefits, build resilience and provide the best value for organisations and residents.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS:

Partners across Kent have continued to make progress under this theme. For instance, Heritage Lottery Funding has been secured to deliver habitat improvement and connectivity projects such as Old Chalk New Downs, Making a Buzz for the Coast, the Fifth Continent Project and the Kearsney Parks Project in Dover. Many planning authorities have successfully secured improvements to the natural and historic environment through updated Local Plans and related green infrastructure, heritage and access strategies.

A number of key partnership strategies and action plans have been finalised and are now in implementation phases, including fuel poverty, active travel, public rights of way and waste management. A revised Kent Biodiversity Strategy and a Pollinator Action Plan for Kent are also in development and due for completion next year. These are key partnership documents that are protecting the environment and improving resource efficiency and health outcomes for Kent residents. Businesses are also being supported to make efficiencies and maximise opportunities from a growing low carbon sector through the LoCASE Programme, and many public sector organisations continue to reduce the environmental impact of their buildings and services through invest-to-save programmes.

Implementation of the Kent Environment Strategy is progressing well. Of the 25 actions in this theme; 16 are on-track or complete; 7 are rated 'amber', indicating moderate delays or issues; 2 are rated as red, with a risk of non-delivery. This is a slight improvement from last year. As in theme 1, the most commonly reported risks relate to a lack of staff resource to progress activities and future funding uncertainties relating to Brexit. Changes to government policy, such as the end of incentives for solar panels, reduction in funding for energy efficiency measures and the lack of public sector sustainability targets are also risks for this theme. There is a significant risk that progress will begin to stall in future years if an alternative to EU funding is not found.

<p>2 RED (no change from last year) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery</p>	<p>7 AMBER (decrease of 1 since last year) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of KES</p>	<p>16 GREEN (increase of 1 since last year) Activity on track or completed</p>
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Table 2: Theme 2 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2017 Implementation Plan)

DETAILED PROGRESS

PRIORITY 5 CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND SUPPLY OF THE COUNTY OF KENT'S NATURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES AND ASSETS

MR5.1: Establish a consistent approach for local planning authorities to incorporate landscape and seascape character into decision making

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Commission new landscape and seascape character assessments, incorporating specific landscape and seascape features and the services they provide.</p> <p><i>LEAD: None</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is progressing on the Kent Downs AONB Review of Landscape Character Areas. Once complete it is expected to form part of the AONB Management Plan, which will be subject to a full public consultation. Some local planning authorities have developed new landscape character assessments as part of the process to refresh their Local Plans. Due to a lack of resource it has not been possible to progress new landscape and seascape assessments for the county or any trend analysis. <p>RISK: Both activities are on hold whilst KES landscape partners review resources and identify a dedicated delivery lead.</p>	RED
<p>Undertake a landscape character trend analysis, identifying areas in declining condition and implementing actions as appropriate.</p> <p><i>LEAD: None</i></p>		

A number of local authorities have been refreshing their local plan, many of which include new approaches to incorporating landscape characteristics; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Canterbury City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council adopted landscape character and biodiversity assessments in 2017.
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A seascape assessment of the district is being used by staff to assess the impact of a marine development proposal. The council are also preparing a Landscape Characterisation Assessment of the district, which will be used to inform the Local Plan allocations and development management decisions.
Gravesham Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council published a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study in April 2018, to support the Council's Site Allocations consultation.

MR5.2: Improve and increase functional habitat networks and ensure that planning decisions enhance and protect our natural and historic environment

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Establish viable and appropriate large-scale habitat connectivity across Kent and Medway focusing on Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA) in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Chalk New Downs (Central North Downs, Medway Gap & North Kent Downs, Greensand Heaths and Commons) • Romney Marsh (Romney Marsh and Rye Harbour) <p><i>LEAD: Kent Nature Partnership</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two landscape scale projects have commenced with funding from Heritage Lottery Fund. The first is on Romney Marsh (Fifth Continent), led by Kent Wildlife Trust and the second project is on the North Downs (Old Chalk New Downs), led by Kent County Council. These four-year projects will deliver large scale habitat connectivity across a number of biodiversity opportunity areas through habitat restoration and re-creation. • Both have detailed work programmes running until 2020. 	GREEN
<p>To support planners and decision makers facilitate delivery of the Kent Biodiversity Strategy and targets, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA) will be integrated into local plans.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Nature Partnership</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2018 work commenced to update and refresh the Kent Biodiversity Strategy and its associated targets. The strategy will reflect the Defra 25-Year Plan, which was published in January 2018. A task and finish group has been established to review and agree the draft strategy for consultation. • Once the strategy has been finalised the BOAs, which are the spatial framework of the plan, can be updated. This will take place in 2019. <p>RISK: It has been necessary to update and refresh the Kent Biodiversity Strategy, which has extended the timeline for this activity.</p>	AMBER (worsened)
<p>Address the decline in pollinators across the county and the impact on Kent's environment and economy through improving linear habitats and delivering Plan Bee.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Plan Bee school's competition was judged and completed in July 2018 and the prize money will be awarded to the winning schools in October 2018. • In May 2018 a motion was passed by Kent County Council to develop a Kent Pollinator Action Plan, with unanimous cross-party support. A cross-party working group will be established to develop a formal strategy for pollinators. • In 2017 a partnership project led by the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust successful made a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their Making a Buzz for the Coast project. The project spans 135 miles of Kent coastline and will focus on restoring and creating habitat for Kent's wild bees. 	GREEN (improved)

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to improve habitat networks and biodiversity; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Canterbury City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several partnership initiatives including the Blean Initiative and Seasalter Partnership are working to increase functional habitat networks. The Swale and Thanet Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Schemes (SAMMS) were developed to provide strategic mitigation on the coastline. • Seasalter grazing marsh has been restored within The Swale SSSI, which is managed by the RSPB on behalf of Canterbury City Council. • Multiple green corridors have been secured as part of strategic planning applications, as well as large areas of additional semi-natural open space. One notable strategic development site identified in the 2017 Canterbury District Local Plan comes forward with 40 acres of land largely formed of semi-natural habitat, to adjoin the neighbouring Duncan Down Village Greens which are managed as a nature reserve and recognised as a Local Wildlife Site, doubling the area currently managed for wildlife and creating a huge new recreational green space for Whitstable. • A new green infrastructure plan is due for approval in November 2018.
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council is undertaking numerous activities to improve and increase functional habitat networks through the White Cliffs Countryside Project, HLF Kearsney Parks Project, Up on the Downs Project, Bay Hill Grassland Project and roadside nature reserves. Highlights include 175ha of improved and better connected chalk grassland, 1.5ha of open canopy woodland for educational use, reptile survey training and clearance of invasive scrub. • Plans are underway for The Bee Yard, where an environmentally friendly beekeeping company is looking to create an environmentally-friendly hub for business start-ups and artisan producers at the former Snowdown Colliery site.
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council are revising their Green Infrastructure Strategy. The new document will include green infrastructure proposals based not only on biodiversity opportunity areas, but according to area-based requirements and themes for example active life styles. The document will include a range projects that could be delivered through the planning system or contributions from other organisations.
Swale Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work has been completed to improve habitat on Seasalter Levels. • A new Green Infrastructure Strategy is being commissioned.
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council continues to fund the Kent High Weald Partnership who support site management and initiatives across the Borough to improve biodiversity and connectivity of habitats and are working to deliver new habitats as part of the on the Kent Wide Great Crested Newt project.

Local authority	Activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council is working in partnership with Kent Nature Partnership on a DEFRA sponsored Pilot project to improve outcomes for biodiversity through planning. In addition, the Council is developing a new net gain policy for biodiversity that includes provision for biodiversity offsetting and the use of DEFRA biodiversity metrics.

MR5.3: Identify and take forward opportunities for sustainable water management to improve quality and quantity of our water environment and resources

Activity	Progress	RAG
Deliver the Restoring Sustainable Abstraction programme, identifying over abstraction and taking action as needed. <i>LEAD: Environment Agency</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environment Agency worked with water companies in Kent to develop Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) for the 2019 periodic review of water company prices. It sets out a range of measures that water companies are expected to deliver for the period 2020-2025, including measures to address abstractions that are considered to be causing environmental damage, or those that could potentially cause deterioration if abstracted volumes increased. The Environment Agency will continue to work with water companies through the periodic review process to influence their business plan development, ahead of the final determination by OFWAT in December 2019. The Restoring Sustainable Abstraction Programme for Kent is complete. 	GREEN

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Deliver in partnership the Thames and South East River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) (2015-2021) to address Water Framework Directive objectives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and improve Drinking Water Protected Areas, Bathing Waters and Natura 2000 Sites. • Partnership action plans to reverse any decline in water body status. • Delivery of partnership projects identified in the RBMP supporting catchment sensitive farming, river restoration, habitat improvement and Water Company infrastructure projects. <p><i>LEAD: Environment Agency</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new £27 million scheme to improve the water environment across England was launched in March 2018 by Defra, Natural England and the Environment Agency. The Water Environment Grant scheme will provide £9 million each year over the next three years to applicants applying for funding to restore local eco-systems and deliver substantial benefits to people and the environment. Projects must help to achieve the River Basin Management Plan. • The EA have received potential project proposals for Kent that include river restoration activities, removal of obstacles to help fish moving along rivers and actions to improve the water quality. • There are 29 bathing waters in Kent and all are classified as sufficient or above. • The Environment Agency is working with water companies to improve drinking water protected areas. Safeguard zone actions are being revised to reflect work already completed by the water companies and planning for future work between 2020-2025 is underway. • Targeted farm visits continue to take place in water bodies with relevant 2021 objectives. • The Catchment Improvement Groups continue to support RBMP objectives through the Catchment Based Approach (CABA). 	GREEN
<p>Identify and deliver soft engineering techniques to mitigate against flood incidents, localised drainage problems or increase capacity in local sewer network.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Flood and Water Management)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two pilot projects are underway to deliver soft engineering techniques as part of the North Sea Region Interreg project BEGIN. These projects will demonstrate blue green infrastructure approaches to managing flood risk within urban areas with localised flood risk. This 3-year project will provide the evidence to support this approach being used across Kent. • The ongoing natural flood management programme helps manage flood risk through improved landscape management, habitat creation and river restoration. Several projects, including one in Tunbridge Wells and another in Marden have been completed to slow the flow of water within ‘flashy’ catchments, reducing the flood risk to downstream communities. 	GREEN (improved)

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to improve sustainable water management; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following an Environment Agency study, the council are planning improvements to prevent water leakage through Russel Gardens. River improvement projects have been completed through the Our Finest Dour project, in partnership with Affinity Water and Southern Water.
Swale Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Plan considers water and flooding and planning applications require sustainable drainage schemes to be considered.

MR5.4: Establish land-use management approaches that create, preserve and enhance healthy, viable soils and respect landscape character

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Engaging in discussion over CAP reforms, ensuring best outcomes for Kent's agricultural sector, biodiversity, landscape and soil.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Nature Partnership</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kent Nature Partnership submitted a response to the Defra consultation "Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit" in May 2018. <p>RISK: Engaging on this agenda is dependent on the capacity of Kent Nature Partnership members.</p>	AMBER (improved)

MR5.5: Develop heritage strategies to improve understanding and management of the historic environment

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Promote the use of Kent Farmsteads Guidance by developers and land managers and integrate within local plans.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Heritage Conservation)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kent County Council Heritage Group have recommended that Kent district and borough authorities adopt the Kent Farmstead Guidance as part of their Local Plan process. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council adopted the guidance in 2016. Applicants are being advised to utilise the guidance during proposed changes to historic farms. <p>RISK: Lack of staff resource has prevented more proactive work on this activity.</p>	AMBER (worsened)

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Assess heritage crime in the county and develop watch schemes as appropriate</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Heritage Conservation)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Heritage Watch Steering Committee was established in 2016 comprising: Kent Police, Historic England, Kent County Council Heritage Conservation, Leeds Castle and wider stakeholder. • Kent Heritage Watch, using the Country Eye app, was launched at Leeds Castle in February 2017. It allows people to report anything suspicious around historic sites in Kent. • Two heritage crime parish assessments are underway at Hollingbourne and Swanscombe and Greenhithe. 	GREEN
<p>Develop a long-term solution to the Kent archaeological archives storage and access problem</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Heritage Conservation)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A condition assessment of the High Speed 1 archaeological archive has been commissioned and is due to report in November 2018. The information will support a Heritage Lottery Fund bid. • Options are being assessed for the long-term storage of Kent archaeological archives in partnership with KCS or East Sussex County Council. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities are involved with activities to develop and update local heritage strategies; examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is progressing a heritage lottery fund bid to restore Maison Dieu (Dover Town Hall), which is a Grade I listed building and scheduled monument. The aim is to create a thriving cultural venue, complementing Dover's many heritage assets and building a stronger visitor economy. • The Let Them Speak for Themselves project, coordinated by Canterbury Archaeological Trust and volunteers is improving the accuracy and quality of records relating to military structures. • A conservation management plan has been produced for South Foreland Lighthouse.
Swale Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council is drafting a Heritage Strategy for consultation, which will form part of the Local Plan evidence base. • Council and community representatives have attended heritage crime workshops and shared best practice at community group level.

PRIORITY 6 IMPROVE OUR RESOURCE EFFICIENCY SUCH AS ENERGY, WATER AND LAND

MR6.1: Reduce negative impacts and maximise the resource efficiency of public sector services, setting out our public commitments for energy, waste and water use reduction

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Update and widely communicate public commitments for energy, waste and water use reduction across local authorities</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Climate Change Network</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full review of KES indicators was completed in 2018 and are included as an appendix to this report. Key targets will also be included in the Impact Report. The Kent Climate Change Network is helping to support public sector organisations to sign up to the Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020, which was launched by government in July. Many public sector organisations have set corporate targets for energy, water and waste. <p>RISK: Although many of Kent's public sector organisations have set environmental targets, they are not widely communicated. Furthermore, the demise of the national Climate Local campaign means there is no longer a recognised format for communicating environmental commitments publicly.</p>	AMBER
<p>Identify and implement renewable energy opportunities across public sector estates, partnering with communities and businesses as appropriate.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The renewable energy action plan has been reviewed and the evidence updated. Feasibility studies have been completed looking at opportunities for solar photovoltaic panels at several sites owned by Kent County Council. Northfleet School for Girls have installed a 180kWp solar array, believed to be one of the largest renewable energy projects installed at a school in the UK. Kent County Council continue to support Orchard Energy and Sheppey Community Energy Trust to promote community renewable energy. <p>RISK: Converting opportunities into schemes on the ground is a long process with many barriers, particularly those relating to technical and planning considerations as well as financial.</p>	AMBER

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to maximise opportunities for resource efficiency on their estates and assets; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council continue to publish HECA and greenhouse gas reports annually, which highlight the action and positive impacts the council is taking to reduce carbon emissions within the council estate and wider. A new Leisure Centre under construction at Whitfield is on target to achieve a BREAAAM Very Good

Local authority	Activity
	<p>rating. The centre includes a thermally efficient building envelope, reduced energy and water consumption, energy monitoring, effective management and recycling of construction waste, energy efficient lighting, indoor air quality, solar PV, electric vehicle charging points and deep bore soakaways to manage all surface water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The William Muge and Snelgrove Housing Development has been built to a high standard using fabric first principles, which ensure a high thermal efficiency of the building. The houses will also have very efficient gas boilers and controls, as well as low energy lighting. • Upgrades to the Tides Leisure Centre plant equipment is expected to reduce energy consumption by 30% and make the systems more reliable. • Plans are underway to convert all of the council's existing street lights to LED lighting, utilising Salix funding. Subject to cabinet approval, the work could start in 2019. • The council is taking part in the Triple A solar PV and battery storage project, which will monitor the benefits of the technology.
Dartford Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new boiler has been installed in the civic centre building and a new roof and insulation is currently being installed. This will reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

MR6.2: Improve the resource efficiency of our homes, reducing costs, tackling fuel poverty and improving health outcomes

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Develop a Waste Disposal Strategy for Kent County Council (as the Waste Disposal Authority), working with the Kent Resource Partnership (KRP).</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Waste Management)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Waste Disposal Strategy was developed and adopted by Kent County Council in 2017, setting out their direction as the Waste Disposal Authority up to 2035. Development of the strategy was informed by engagement with the Kent Resource Partnership, KCC and district partners. • An implementation plan been developed and implementation of phase 1 started in 2018/2019. Key achievements so far include establishing the Kent Environmental Crime Practitioner’s Working Group, establishing trade waste enforcement processes, analysing reuse opportunities at household waste recycling centres and initial work to understand the market opportunities for the provision of a household waste recycling centre to serve west Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling. • Overall, waste to landfill for the 17/18 period was down to 1%. 	GREEN
<p>Review and update the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS).</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Resource Partnership</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017/18 the Kent Resource Partnership begun its process of refreshing the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. Following a period of consultation with councillors and officers of the Kent Resource Partnership, a revised strategy was open for public consultation during March and April 2018. • The final strategy was approved by the Kent Resource Partnership Members Board in July 2018, with all Kent councils anticipated to formally adopt the strategy over the summer. 	GREEN (improved)
<p>Develop and deliver a Fuel Poverty Strategy for Kent and Medway.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership (KEEP)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2016 the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership developed a fuel poverty strategy for Kent, in consultation with wider stakeholders. In 2017 subsequent work was undertaken to develop an action plan. • The partnership continues to lever in external funding, with many districts now having an ECO Flex Statement of Intent in place. The partnership has also started to work with SGN to deliver first-time heating and gas connections. • To help reduce energy bills for residents the partnership continues to deliver ‘collective switching’, and energy efficiency measures through the Warm Homes scheme. • The partnership and KCC Public Health through the Open Data Institute successfully bid for funding with to pilot the use of anonymised health data and links to fuel poverty area targeting. There is scope to extend this for health referrals with public health and to enable area of focus on more streamlined referral route for the most vulnerable in our communities. 	GREEN

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Deliver a coordinated retrofit programme across Kent and Medway such as the Warm Homes Programme.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Warm Homes Programme has continued to assist residents in making energy improvements to their homes. Over the past year the initiative has assisted over 120 residents, leveraging in over £49,000 national and local grant funding and finance. KCC in partnership with the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership are a partner in a four-year project to trial new technologies (solar PV linked to battery storage) in 10 homes within Kent. <p>RISK: National and local funding for energy efficiency measures continues to reduce and the partnership must look for alternative funding and financial mechanisms to support residents.</p>	AMBER (worsened)

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to improve energy and resource efficiency and reduce fuel poverty for residents; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dover District Council is the lead authority for Energy Deal, the Collective Energy Switching Scheme supported by 5 local authorities in Kent. Energy Deal has saved domestic switchers £770,127 since its launch in 2013. This scheme supports one of the priorities outlined in the Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy. Dover District along with other councils across Kent is actively working with Southern Gas Networks to find and connect off-gas properties to mains gas to help provide affordable warmth. The council is also an active member of ALEO SE and Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership and promotes schemes such as Energy Deal, Local Authority Flexible Eligibility (LA Flex) and Warm Homes. The council's Housing Assistance Policy has been amended to provide assistance for more people and a Health and Housing Coordinator has been funded for William Harvey Hospital, which should increase referrals to those in fuel poverty. The Council has been involved in various Kent Resource Partnership projects to improve the quality of recycled waste, increase food waste disposal and providing a cleaner Kent.
Dartford Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dartford Borough Council has developed and used the new LA Flex process and has been making declarations for energy efficiency measures for vulnerable residents. The council has also introduced additional grants using Better Care Funding, which can be used to help support residents to ensure they stay warm and safe within their own homes. This includes grants towards boilers and heating systems. The council continues to operate a programme for external wall insulation measures for its council housing stock. The council has focussed on identifying and helping properties that are currently 'off gas' but may be eligible for support to have gas connected and a heating system installed in their property.

Local authority	Activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops have been organised for community pharmacists to make them aware of the different services available to residents including collective switching, LA Flex, grants for disabled facilities and other grants.
Gravesham Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council continues to deliver fuel poverty schemes to help vulnerable households living in cold homes and reducing carbon emissions.
Swale Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council continues to signpost households to sources of funding for energy efficiency measures.

MR6.3: Work with businesses to reduce costs and negative impacts through improving compliance, efficiency, resilience and innovation in the use of resources

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Develop an integrated business support package to maximise existing support and develop appropriate public sector interventions for promoting growth in the low carbon sector across Kent and Medway.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LoCASE Programme was launched in 2016, a £18.8million EU funded project being delivered through a partnership of local authorities and universities across the southeast. The project is supporting growth of the low carbon economy through providing support and grants to SMEs for low carbon initiatives (new businesses, carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures, products and knowledge transfer), creating new jobs in the Low Carbon, Environmental Goods and Services (LCEGS) sector, private sector investment and raising awareness of opportunities. <p>RISK: Current support mechanisms such as LOCASE are due to end as early as March 2019, with uncertainty around what will replace them.</p>	GREEN

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to reduce costs and increase resource efficiency for businesses; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the Energy Deal, the council has assisted SMEs to switch to cheaper energy tariffs; 15 in 2016, and a further 28 in 2017.
Swale Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council continues to signpost businesses to sources of funding for energy efficiency measures.

PRIORITY 7 ENSURE SUSTAINABLE ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY FOR BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES

MR7.1 Develop and integrated approach to sustainable access to our countryside, heritage and coast

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Review and update the Countryside and Coastal Access and Improvement Plan.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Public Rights of Way)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will set out KCC's vision for the public rights of way network and how they will deliver it over the next 10 years. Preparation of the plan has included: assessment of existing and potential use and demand of the public rights of way network; policy and strategy review; customer profiling; market research; consultation and stakeholder engagement. A public consultation was held between June and September 2018 and the final plan was adopted by the council in December 2018. 	GREEN (Improved)
<p>Promote a sustainable tourism and visitor economy for Kent maximising Kent's natural and historical assets across the county's inland, coastal and marine areas.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Explore Kent)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore Kent continues to work with partners to develop and refresh the promotion of quality activities and routes on the Explore Kent website. During 2017/18, seven new routes were added to the website and promoted. The 'We Love Walkers and Cyclists' accreditation scheme has been put on hold following staff changes. <p>RISK: Explore Kent is currently reviewing its service and resourcing.</p>	AMBER
<p>Searchable register and promotion of activities that support the health and wellbeing of residents.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Explore Kent)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Explore Kent website provides a searchable register of outdoor activities. The list of activities increased over 2017/18 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 outdoor gyms (free and located in public places) 1 new cycle trail 7 new walking routes 2,454 events promoted. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to increase use and improve accessibility to countryside, heritage and coast; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Canterbury City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two new off-road cycle routes have been opened; one at Canterbury riverside and the other at the Crab and Winkle route in Whitstable.

Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The White Cliffs Countryside Project promotes walking and cycling across Dover, Hythe and Folkestone, through annual events programme. It is also working with partners to promote sustainable tourism. • The HLF Kearsney Parks Project is installing new cycle racks and improving parkland routes to encourage walking and cycling around the gardens. • The Up on the Downs Project has created a 300m Access for All path and improved 1km of public footpath.
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dungeness Sustainable Access and Recreational Management Strategy (SARMS) has been prepared by both Folkestone and Hythe and Rother District Councils. The strategy seeks to address the issues that could occur if planned new development increases access and recreational use at the internationally important Dungeness Complex of Natura 2000 sites. It proposes supporting actions to ensure sensitive management of recreation and access for the sites, drawing upon the visitor surveys in the first phase.

MR7.2 Ensure our residents, businesses and communities are well connected to services, with sustainable and active travel options

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Promote the development of high quality walking, cycling and public transport routes through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, Local Transport Plan and KCC's Active Travel Strategy.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Highways and Transport)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC's Active Travel Strategy was adopted by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee in March 2017. The focus is on better maintaining, promoting and encouraging use of existing routes for walking and cycling. Actions include expanding bicycle recycling programmes, providing town walk and cycle maps and improving accuracy of fault reporting on the cycle network. • The Active Travel Strategy's 2017/18 progress report has been published and is available at www.kent.gov.uk/activetravel. Cycle counter evidence suggests a 7.7% increase in cycling across the county in 2017, compared to 2016. 	GREEN
<p>Support access to superfast broadband across the county.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Economic Development)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC continues to work with the government's broadband agency, Broadband Delivery UK, to improve access to superfast broadband services in Kent and Medway. To date, this work has brought superfast broadband to over 138,000 homes and businesses, who would otherwise have been left with no, or slow broadband. • This means that by the end of September 2018, 95.7% of properties across Kent and Medway will be able to access a superfast broadband service of at least 24mbps. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to ensure residents, business and communities are connected to services; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Canterbury City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new developments are required to have electric vehicle charging points from July 2018. Nine new on-street EV charging points have been installed and another three installed in car parks. A Canterbury car club is being rolled-out, as is a docked bike-hire scheme. Improvements are being made to the public realm in Canterbury to encourage walking and better integration of bus services to encourage greater use of public transport.
Gravesham Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council worked with Kent County Council to develop the Gravesend Station to Cyclopark cycle route. The first phase opened in spring 2018 and the phase two opened in the summer. Through the Local Plan, the council are consulting on a draft policy on electric vehicle charging points.

MR7.3 Promote smarter working practices to improve efficiency and deliver health and economic benefits through reduced travel

Activity	Progress	RAG
Support SME's in enhancing their digital capabilities. <i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LoCASE Programme provides support and grants to SMEs for low carbon initiatives (new businesses, carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures, products and knowledge transfer), creating new jobs in the Low Carbon, Environmental Goods and Services (LCEGS) sector, private sector investment and raising awareness of opportunities. Through the programme, 112 businesses have been assisted with website development, with a total grant value of £464,000. <p>RISK: Current support mechanisms such as LOCASE are due to end as early as March 2019, with uncertainty around what will replace them.</p>	GREEN
Holding action for travel advice for public sector and businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This activity will be reviewed during the next iteration of the implementation plan. 	

THEME 3: TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The focus of theme three is to ensure that that Kent’s communities, businesses, environment and services are resilient to future environmental change, whilst delivering wider economic and health opportunities. The evidence on risks and opportunities from theme one is used to influence and develop the plans, strategies and policies in this theme.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS:

Through a range of partnership activities, including the recommendations made by the Water for Sustainable Growth Study, there is now a better understanding of the fresh and waste water requirements needed to support growth. This learning has been incorporated into the updated Growth and Infrastructure Framework and the requirements are being successfully included within planning decisions such as those at Ebbsfleet Garden City and Otterpool Park developments. There has also been progress with the Environment Agency’s capital programme to reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion and the promotion of sustainable drainage schemes through local planning and the recently approved BEGIN project.

Several European Union funded projects are underway, which will increase the capacity of our communities and services to adapt to the impacts of climate change, particularly from flooding and heat, whilst resilient practices are also being integrated into business support programmes through Low Carbon Kent. Work to develop a climate change risk assessment for Kent is also underway and due for publication in 2019.

Kent’s local produce and low carbon sectors continue to be supported through European Union funded projects such as LEADER and LoCASE, which provide support to the rural sector and wider low carbon businesses. High growth areas supporting the transition to a low carbon economy have been identified through theme 1 and are being supported through these projects and others, such as Inn2POWER, a European Union funded project focused on Kent’s offshore wind supply chain sector.

Of the 25 actions in this theme; 20 are on-track or complete; 4 are rated ‘amber’ indicating moderate delays or issues; 1 is rated as red with a risk of non-delivery. This is a significant improvement from last year, due to the increase in staff resource following successful European Union bids for funding. The main risks for this theme relate to partnership activities where a lead has yet to be agreed, or where further work to coordinate activities is required; in these cases, a lack of resource is the primary issue.

<p>1 RED (decrease of 4 from last year) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery</p>	<p>4 AMBER (increase of 2 from last year) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of KES</p>	<p>20 GREEN (increase of 2 from last year) Activity on track or completed</p>
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Table 3: Theme 3 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2017 Implementation Plan)

DETAILED PROGRESS

PRIORITY 8: INFLUENCE FUTURE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FOR THE COUNTY OF KENT

SF8.1: Ensure that key environmental risks such as flooding, water scarcity and heat are informing policy decisions and development

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Review and refresh the Local Flood Risk Strategy.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Flood and Water Management)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Flood Risk Strategy has been completed and was published in November 2017. It will continue to be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure objectives are being delivered and remain relevant. 	GREEN
<p>Water infrastructure capacity is informing planned developments.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Flood and Water Management)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recommendations from the Water for Sustainable Growth study are being used to inform planned developments; see activity BF1.4 for update. Water and wastewater requirements are included in the Growth and Infrastructure Framework. Dover District Council, KCC and Southern Water are developing a broader, improved approach to aligning growth and wastewater infrastructure capacity through the Water for Growth, Dover project. Planning for the Ebbsfleet Garden City and Otterpool Park developments are including detailed consideration of water infrastructure constraints and requirements. KCC and local authorities are working with the water industry to influence their planning. Detailed responses were provided to the draft Water Resources Management Plans. Water Cycle studies are being updated by local planning authorities to consider water infrastructure issues and opportunities to support Local Plans. 	GREEN
<p>Ensure outputs of the Kent Climate Change Risk Assessment are integrated into policy and planning.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kent Climate Change Risk Assessment will be updated in early 2019 (see activity BF1.2) and the recommendations from that will then be communicated to relevant partner policy leads. 	GREEN (improved)

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to integrate environmental risks and opportunities into local plans and policy; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	The local plan is currently being reviewed and will be informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
Gravesham Borough Council	As part of planning for the Ebbsfleet Garden City developments are including detailed consideration of water infrastructure constraints and requirements.
Swale District Council	The local plan was revised and adopted in July 2017. It includes domestic water use limits which are lower than those stipulated in building regulations.

SF8.2: Address the environmental challenges and ambitions identified in the Growth and Infrastructure Framework and local plans, such as sustainable and alternative transport options, green infrastructure, energy, water and flooding

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Identify energy needs for growth and how these can be met sustainably and ensuring that these are incorporated into the Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF) (e.g. district heating and community energy).</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recommendations from the energy select committee and renewable energy action plan review are been incorporated into the Growth and Infrastructure Framework. Work continues to provide energy advice and guidance to inform the Framework. Kent County Council are working with UK Power Networks so that new development can be planned and that new energy needs are met sustainably. Kent County Council is providing input into the Tri-LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) Energy Strategy, which focuses on the long-terms needs for power, heating and transport in South East England. A Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy is being developed and will include a focus on energy. 	GREEN

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Promote inclusion of environment and sustainable approaches to water management, such as sustainably managed surface water and increased capacity with sewer systems.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Flood and Water Management)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent County Council has delivered annual workshops to Local Planning Authorities and developers about the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme (SuDS) in the management of surface water. These sessions have also included discussions about the opportunities that exist to create habitat to support a greater biodiversity within SuDS. • Kent County Council continues to support the Wet Centre at the NIAB EMR which promotes the use of sustainable water and water efficiency within the soft fruit industry. • The Natural Flood Management programme is delivering sustainable approaches to flood risk management and works closely with the catchment partnerships to deliver projects which tackle flooding and address water quality and habitat issues. This multiple benefit approach ensures that projects are more cost effective and allows greater partnership working across sectors. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to address environmental challenges and opportunities; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Canterbury City Council	The Local Plan ensures that all major new developments have good accessible transport links, including cycle and bus routes. There is also a requirement that all new housing developments have EVB charging capabilities.

SF8.3: Develop guidance and support to enable sustainable growth, protecting the county of Kent’s environmental and historic assets, and supporting healthy, prosperous communities

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Provide support and guidance e.g. Kent Design to achieve sustainable growth through incorporating KES priorities.</p> <p><i>LEAD:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project for creating a set of sustainable design standards for Kent County Council has started and is now in the 'analyse' phase. <p>RISK: A lead has yet to be identified for this activity.</p>	AMBER (improved)

PRIORITY 9: IMPROVE THE COUNTY OF KENT'S ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

SF9.1: Increase awareness of the impacts of severe weather and environmental change and empower businesses and communities to build resilience

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Increase the number of people across Kent registered with Floodline Warnings Direct by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging people to sign up. • Working with telecommunications companies to register customers at risk of flooding to Floodline Warnings Direct. • Developing the Flood Warning Service to increase the level of coverage, offering a service to more customers. <p><i>LEAD: Environment Agency</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment Agency continues to encourage communities to sign up to flood warnings and prepare for flooding through face to face community events and meetings. They visited a number of primary schools to promote flood risk and preparedness, held a successful flood warden seminar and held four flood warden training sessions, targeting over 40 different communities across Kent. A key role of flood wardens is to promote awareness of flood risk to communities and encourage people to sign up to receive flood warnings. • The Environment Agency also used social and traditional media to share messages, for example through the Flood Action Campaign with the strapline of 'Prepare, Act, Survive'. As part of the Flood Action Campaign, the Environment Agency has been engaging with their target audiences in Kent (18-34 year olds, young families and students), by displaying advice and information in libraries, leisure centres and children's centres. • Between Oct 2017 and Sept 2018 there has been an overall increase of 8,263 Flood Warning registrations in Kent. This equates to 188 new full registrations, and 8,075 new Extended Direct Warning (EDW) registrations. These EDW registrations were automatic sign-ups through mobile phone providers. 	GREEN
<p>Support communities at risk of flooding to be more actively involved in the management of flood risk in their area.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On behalf of Kent County Council, the National Flood Forum have been working closely with five communities in Kent to establish flood action groups and develop flood action plans to help them better manage risk. These are progressing well, especially though partnership working during multi-agency meetings with communities. • A community resilience group has also been formed through the Medway Flood Partnership, which aims to help communities in the Medway catchment better manage risk in their area. • The Kent Resilience Forum continues to promote and support Flood Warden training and is planning to hold a community resilience and winter preparedness seminar later in 2018. 	GREEN
<p>Support businesses in understanding their risk and build resilience to environmental change.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) programme continues to include resilience to severe weather; this is delivered through Low Carbon Kent. • Initial work has started to develop project bids that will support businesses to improve water management on their properties and reduce the risk and impact of flood and drought. 	GREEN

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Development and implementation of a Kent Community Resilience Strategy addressing environmental change.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Resilience Forum</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kent Resilience Forum's Long-Term Risk Assessment has been completed (which considers the impacts of climate change) and is being used to inform business planning. A new Severe Weather Group has been established, reporting to the Kent Resilience Forum Delivery Board. The Kent Association of Local Councils are now included in the community risk assessment process to ensure that community plans are developed according to the risks. The community risk register is informed by the Climate Change Risk Assessment. <p>RISK: Work to progress the resilient communities engagement strategy has been put on hold due to Brexit contingency planning.</p>	AMBER

SF9.2: Ensure that public sector services have assessed key environment and severe weather risks and opportunities and are taking action accordingly

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Ensure the risks and opportunities from climate change are understood and inform delivery and commissioning of services.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kent Climate Change Risk Assessment will be updated in early 2019 (see activity BF1.2) after which the risks and opportunities will be disseminated. In addition, a decision-making support tool will also be developed through the EU funded STAR 2Cs project, to help inform the delivery and commissioning of services. Kent County Council risk management guidance includes climate change risks. 	GREEN
<p>Embed climate change adaptation into long term decision making for public authorities.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kent Climate Change Risk Assessment will be updated in early 2019 (see activity BF1.2) after which the risks and opportunities will be disseminated. In addition, a decision-making support tool will also be developed through the EU funded STAR 2Cs project, to help inform the delivery and commissioning of services. 	GREEN
<p>Establish approach to build resilience within health and social care sector.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the EU funded FRAMES project, work has been undertaken to improve e-tools such as SHAPE, SWIMS, Kent View, Climate Just and service templates, to strengthen their links to the multi-layer concept and increase their usefulness in improving resilience across the health and social care sector. 	GREEN

SF9.3: Improve water management and build flood resilience, maximising opportunities to deliver multiple benefits for our environment and residents into the future

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Devise a sustainable maintenance model for SuDs (Sustainable Drainage Scheme) features.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Flood and Water Management)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the North Seas Region Interreg BEGIN project, work is underway to develop a sustainable maintenance model for SuDs and Blue Green Infrastructure. The project is in its early stages, but the approach is utilising community engagement and social innovation from the outset. The project will continue until 2020. 	GREEN
<p>Reduce the number of properties at flood risk or coastal erosion risk through delivery of a six year capital improvement plan.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Environment Agency</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environment Agency continues to deliver its six-year capital improvement programme. In 2017/18, Environment Agency-led schemes improved the level of protection from flooding to 6,070 homes and 699 homes from coastal erosion in Kent. Examples include the Middle Medway Flood Resilience project, which protected 27 properties and Queenborough Creek Barrier, which protected 190 properties. The programme for 2018/19 will reduce flood risk to a further 3,824 homes and 984 homes from coastal erosion in Kent. 	GREEN
<p>Build resilience of catchments and ecosystems and develop integrated catchment management throughout Kent through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking opportunities to engage, promote, and support the 4 Catchment Partnership in Kent. Working with Kent Planning Officers Group to raise awareness of Water Framework Directive and utilise opportunities arising through the planning process. Delivery of freshwater and inter-tidal habitats across the Thames and Medway Estuaries and North Kent. <p><i>LEAD: Environment Agency</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In December 2017 the Medway Flood Partnership published the Medway Flood Action Plan. The plan sets out a shared action plan for the next 5 to 10 years, and a 25-year vision for the future around how the partnership can manage or reduce the risk of flooding and increase resilience in the Medway catchment. Catchment partners across Kent and Medway continue to build the resilience of catchments and ecosystems through the catchment-based approach, and to look for joint ways of working to increase the long-term sustainability of the catchment partnerships. There is ongoing work with the Rivers Trust to look at future partnership working to deliver larger and more ambitious, multi-catchment projects over a longer time period. The Estuary Edges Guidance has been published. The guidance is aimed at developers in urban areas to promote the creation of saltmarsh fringes. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to build flood resilience; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	The council have worked with East Kent Engineering Partnership to design and construct two geo bag groynes (simulating rock groynes), to see how they behave in their position over the next year. Long term rock groynes will replace the trial versions in 2020.
Swale Borough Council	In partnership with Kent County Council, a sustainable urban drainage scheme for Bell Road in Sittingbourne is being developed.

SF9.4: Build resilience to the impacts of environmental change, disease and invasive species on human, plant and animal health

Activity	Progress	RAG
Implement the Ash Dieback Action Plan and develop a Tree Strategy for Kent & Medway <i>LEAD: Kent Resilience Forum (Ash Dieback Strategic Coordinating Group)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Ash Dieback Action Plan continues to be monitored. An update report was given to KCC Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee in November 2017 and annual tetrad surveys undertaken in June 2018. Kent data has been used to inform a research paper published in Plants, People and Planet Journal. Work is underway to develop a Tree Strategy for Kent. A draft document was presented to the KES Steering Group in June 2018 and further work will be undertaken to refine the document ahead of wider stakeholder consultation. 	GREEN

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Share risks and learning in relation to animal and plant disease, and invasive species, mechanism will be developed to raise awareness and improve communication across public and voluntary sectors, and landowners.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Resilience Forum</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The KCC Animal and Plant Health Emergency Plan was refreshed and re-issued in July 2017 and validated by a multi-agency exercise in November 2017. A public version is available online. • A Biosecurity: Animal and Plant Health E-Learning Tool has been produced. • KCC Resilience and Emergency Planning Service and Trading Standards work closely with Defra's Animal and Plant Health Agency to ensure that early warning of potential animal and plant health threats are assessed and communicated as appropriate. • Biosecurity and ecological resilience considerations routinely inform KCC Resilience and Emergency Planning Service contributions to KCC responses to planning / landscape policy and major planning application consultations. • Individual activities to tackle invasive non-native species are being carried out by a range of partners including Environment Agency, Kent Countryside Management Partnerships, Kent Wildlife Trust and Natural England. <p>RISK: Although there has been considerable activity around animal and plant disease, there has been little coordinated activity to address invasive non-native species. It may be necessary to identify a lead for this sub-activity in future iterations of the plan.</p>	AMBER (improved)

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to build resilience to environmental change; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	Plans are underway to extend the current tree survey to include housing land. This will inform how the council manages its tree stock in relation to ash dieback, invasive species and planting schemes.
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	The council are leading on delivery of the Kent Tree Strategy through the Task and Finish Group.

PRIORITY 10: SUPPORTING GROWTH IN THE RURAL ECONOMY AND LOW CARBON AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SECTOR

SF10.1: Support business innovation

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Support businesses to build resilience to resource scarcity in delivery of products and services.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the LoCASE Programme, all SMEs are encouraged to build resilience to resource scarcity into the delivery of the products and services. The Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) programme continues to include resilience to severe weather; this is delivered through Low Carbon Kent. 	GREEN
<p>Develop and promote high growth, low carbon sectors such as offshore wind, marine energy, building retrofit and wood biomass.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Inn2POWER project is improving the innovation capacity of SMEs and facilitating access to the Offshore Wind Industry (OWI). So far 340 SMEs have signed up to the network. A Greater South East networking event will take place in November 2018. The LoCASE Programme directly aims to support the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors including wood fuels and building retrofit. It does this in a number of ways; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in enterprises. Investing in businesses directly involved in the low-carbon environmental goods and services (LCEGS) sector. 	GREEN

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to support business innovation; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Dover District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLF Kearsney Parks project successfully bid for £44,000 of Arts Council funding to support local artists.

SF10.2: Maximise opportunities for the rural sector

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Develop an integrated business support package for the rural low carbon and environmental and goods and services (LCEGS) sector.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LoCASE Programme was launched in 2016; a £18.8million EU funded project being delivered through a partnership of local authorities and universities across the southeast. So far, 654 grants have been awarded, totalling £4.3million. The project is supporting businesses in the rural low carbon environmental goods and services, including the rural wood fuel businesses. Additional support for rural business is provided by the LEADER Rural Funding Programme, which offers grants and investment to growers, foresters, farmers and other rural businesses. 	GREEN

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Widely promote Kent's local food and drink offer to key markets and raise awareness of sustainable business opportunities.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Produced in Kent</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced in Kent continues to provide business support to a wide range of SMEs in the food and drinks sector, and promote their produce and products locally, nationally and internationally. This work is undertaken in partnership with a number of organisations including Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Institute of Directors (Kent); Department of International Trade and the Better Business for All initiative (BBfA). • Highlights during this period include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The first Kent food and drink conference held in April 2018 and the Taste of Kent Awards in March 2018. ○ Implementation of the Kent Food Trails food tourism project; including a micro site for visitors to curate their own food experience. ○ Development of a new buyer-to-buyer Produced in Kent website. ○ Securing food and drink sector representation on two Kent LEADER groups. 	GREEN
<p>Attract increasing levels of investment into the Kent agri-food sector to increase food production to meet national targets, now part of a national Government strategy in the 25 year Food Plan.</p> <p><i>LEAD:</i></p>	<p>A lead for this activity has yet to be identified.</p> <p>RISK: Once a lead has been confirmed, the scope of this activity will be defined in line with available resource.</p>	RED

A number of local authorities across the Boroughs and Districts have been involved with maximising opportunities for the rural sector; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
Swale Borough Council	The council is a key contributor at the executive level to the LEADER programme and project assessment process.
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council promote the West Kent Leader Programme. The current programme runs from 2014 to 2020. The last LEADER programme closed at end of 2013, having awarded over £1.25m grant funding to 62 projects.

SF10.3: Support skills development to facilitate growth

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Target skills development across priority areas in the land sector, rural economy and community energy.</p> <p><i>LEAD:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual activities to develop skills in the land sector and rural economy are being led through support programmes such as LoCASE (see activities 10.1 and 10.2), and Kent Guilds, which was set up to address skills issues in several sectors including the land-based sector. No lead has been identified for this action. <p>RISK: With no lead, there is a risk that activities will be carried out in isolation, and the priority gaps and issues are not identified or addressed.</p>	AMBER

A number of local authorities have been involved with activity to support skills development; a few examples of activity are highlighted below.

Local authority	Activity
<p>Dover District Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Up On The Downs HLF project has offered three one-year apprenticeships in Environmental Conservation. The John Muir Award aims to get people from all backgrounds into the countryside, as part of an educational programme. All the people were at risk of leaving full-time education without going on to further training or employment. 112 young people were helped to achieve the award. Teaching on the Downs has been created to inspire teachers to use the Downs for a wide variety of subjects, including Maths, English, History and Art in a cross curricular way. The website provides everything a teacher would need to use the outdoors in lesson planning, with suggested lesson activities, practical information about suggested sites, video guides and risk assessments.

SF10.4: Widely promote the county of Kent as the place for low carbon and environmental businesses

Activity	Progress	RAG
<p>Market Kent as the place for sustainable business by promoting the low carbon sector.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent County Council (Sustainable Business and Communities)</i></p>	<p>The Low Carbon Kent Network delivers a number of projects that support growth of the Low Carbon Sector by stimulating demand, supporting supply and transferring knowledge. To date the projects have provided support to 1500 SMEs, created 270 new jobs in the Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services sector and raised awareness to 200,000+ people.</p> <p>Over the next reporting period the Low Carbon Kent partners and network SMEs will be involved in a number of events to directly promote and market the sector, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration building, business-to-business networking and meet-the-buyer events to aid key sector supply chain development, including promotion at national and international events and support entering transnational markets. • Delivery of EU funded projects LoCASE and Inn2Power which will support development and promotion of opportunities respectively for the low carbon sector as a whole and offshore wind supply chain sector. 	<p>GREEN</p>