

# **Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy Implementation Plan 2024-2027**

Year 4 activity monitoring report

Jan 2024 – Dec 2024

**Executive Summary of achievements**

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## Priority 1 Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050

### Set five-year carbon budgets and emission reduction pathways to 2050 for Kent and Medway, with significant reduction by 2030.

In 2024, the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (ELES) continued to provide an overarching Kent and Medway area Net Zero plan.

All Kent and Medway local authorities have published their own local net zero action plans and strategies, some of which have other titles such as climate change action plans or carbon reduction plans. These plans generally set out the scope of emissions within the organisation's control, usually scopes 1 & 2, which tends to consist of emissions derived by gas from heating buildings, fuel for fleet and electricity across the estate. Some districts have also considered wider scope 3 emissions within their plans.

In terms of scope 3 emissions, which are far more challenging for a local authority to influence, these have been referenced in varying capacity within plans by Kent County Council (KCC), Ashford Borough Council (Ashford BC), Canterbury City Council (Canterbury CC), Dartford Borough Council (Dartford BC), Dover District Council (Dover DC), Folkestone and Hythe District Council (Folkestone and Hythe DC), Gravesham Borough Council (Gravesham BC), Maidstone Borough Council (Maidstone BC), Medway Council (Medway C), Sevenoaks District Council (Sevenoaks DC), Swale Borough Council (Swale BC), Thanet District Council (Thanet DC), Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (Tonbridge and Malling BC) and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (Tunbridge Wells BC). Most authorities are only measuring progress against scope 3 emissions where certain data is easily available to them and/or based on what's considered within scope. For example, some authorities would include their waste contracts in scope 3 and can therefore measure emissions derived from waste fleet fuel consumption.

The Kent Emissions Pathway Report was published in March 2021, following agreement by all partner authorities. KCC's Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee also agreed to track progress against the Pathway.

Further to the pathway report, some local authorities have determined specific carbon budgets for their areas, using the Tyndall Centre data. While a number of authorities have undertaken this work, the majority have yet to publish their own area-specific carbon budgets.

Work to refine the pathways at a sector and area level, and to estimate costs, has started within the transport sector. In late 2024, the LTP5 was published. The plan has a section dedicated to Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions reductions forecasts against our carbon budget, and includes potential emissions increase risks identified within the transport plan.

Progress with the ELES is being monitored annually with contributions via Kent's Climate Change Network (CCN). Annual monitoring took place during November/December 2024 with a full report due to be presented to Kent and Medway Environmental Group (KMEG), before going to KCC's Cross Party Members Group for the Environment (CPMG) and KCC's Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee (ETCC). Most authorities are monitoring their climate change activity using internal governance processes and some are providing annual updates of plans on their websites.

Other members of the Climate Change Network (CCN) group have also published their own plans. Kent Fire and Rescue have published a Climate Action Plan which includes a commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030. Kent Police have a Carbon Management Plan which claims an emissions reduction of 49% since 2008, however no specific target is included.

NHS Kent and Medway published a Green Plan in 2022 which includes a net zero target of 2040 and an aim to reduce emissions by 80% by 2028-2032. They have included emissions data within the report which includes scopes 1, 2, 3 and travel.

All actions under priority 1 progressed in 2024, however they are held up by action required to develop a detailed emissions reduction pathway. This action requires collaboration with Kent local authorities. Some elements are being delivered by individual local authorities, but a consistent approach is required. There is a scarcity of staff resource in all councils to monitor and measure emissions in a consistent and co-ordinated manner and this requires further attention.

### Summary of progress

<b>X RED (4)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (2)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (0)</b> Activity on track or completed
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**Table 1: Priority 1 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
1.1: Agree evidence/baseline and set 5-yearly carbon budgets for Kent and Medway as a whole. Monitor delivery against the five-year carbon budgets for Kent and Medway as a whole.  <i>LEAD partner: KCC</i>	In 2024, we explored evidence and ways to carry out monitoring against the previously set carbon budgets, but no formal monitoring took place.  The Climate Change Network (CCN) should agree on an approach to monitoring, to allow this action to progress.	Red
1.2 Develop Kent and Medway emissions reduction pathway to Net Zero by 2050. Monitor delivery against the high ambition pathway and the 1.5° compliant pathway set by the Tyndall Centre.	This action is linked with the previous action and therefore delayed. While the Kent Emissions Pathway was published in 2021, authorities in Kent must align on an approach to monitor delivery, analysing available data annually to achieve this action.	Red

<i>LEAD partner: KCC</i>		
<p>1.3 Develop local strategies that set out how Net Zero will be achieved in their area, using carbon budgets and emission reduction pathway report to inform the evidence base where appropriate</p> <p><i>LEAD partner: All local authorities</i></p>	<p>While varying local strategies and plans exist, they do not all include carbon budgets and emissions reduction pathways. Many local authorities are taking actions to refresh their plans.</p> <p>Some local authorities have actioned this using information from LASER and the Tyndall Centre research, but this is not yet consistent across all authorities.</p> <p>Carbon budgets must be calculated at district level in Kent and Medway to further progress this action.</p>	Amber
<p>1.4 Continue to develop and refine detailed emission reduction pathways for key sectors based on emerging policy and good practice, incorporating estimated costs where possible.</p> <p><i>LEAD partner: TBC</i></p>	<p>This action has started to progress within the transport sector, but more attention is required across all sectors. The intention is to develop more detailed emissions reduction pathways and actions for key sectors which will marry up with DESNEZ data sets e.g. emissions from residential housing, commercial and industry, agriculture etc.</p> <p>Focusing on sector emissions is a policy adopted by DEFRA after the ELES was first adopted. Different sectors are further ahead in developing detailed emission reduction pathways. There is a limited Kent-wide approach to address the emissions from housing.</p>	Red
<p>1.5 Monitor and publicly report progress against net zero targets.</p> <p><i>LEAD partner: All local authorities</i></p>	<p>The majority of Kent local authorities monitor and report on their own net zero targets.</p> <p>There is a lack of consistency on which data authorities are reporting on, and how frequently they do this. All local authorities in Kent and Medway must undertake this work regularly, ideally annually, and align an approach.</p>	Amber
<p>1.6 Consider how emissions from consumption could be calculated and incorporated into future area pathways / targets. Incorporate consumption-based emissions into ELES targets and implementation plan.</p>	<p>DEFRA data is available and could be used to calculate emissions from consumption. Consumption emissions are not formally considered within ELES targets or the implementation plan.</p> <p>The practical possibility and implications of this target are under review.</p>	Red

<i>LEAD partner: TBC</i>		
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## Priority 2 Public Sector Decision Making

Develop a consistent approach across Kent and Medway, to assess, manage and mitigate environmental impacts (both positive and negative), resulting from public sector policies, strategies, service delivery, commissioning, and procurement.

Progress across local authorities in Kent is varied for this priority in 2024. While some authorities have introduced climate risk assessments as part of their decision-making process, others have made more progress in strengthening climate representation within internal strategy. It is too early to comment on the success of these approaches, as authorities are in the early stages of implementation.

The majority of authorities in Kent advanced in the procurement area in 2024. The Kent and Medway Climate Change Network (CCN) Procurement sub-group continued to share best practice and support the inclusion of Net-Zero and adaptation measures in procurement and contract documents across all Kent local authorities. A sustainable procurement toolkit was developed, which provided recommendations on environmental requirements within commissioning and procurement, encouraging and guiding the user to determine the best environmental fit for their contract. The toolkit was trialled by KCC and procurement partners during 2024 and this continues. The intention for this piece of work is for Kent local authorities to adopt the toolkit for their own use.

A number of local authorities in Kent introduced a requirement where all decision-making reports should prompt officers to consider the environmental impacts of projects. Three local authorities implemented environmental impact assessments whilst three other local authorities have implemented a review process for decision making. KCC started developing an Environmental Impact Assessment which ensures environmental considerations are embedded into the project development and decision-making process. A pilot is planned for 2025, but the project is still in the early stages. The council must maintain momentum on this project to ensure the tool is implemented properly and effectively.

KCC appointed to a new role, Commercial Ethics and Sustainability Lead, in January 2024. The role is part of a new team who have been heavily involved in the CCN procurement sub-group and are working to embed sustainability and social value into council contracts.

Strong progress has been made in this area. The priority now needs to be pushing all authorities in Kent to adopt the procurement toolkit or similar approaches. All local authorities should be pushed to include high quality climate/carbon risk assessments as part of the decision-making process.

### Summary of progress

<b>X RED (0)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (3)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (1)</b> Activity on track or completed
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Table 2: Priority 2 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>2.2 Develop recommended requirements to be included within public sector contracts to align to net-zero ambition and support use of local goods and services where possible.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Climate Change Network</i></p>	<p>A Sustainable Procurement Toolkit was developed, recommending requirements to be included within procurement processes and subsequently within Kent local authority contracts.</p> <p>The Toolkit is outcomes-driven and sets out procurement requirements under a range of category headings and thematic environment headings (e.g. adaptation, biodiversity, supply chain, governance, Net Zero etc). It was designed to show commissioning and commercial practitioners what good environmental requirements look like, and encourage them to consider what will be the most effective environment outcomes for their specific contract.</p> <p>The Toolkit entered a testing phase with live contracts in the fourth quarter and started delivering a material change in contract specifications.</p> <p>Success of this action is dependent on the endorsement of Kent local authorities.</p>	Green
<p>2.3 Review contracts and commissioning processes to implement recommended requirements (see 2.2), tailored to organisational/local needs as necessary</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>A review and update of KCC's existing procurement guidance notes and templates for officers carrying out procurements was undertaken, tied in with changes coming into effect via the Procurement Act 2023. Environmental considerations including carbon reduction were referenced across these documents to support officers to embed these considerations in their procurement processes and subsequent contracts, as part of the Procurement Act 2023's focus on wider public benefit as a key priority of the new regulations.</p> <p>A few local authorities in Kent started to do the same for their respective organisations.</p> <p>Continued guidance from the county council is required to help those authorities who are yet to implement this action.</p>	Amber
<p>2.4 Develop, test and rollout a comprehensive climate change impact assessment and social value framework for public sector decision making, with associated policies, guidance, training and support.</p>	<p>KCC started drafting an environmental impact tool to implement into decision making. More work is required to develop the scope and progress this into a framework.</p> <p>This action requires strong integration to have an impact within the organisation. The aim is to prevent the impact assessment from becoming a box ticking exercise, and instead a useful tool for officers and authorities.</p>	Amber

<i>LEAD: KCC</i>		
<p>2.5 Encourage and support SMEs within public sector supply chains to effect positive environmental change by utilising Low Carbon Kent and linked support programmes across the county.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>Following BREXIT, all EU-funded business support provided by Low Carbon Kent was closed down. This has resulted in a change of projects delivered by the Low Carbon Kent team.</p> <p>Regular collaboration with procurement and commissioning colleagues both internally and externally resulted in opportunities to engage and train local businesses via Low Carbon Kent's IEMA Training Centre.</p> <p>Co-design support with Kent local authorities seeking to deliver business support programmes similar to LoCASE via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund top up, where operational, enabled Kent &amp; Medway small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to access funding to support positive environmental change.</p> <p>It should be noted that the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce (KICC) continued to run the Kent &amp; Medway Growth Hub and was also commissioned independently to run a number of 'low carbon audits' with contributions from the UKSPF.</p> <p>To further progress this action, local authorities should work to establish further projects to support local businesses, with the absence of EU funded projects.</p>	Amber

### Priority 3 Planning and Development

Ensure climate change, energy, air quality and environmental considerations are integrated into Local Plans, policies and developments, by developing a clean growth strategic planning policy and guidance framework for Kent and Medway, to drive down emissions and incorporate climate resilience.

Several local authority Local Plans in Kent were updated with Net Zero commitments and related policies, and other authorities started the process of this. However, the 5-year cycle of Local Plan refreshes means that it will still be a few years before all plans include Net Zero.

The Kent Design Guide refresh workshops started, to consult KCC colleagues and Kent planning authority officers on the process. A report was produced based upon the feedback. The adoption of the refreshed design guidance within Local Plans is a clear opportunity that was broadly welcomed, should the refreshed guidance align with local plan completion.

Best practice in terms of evidence, guidance and policy was routinely shared through well-established officer networks including the Kent Planning Policy Forum.

#### Summary of progress

<b>X RED (4)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (2)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (0)</b> Activity on track or completed
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**Table 3: Priority 3 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>3.1 Refresh the Kent Design Guide to reflect clean growth, net zero targets and climate change adaptation.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Two workshops were held in September and November 2024 to consult upon the ongoing Kent Design Guide refresh – the first with KCC colleagues and the latter with lead officers of Kent’s LPAs concerned with Development Management and Design and several KCC officers.</p> <p>These workshops were led by Design South East (DSE) on behalf of KCC, and each workshop has produced a report by DSE with recommendations for how to proceed with the guidance.</p> <p>This project has been delayed and, whilst progressing, is still in the early concept stages.</p>	Red

<p>3.2 Adopt and/or reference the refreshed Kent Design Guide as Supplementary Planning Documents, in line with Local Plan updates</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>This action is delayed as it relies on the completion of the refreshed Kent Design Guide.</p> <p>Once the refresh is complete, the new Kent Design Guide will be suitable for adoption in emerging local plans in the county.</p> <p>Several local plans are currently under review within Kent. If the Kent Design Guide is not complete in line with these delivery timelines, it may delay adoption.</p>	<p>Red</p>
<p>3.3 Secure agreement and identify scope and resource requirements to develop a shared Kent and Medway clean growth evidence-base and strategic planning policy and guidance framework</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The Kent &amp; Medway Economic Framework includes guidance and references to existing policy around net zero and maximising energy potential.</p> <p>Work in this area has started by engaging with large scale companies to discover how their energy needs could be resolved. The intention is to create a database of potential projects and make the government aware of these.</p> <p>The emerging workstreams must now be formed into an 'evidence base', ensuring that the technical aspects of these potential projects are quantified appropriately.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>3.4 Using the outputs from action 3.3, to develop a shared Kent and Medway clean growth strategic planning policy and guidance framework that identifies latest evidence, good practice, position statements and policies for Local Plans and Development Management</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Best practice in terms of evidence, guidance and policy is routinely shared through well-established officer networks including the Kent Planning Policy Forum.</p> <p>Several local authorities are incorporating emissions reduction considerations into emerging Local Plans.</p> <p>More work is required to pull outputs from 3.3 together into a shared framework.</p> <p>This action is at risk of non-completion due to lack of staff resource and time to pull such a significant plan together, which would include planners, planning committee members, developers, and supply chain staff.</p>	<p>Red</p>
<p>3.5 Raise clean growth/climate change awareness and skills of planners, planning committees, developers and supply chain</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>In 2024, collaboration was enabled between Climate Change services and Strategic Planning services, to ensure that Adaptation, Energy Efficiency, Emissions reduction are considered in the context of large-scale planning applications and significant upcoming local developments.</p> <p>A more streamlined process should be implemented to flag developments and planning applications of a certain scale, to ensure all appropriate applications are being reviewed with a climate change lens.</p>	<p>Amber</p>

	<p>Carbon Literacy training resources have been purchased by the council and could be utilised to upskill the Strategic Planning team further in this area.</p> <p>The refreshed Kent Design Guide should also help to progress this action further.</p>	
<p>3.6 Develop tailored Kent and Medway public sector building design guidance for new build and refurbishment</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Workshops were held in 2024 to progress the Kent Design Guide refresh.</p> <p>The contents of the design guide remains under discussion, but it is anticipated that there will be a need for building design guidance.</p> <p>To progress this action, climate change representatives within the working group will push for this to be a priority in the new Kent Design Guide.</p>	<p>Red</p>

## Priority 4 Climate Emergency Investment Fund

Establish a trusted Kent and Medway 'Climate Emergency' carbon sequestration, offset and renewable energy investment scheme and fund.

No climate emergency investment fund has been established within Kent.

Over the past year, government departments have provided several funding opportunities. The most popular funding opportunities in 2024 consisted of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), Swimming Pool Fund (SPF), Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) and Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS). These funds have typically been one-time allocations with short deadlines for bids and implementation. Efforts have primarily focused on responding reactively to these funding opportunities (with many Kent authorities submitting successful bids), rather than establishing a strategic investment fund.

While no investment scheme/fund has been developed in Kent, KCC continued to gather and disseminate information about upcoming funding opportunities to Climate Change Network (CCN) members through a bi-weekly newsletter. Any significant funding opportunities were discussed in regular meetings.

KCC started the process of drafting the KCC Green Finance Strategy, with the purpose of attracting private finance for nature recovery, climate adaptation and net-zero. This will be funded by government grants, public-private partnerships, green bonds, and financial institutions.

Brief bidding windows for external funding opportunities have highlighted the necessity for a pipeline of 'shovel ready' decarbonisation projects, as outlined in the ELES implementation plan. Most partners are reporting a shortage of staff skills and/or capacity to develop business cases, along with a lack of funding to conduct necessary feasibility studies to develop pipeline programs.

Further attention, alignment and economies of scale is required across local authorities in the county to gain momentum and ultimately achieve this priority.

### Summary of progress

<b>X RED (3)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (3)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (0)</b> Activity on track or completed
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**Table 4: Priority 4 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>4.1 Review existing internal and external funding streams, expertise and opportunities that could be used to deliver ELES actions. Develop into a central collaborative resource.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC/Kent Climate Change Network</i></p>	<p>This action is ongoing. KCC has arranged a 'funding opportunities' directory within the Climate Change Network (CCN) teams site and highlights these funding opportunities through the newsletter and in meetings. The success and value of this will depend upon engagement by other CCN members.</p> <p>Further research on investment and income generation opportunities continues within KCC. The Climate Change Network (CCN) must work to introduce a central, collaborative resource across districts, to achieve economies of scale.</p>	<p>Red</p>
<p>4.2 Accelerate the 'supply and demand' of nature-based climate solutions (understand demand, assess skills/capacity gaps, develop resources to support delivery)</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>While final outputs for the SELEP funded "Accelerating Nature-Based Climate Solutions" project were published last year, little has been done to progress this action further in 2024.</p> <p>Resources for delivery have been developed. The next stage to progress this action involves further work to advocate for the resources available and encourage promotion and use of these across Kent.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>4.3 Create the framework for a SE-wide 'brokerage hub' that can bring together 'buyers' and 'sellers' to co-develop nature-based carbon sequestration projects</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>While the SELEP funded project mentioned in 4.3 produced recommendations around a framework, no such framework has been established yet.</p> <p>There are no dedicated resources (staff or funding) for the development of a framework.</p>	<p>Red</p>
<p>4.4 Review and act on the outcomes of the SELEP Sector Support Fund project, and Accelerating Nature Based Climate Solutions conclusions.</p>	<p>While KCC has reviewed the outcomes of this project, no progress has been made on acting upon these outcomes, owed to lack of resource.</p>	<p>Red</p>

<i>LEAD: KCC</i>		
<p>4.5 Grow and maintain a portfolio of 'shovel-ready' renewable energy projects suitable for external funding.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>The government published the revised National Planning Policy Framework on 12 December 2024, setting out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.</p> <p>This set an expectation for Local Plans to provide a positive strategy for energy supply and use from renewable and low carbon sources and consider identifying suitable areas for renewables and low carbon.</p> <p>In light of the above, KCC started using data to map opportunities for low carbon energy generation across the county. It is hoped that this mapping will help local government identify the best locations and technologies to meet the county's growing energy demands.</p> <p>Some authorities across Kent are implementing small scale renewable energy projects, however, most do not have the resources to undertake this work on a larger scale. KCC must support this where possible.</p>	Amber
<p>4.6 Develop a portfolio of quick wins and 'shovel-ready' natural capital / carbon sequestration projects suitable for delivery through Net Gain or other external funding</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Nature Partnership</i></p>	<p>KCC started developing a bank of shovel ready projects in this area. Currently, 3 projects are under exploration consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitat Banking</li> <li>• Biochar</li> <li>• Green Future Farm Municipal Bond</li> </ul> <p>These projects are in the early stages and not yet shovel ready but work to get to this point is in progress.</p>	Amber

## Priority 5 Building Retrofit Programme

Develop Kent and Medway net zero buildings retrofit plans and programmes for public sector, domestic and businesses.

The majority of local authorities in Kent have carbon reduction plans (with varying titles) for their estate, with the remainder reviewing this. Most authorities are implementing public sector building retrofit programmes, enabled by various funding opportunities.

Several local authorities were successful in acquiring funding via Sports England's Swimming Pool Fund, to decarbonise leisure centre facilities which generally includes the upgrading of equipment to increase energy efficiency. Other authorities were successful in completing other retrofit projects, mostly enabled by Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding. These consisted of depots, main offices and leisure facilities.

Some highlights include:

- Tonbridge and Malling BC was awarded £1,164,760 from the PSDS and £405,000 from Sports England.
- Medway C was awarded £310,888 to install LED lighting and replace gas boilers at Hoo sports centre.
- Canterbury CC is relocating offices, moving into a redundant unit (previously a bank) which is being retrofitted to a high environmental standard.

Multiple authorities continue to deliver the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) and have applied for the Warm Homes Local Grant to decarbonise private housing stock.

The majority of Kent local authorities have set a target year to reach EPC C across their respective social housing stock. Highlights include:

- Ashford BC is looking to incorporate a ground source heating solution across 3 social housing sites, as part of its £5.1m SHDF programme.
- Dartford BC was awarded £1,700,000 from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to complete external wall insulation on a further 200 properties.
- Canterbury CC is undertaking a deep retrofit project on a derelict council house. The project is partially funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Emissions from the domestic sector remain a large emission source across Kent. A consortium bid to the MCS Foundations' Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) was submitted by KCC but unfortunately was unsuccessful.

A proposal for a dedicated domestic retrofit officer to work across Kent and Medway was rejected by the Kent and Medway Environment Group (KMEG).

KCC established a long term, meaningful relationship with the Kent Housing Group (KHG), which enabled effective collaboration and monitoring of new and existing homes where emissions reduction overlaps with other priorities. The KHG Private Sector Sub-Group used enforcement power under Part 1

of the Housing Act 2004 and other relevant legislation, to enforce landlords to improve energy efficiency of their domestic properties where significant excess cold hazards and/or damp and mould hazards exist.

KCC collaborated with other authorities and local groups to deliver six retrofit information sessions within the county. These sessions were well attended and positively received by residents.

KCC works with local authorities, utility providers and charities to support eligible households with energy efficiency. Highlights for 2024 include:

- Over 350 awards provided for carpeting or curtains.
- Some authorities have used Household Support Funding to help residents upgrade or replace gas boilers.

More collaborative work is required across Kent districts to enable non-social housing retrofit programmes. There should be an aim to develop a 'shovel ready' project for the private housing sector, to apply as a consortium for the next round of Warm Homes Local Grant (or equivalent).

A key barrier for the retrofit of council owned buildings and homes is resource: funding, time and staff. These large-scale projects require a degree of upfront investment (sometimes in the form of heat decarbonisation plans, or surveys of housing stock) and significant match funding. For these reasons, there is significant risk against this priority.

### Summary of progress

<b>X RED (4)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (5)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (2)</b> Activity on track or completed
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**Table 5: Priority 5 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>5.1 Develop organisational action plans to deliver net zero public sector estate by 2030 at the latest. Monitor and report progress.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>Local authorities individually own their relative Net Zero Plans (or similar) and report on their own progress accordingly.</p> <p>KCC has a Net-Zero target for the estate of 2030 and a complimentary action plan to achieve the target.</p> <p>A more streamlined approach across Kent would enable more economies of scale and make this action easier to measure and monitor.</p>	Amber

	<p>There are inconsistencies among Kent authorities in terms of the level of commitment and ambition. This makes monitoring and reporting challenging as the process is not consistently aligned.</p>	
<p>5.2 Implement a public sector building retrofit programme (energy and water), identifying joint projects that maximise economies of scale where possible.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>Most Kent authorities are implementing varied retrofit programmes for public sector buildings. Please see highlights below.</p> <p>KCC: applied to PSDS Phase 4 for decarbonisation measures for one building</p> <p>Ashford BC: Heat Network Development Plan Document (DPD) approval.</p> <p>Canterbury CC: Awarded Sports England Swimming Pool Fund for Whitstable leisure centre for solar PV and sub metering. The decarbonisation of Kingsmead Leisure Centre was complete in Oct 2024, which was a PSDS project.</p> <p>Dartford BC: Retrofitting the Civic Centre, Orchard Theatre, Acacia Sports Hall, and Fairfield Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Dover DC: £100k for HNDU heat network feasibility study.</p> <p>Gravesham BC: Awarded Sport England Swimming Pool Fund for the Capital Element, which will be used to renovate the swimming pool hall's Air Handling Unit (AHU) and install pool covers as part of the decarbonisation efforts at Cygnet Leisure Centre. Awarded Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) wave 2.2 which was a fund amount of £373,172.05 and a Swimming Pool Support Fund of £173,250 (for pool covers and swimming pool Air Handling Unit(AHU)).</p> <p>Medway C: Awarded Sports England Swimming Pool Support Fund Phase II of £310,888 to install LED lighting and replace gas boilers at Hoo Sports Centre as part of the councils decarbonisation efforts during 2024/25.</p> <p>Swale BC: Completed retrofit of 2 buildings.</p> <p>Thanet DC: Awarded Sports England Swimming Pool Support Fund (Phase 2) used for 400kW solar PV at Ramsgate Leisure Centre which includes energy efficient pool pumps.</p> <p>Tonbridge and Malling BC: £1,164,760 has been awarded by the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and £405,000 awarded by Sport England</p>	<p>Amber</p>

	<p>Tunbridge Wells BC: Retrofitted the Weald Leisure Centre and North Farm Depot (works completed in 2024). £90,000 from Swimming Pool Support Fund, £55,800 from Low Carbon Skills Fund.</p> <p>While individual programmes are taking place, an overarching, detailed strategy for the entire estate would be beneficial to authorities who do not have this.</p>	
<p>5.3 Develop a comprehensive Kent and Medway Domestic Retrofit Action Plan (excluding social housing) that identifies the actions and financial mechanisms for all income levels, to reduce emissions (from electricity, heat, and water) from all property types, with evidence-led targets and costed actions where possible</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The Kent and Medway Environment Group (KMEG) rejected the proposal to fund a central, dedicated resource to undertake this work.</p> <p>Domestic gas and electric consumption remain large greenhouse gas emissions sources in Kent and current plans to address this action are limited in scope and impact.</p> <p>A key barrier for the implementation of this action is having the resource to pull this together across all local authorities in Kent. The Climate Change Network (CCN) should collaborate to find a solution to this.</p>	Red
<p>5.4 Secure funding and implement projects identified in the Domestic Retrofit Action Plan (excluding social housing)</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Kent local authorities, charities and education providers submitted a joint application to the Local Authority Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) pilot (subsequently rejected). KCC will monitor outcomes of LARA pilot projects in other areas to inform future action.</p> <p>KCC coordinated the bid with 12 local authorities, Mid Kent College, the Kent Housing Group, and two energy-focused charities in May 2024.</p> <p>The council looks to maintain and strengthen relevant knowledge and working relationships with local stakeholders based on application feedback. The application process allowed for stakeholder mapping and an overview of domestic retrofit activity (exc. social housing) across Kent and Medway.</p> <p>A Green Open Homes event was hosted in Faversham, with the Town Council and a local community group, to showcase heat pump installations in people's homes and how residents can benefit from home energy efficiency measures.</p> <p>Next steps are currently unclear following application rejection. To progress this action, KCC must utilise the Climate Change Network (CCN) and Kent and Medway Environment Group (KMEG) to establish a way forward.</p>	Red

<p>5.5 Develop costed action plans to deliver net-zero social housing by 2030. Monitor and report progress. For new builds as well as existing housing stock.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Stock holding authorities (Medway C, Ashford BC, Canterbury CC, Dartford BC, Dover DC, Gravesham BC, Folkestone &amp; Hythe DC, Thanet DC)</i></p>	<p>The relevant local authorities are progressing this action individually. A number of authorities intend on applying to the Warm Homes Social Housing Fund and this process involves costing the intended application. Medway C have continued to improve the energy efficiency of 190 council owned homes using Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding.</p> <p>Regarding new housing development, Ashford BC (joint with Thanet DC; Dover DC; Canterbury CC, Folkestone and Hythe DC) received £250,000 for their successful application to the Planning Skills Delivery Fund. The expected outcome is an East Kent Design Code.</p> <p>Accurately costed action plans are dependent on high quality housing stock data, which is an issue for some districts.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>5.6 Support and facilitate Registered Providers to develop costed action plans to decarbonise their housing stock. This should include the costs of material and labour</p> <p><i>LEAD: KHG Asset Management sub-group</i></p>	<p>Registered Providers and other providers of social housing made progress towards decarbonising their housing stock (see 5.7).</p> <p>There are long-term, meaningful relationships between KCC and KHG, allowing for effective collaboration and monitoring of new and existing homes where emissions reduction overlaps with priorities such as accelerated housing delivery and health and wellbeing outcomes, as supported by wider policy.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>5.7 Implement projects to improve the energy efficiency of social housing, focusing on whole house retrofit to PAS2035 standards and identifying joint projects that maximise economies of scale where possible.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Stock holding authorities/Registered Providers</i></p>	<p>The majority of Kent local authorities have a target year to reach EPC C within social housing stock.</p> <p>Multiple local authorities in Kent applied for Warm Homes funding to decarbonise their housing stock.</p> <p>Dartford BC partnered with Low Carbon Exchange to deliver an external wall insulation upgrade programme to approximately 75 homes.</p> <p>Successful applicants to SHDF <a href="#">Wave 2.1</a> include Ashford BC, Clarion Housing Association Ltd., Dartford BC, Folkestone and Hythe DC, Golding Homes Ltd., Medway C, Moat Homes Ltd., Southern Housing, Thanet DC.</p> <p>Successful applicants to <a href="#">Wave 2.2</a> include Gravesham BC and MHS Homes Ltd.</p>	<p>Amber</p>

<p>5.8 Update and deliver the Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy (in association with action 5.3); supporting vulnerable and fuel poor households to access affordable energy.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KHG Domestic Retrofit subgroup</i></p>	<p>The strategy was not updated in 2024 but Kent authorities have committed to revisiting this in 2025. Stakeholders continue to deliver excellent work in this area.</p>	<p>Red</p>
<p>5.9 Provide advice and guidance to private sector property owners, taking enforcement action where necessary, to ensure improvements are made on privately rented properties.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Local Authorities (Private Sector Housing/Environmental Health)</i></p>	<p>Some local authorities within Kent provided advice and information to landlords with a focus on improving energy efficiency via landlord forums and via pro-active work under the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) legislation. Multiple authorities have reported MEES investigations being undertaken to enforce these rules.</p> <p>Using enforcement powers under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004, landlords have been required to improve the energy efficiency of their domestic properties where significant excess cold hazards and/or damp and mould hazards exist.</p> <p>Other appropriate legislation such as the Environmental Protection Act 1990 has also been used by local authorities to require energy efficiency improvements.</p> <p>For example, out of all reported instances where notices were served, enforcement action was taken or financial assistance was provided by Medway C, just over 80% of cases were related to excess cold.</p> <p>The current funding climate for domestic energy efficiency improvements is complex, with government funded programmes taking time to set up and having limited delivery windows and specific (and varying) criteria. Dedicated energy efficiency officer roles are not available in all councils, with this work often being undertaken alongside the delivery of other priority areas of work, further impacting on the opportunity to be proactive.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>5.10 Support SMEs to retrofit energy efficiency and renewable technologies in business premises through Low Carbon Kent support and signposting to local solutions.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>As mentioned earlier in the report, the Low Carbon Kent team consolidated efforts to champion the historic bank of best practice through a refresh of the Kent Sustainable Business Toolkit, complete with links to ideas, resource and support from verified third party sites. The extended reach via LinkedIn saw thousands of 'impressions'.</p>	<p>Green</p>

	<p>The team also fed into a relaunch of the Kent and Medway Business Fund and Small Business Boost with a view to embedding such concepts into business plans and solutions quoted for by contractors.</p> <p>A lack of match-funded resource to directly support supply and create demand for low carbon goods and services has limited the Low Carbon Kent team to the above actions and promoting schemes like Solar Together to other business-facing teams at KCC like Trading Standards (for those working in the home improvement sphere) and Active Kent &amp; Medway (who in turn have helped sports facilities with renewables, energy-saving and water-saving solutions).</p>	
<p>5.11 Assess the feasibility and funding mechanisms for 'place-based' retrofit schemes (e.g. street-by-street, whole business park, community scale), combining business, residential, public realm retrofit schemes.</p> <p><i>LEAD: TBC</i></p>	<p>The Greater South-East Net Zero Hub (GSENZH) and Opergy are mapping Industrial Decarbonisation opportunities, in collaboration with Kent and Medway local authorities.</p> <p>Undertaking feasibility exercises of this scale requires notable resource: staff time and budget, both of which are under significant strain.</p>	<p>Red</p>

## Priority 6 Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity

Set up a smart connectivity and mobility modal shift programme – linking sustainable transport, transport innovations, active travel, virtual working, broadband, digital services, artificial intelligence and behaviour change.

KCC had funding agreed to introduce Mobility as a Service (MaaS), a multi-operator digital transport technology platform for Ebbsfleet, Dartford and Gravesend areas. Mobility as a Service (MaaS) will help modal shift away from private car ownership to more use of public transport, active travel & shared transport. Mobility as a Service (MaaS) will allow people to plan, book and pay for multimodal journeys in a way that's not been possible before. As part of the pilot, MaaS has looked to incorporate bike/e-bike share schemes, e-cargo bike trials and electric car clubs, subject to funding. The procurement process for the pilot started in the Autumn.

Canterbury CC produced a progressive transport plan within their new draft local plan, which went out to consultation in 2024. The transport plan was bus-led, focussing on modal shift.

Both KCC and Medway C produced Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to improve bus services across Kent and Medway. DFT will continue the National Bus Fare Cap at £3, beginning in January 2025 through to 31 December 2025.

KCC continued to work with rail industry stakeholders and to understand the opportunity to increase utilisation of the rail network as an alternative to road-based freight through Kent.

KCCs' LEVI funding application was approved by KCC's Cabinet Member and the Office of Zero Emissions Vehicles. A procurement exercise has been launched to find a charge point operator.

The council also presented a draft of the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) to Members in September 2024. Active travel objectives were also included within the published Kent Local Transport Plan.

The Medway Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan is in its latter stages, setting out a 10-year investment plan for the delivery of cycling and walking infrastructure. Medway's School Streets Intervention continues to form a part of their Safer Healthier Streets programme.

KCC's Walk Once a Week (WOW) initiative ran with Living Streets in 30 schools.

KCC has been working with Cycling UK's Big Bike Revival Programme to offer bike maintenance and cycle training to staff.

The majority of local authorities in Kent have developed or are developing plans to transition their owned fleet to electric vehicles.

KCC has created a project initiation document for the transition of its Highways and Transport Fleet and are in the early research phase for the whole fleet electrification. Ashford BC, Sevenoaks DC and Thanet DC are replacing their vehicles on an ad hoc basis once the vehicles come to the end of

their useful life or contract, and Swale BC has already replaced its fleet with electric vehicles. Canterbury CC has replaced its fleet with electric vehicles, and has submitted a growth bid to transition to hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) for fuelling its waste fleet.

While progress has been made in many areas of this priority, issues such as the cost and supply of electric cars and potential electricity supply problems may impact further progress for the whole-sale transfer to ultra-low emission vehicles. Funding for these types of projects is not sufficient to meet the challenges, currently.

### Summary of progress

<b>X RED (2)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (5)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (7)</b> Activity on track or completed
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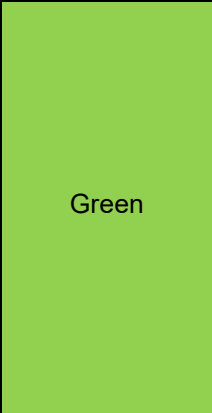
**Table 6: Priority 6 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
6.1 Review business mileage, set challenging reduction targets in light of COVID ways of working and expand sustainable travel polices that reduce the need to travel, encourage modal shift to active travel/public transport or increase car sharing. <i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i>	Business mileage falls within Scope 3. KCC are developing a Scope 3 plan which is planned to be shared with local authorities for consistency of reporting across Kent.	Red
6.2 Work in partnership to influence and develop plans to transition public sector fleets to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV). <i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i>	Most authorities in Kent have plans to decarbonise their fleets. Ashford BC, Sevenoaks DC, Tonbridge and Malling BC and Thanet DC are replacing vehicles on an ad hoc basis once the vehicle comes to the end of its life. Swale BC and Canterbury CC transitioned their council owned fleets to electric. The fleet electrification project initiation document for KCC highways & transport fleet is completed but further progression has been slow. A strategic organisation approach to fleet electrification is required.	Amber
6.3 Implement the Rights of Way Improvement Plans for Kent and for Medway; to develop motor-vehicle free routes for walking and cycling. <i>LEAD: KCC &amp; Medway Council</i>	KCC published a Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Kent back in 2018 that covers a 10-year period of objectives up to 2028. Medway Council published a Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Medway in 2020 that covers a 10-year period of objectives up to 2030.	Green

<p>6.4 Update and implement the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) and related strategies and the Medway Sustainable School Travel Strategy to promote and incentivise walking, wheeling, and cycling through the provision of infrastructure, facilities, training, and engagement</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC presented a draft of the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) with updated objectives and methodology to the Members in Sep 2024.</p> <p>KCC's Walk Once a Week (WOW) initiative ran with Living Streets in 30 schools. The scheme is match funded by Active Travel England Capability Funded. The initiative is pupil-led, where children self-report how they get to school every day using the interactive WOW Travel Tracker. If they travel sustainably once a week for a month, they get a badge reward. On average, WOW schools see a 30% reduction in car journeys to the school gate and a 23% increase in walking rates.</p> <p>Medway C's LCWIP is in its latter stages setting out a 10-year investment plan for the delivery of cycling and walking infrastructure.</p> <p>Medway's School Streets intervention continues to form a part of Medway's Safer Healthier Streets programme. It involves a timed restriction and temporary closures of roads outside schools, effectively creating a pedestrian and cycle zone, whilst encouraging active modes of travel to and from school. Seven sites were introduced in Medway in March 2024, with a second tranche of nine locations consulted on in October 2024. Officers continue to liaise with the participating schools, including on the development of a School Streets road safety education lesson plan.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>6.5 Work in partnership to prepare and implement local walking and cycling strategies. Measure the amount of new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure delivered in Kent.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC worked with all Kent local authorities to promote walking and cycling through improved infrastructure. The council also collaborated with local authorities on their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP)s.</p> <p>Medway C put their LCWIP out to public consultation in 2024.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>6.6 Work with public transport providers to achieve EURO VI emissions standards or better.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Using department for transport (DfT) Zebra funding, KCC is rolling out zero emission buses on its Dover and Kent Thameside Fastrack services.</p> <p>Funding for low emissions buses and infrastructure remains a challenge.</p>	<p>Amber</p>

<p>6.7 Trial new transport projects that drive the transition to Ultra Low Emission Vehicle public transport</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The Council has publicly stated ambition for improving air quality on buses through its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).</p> <p>As funding allows from external grant schemes, we will look to support the introduction of low / zero emission buses on AQMAs with the poorest air quality / emissions ratings.</p> <p>Acquiring funding for ULEV public transport trials is challenging and resource intensive</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>6.8 Trial and implement projects that support modal shift away from car ownership and/or reduce car dependency.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Kent produced a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which details the counties aspirations for bus should external funding become available. This Plan includes interventions for vehicles, ticketing, network, innovation, infrastructure and information. The Plan is designed to encourage a great mode share of bus. KCC has been allocated £23.1m as Bus Grant in response to this plan for 25/26.</p> <p>Following the ongoing success of Medway C's Free Bus Travel Weekend in September, which saw a 23% uplift in bus patronage when compared to a normal weekend, two further Free Bus Travel Weekends were held in December to coincide with the festive period. The promotion supported Medway C's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) outputs and Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators, whilst encouraging residents and visitors to Medway to travel by bus, perhaps for the first time.</p> <p>The Department for Transport (DfT) announced funding allocations for local transport authorities to provide bus service improvements throughout England in 2025/26. Medway's BSIP capital allocation for 2025/26 totals £2.6 million, including £1.1 million in revenue funding and £94k in capacity and capability funding. A further £172k has been allocated for 2025/26 in line with a Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG), to protect existing services and support service delivery.</p> <p>Whilst there has been financial support to subsidise some bus routes this is not a finite resource, and the commercial viability of routes must be considered when allocating further support funding.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>6.9 Work with private transport sector, including school transport providers and taxi licencing to incentivise and switch to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles</p>	<p>KCC worked with and routinely met with the Climate Change Network (CCN) taxi subgroup made up local authority Taxi Licensing officers.</p> <p>More work must be done to engage with school transport providers.</p>	<p>Red</p>

<p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>KCC has limited ability to influence taxi licensing across Kent as licensing is at the discretion of the local authority body.</p>	
<p>6.10 Consider future opportunities and interventions for reducing emissions from freight and international traffic including use of rivers and wharfs, improved journey efficiency, improved efficiency of vehicles and FORS and ECOStars schemes</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC &amp; Medway C</i></p>	<p>KCC worked with rail industry stakeholders and to understand the opportunity to increase utilisation of the rail network to provide an alternative to road-based freight through Kent associated with international trade through the Channel crossing terminals.</p> <p>Recognising that this opportunity has ramifications for the wider region, KCC worked with Transport for the South East and corresponded with the government in early 2024, to call for progress on funding of rail freight gauge enhancements to enable the capacity on the domestic rail network and through the Channel Tunnel to be exploited. Kent MPs wrote further to the government in October this year to repeat those calls for investment.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>6.11 Work collaboratively with the public and private sector to roll out electric charging points across Kent and Medway, in line with local EV strategies.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>LEVI funding application approved by KCC in 2024 and then subsequently by the Office of Zero Emissions Vehicles.</p> <p>A procurement exercise has been launched to identify a charge point operator partner to achieve the ambitions. Some local authorities have an EV charging point strategy in place.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>6.12 Support local SMEs to switch to ULEV vans. Support further measures to encourage Kent business to switch to electric vehicles.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The inclusion of electrification of fleet (alongside active transport, last mile delivery and other logistics options) into the Kent Sustainable Business Toolkit as well as the IEMA training courses enabled the Low Carbon Kent team to continue to advocate Kent firms seeking viability, signposting to any fiscal support via UKSPF or other project funding for investment in EVs offered within the county.</p> <p>Folkestone and Hythe DC, for example, used this example from late 2023 which used an ex-Kent REVS van for community deliveries of local produce. Low Carbon Kent and Greener Kent went public with the results and lessons learned from the Kent REVS trial via social media and secured hundreds of impressions over the course of the year in doing so.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>6.13 Support progress in Kent regarding “low carbon multimodal transport hubs” to include measures such as multimodal integrated transport next to Fastrack electric</p>	<p>As part of the Mobility as a Service pilot, KCC aims to incorporate bike/e-bike share schemes, ecargo bike trials and electric car clubs once the platform is launched.</p>	<p>Amber</p>

<p>BRT network, train stations, key bus corridors, public EV infrastructure, bike/e-bike share schemes, secure bike storage, electric car clubs with associated EV infrastructure, e-cargo bike trials.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC &amp; Medway</i></p>	<p>Directly procured bike/e-bike share schemes and e-cargo bike trials would be dependent on funding, but a commercial operation could quickly be included.</p> <p>Market research has suggested the opening of the Bean road tunnel directly linking Ebbsfleet to Bluewater shopping centre will likely be the catalyst for commercial interest in implementing a cycle scheme.</p>	
<p>6.14 Tackle poor air quality hotspots through the implementation of Air Quality Action Plans.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>The Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership continued to meet to share best practice and work collaboratively on the monitoring of air quality and publication of the results.</p> <p>Kent and Medway local authorities continue to update air quality action plans and publish them on their web pages as part of statutory local air quality management duties.</p> <p>The Environment Act 2021 requires government to set new targets to reduce air pollution by particulate matter (PM2.5) and councils will be required to work together more closely to tackle local air quality issues. It is unclear what these changes will mean in practice for the local authorities in Kent and whether extra resourcing will be required for implementation.</p>	<p>Green</p> 

## Priority 7 Renewable Energy Generation

### Set up an opportunities and investment programme for renewable electricity and heat energy

The majority of local authorities within Kent addressed a need for renewable energy related projects within their respective net zero plans.

KCC undertook an initial assessment of a Kent-wide Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP). Against a changing policy landscape and budget constraints, it was concluded that this was not a priority investment for 2024. Authorities continue to seek opportunities independently for renewable energy generation and storage within their estates.

Ashford BC were the first local authority in Kent to invest in a LAEP, to review energy demand and generation opportunities in their area. The platform was developed in 2024 and the data has already been used to assist UKPN with infrastructure planning and identify priority areas for other initiatives. The report and digital twin modelling software will continue to be used to refine Ashford BC's approach towards, and delivery of, energy-related initiatives e.g community energy projects and targeted communications for Warm Homes Grant.

All Kent local authorities were offered access to sessions run by UK Power Networks (UKPN) regarding access to their free energy mapping tool, Your Local Net Zero Hub, to assist development plans.

KCC engaged with community groups in Medway, Tonbridge and Malling, Sevenoaks, Maidstone and others to consider how local authorities can best support local sustainability initiatives and connect them with other organisations and resources.

All local authorities continued to support Solar Together, which has facilitated, 3,485 installations of Solar PV systems and battery storage since 2020. In the first year after each installation, these Solar PV systems are estimated to help avoid over 3,330 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in total, with expected system lifetimes of around 25 years.

Through successful applications to the PSDS, Kent authorities continue to install rooftop solar and other measures on public sector buildings. In 2024, solar panels were installed on public sector buildings in Ashford BC, Canterbury CC, Dartford DC, Dover DC, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells BC.

The Maidstone Heat Network could not progress as a KCC-led project due to rising costs and is now being considered by a private company.

The KCC solar array in Somerset (Bowerhouse II) produces 22000 MWh per year. KCC Kings Hill Solar Farm started operating in Nov 2023 and produced 3,000 MWh per year.

Progress against this action is currently dependent on various pots of funding, which districts are applying for independently. A more joined up approach is required within the county to create a co-ordinated programme for opportunities and investment.

## Summary of progress

<b>X RED (1)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (5)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (2)</b> Activity on track or completed
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**Table 7: Priority 7 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>7.1 Undertake a Local Area Energy Plan for Kent (or multiple smaller LAEP's) that focus on all existing and emerging technologies.</p> <p>LEAD: KCC</p>	<p>KCC undertook an initial assessment for a Kent-wide LAEP. Against a changing policy landscape and budget constraints, it was concluded that this was not a priority investment for 2024.</p> <p>Ashford BC invested in a LAEP to review energy demand and opportunities in their area. The platform was developed in 2024, and the data has already been used to work with UKPN to assist with their infrastructure planning and has been used to identify key target areas for a Warm Homes Local Grant bid. The report, along with digital twin modelling software, will continue to be used to refine Ashford BC's approach towards, and delivery of, energy-related initiatives.</p> <p>To progress this action, Kent districts will need to establish their intended approaches for LAEPs. An economy-of-scale approach should be explored further to maximise value for money.</p> <p>LAEPs are a significant expense and vary in level of detail. The resource to create a LAEP is significant.</p>	Amber
<p>7.2 Work in partnership to identify, support and promote new renewable energy projects across Kent and Medway, maximising funding from the Growth Fund, future Prosperity Fund and SE Energy Hub.</p> <p>LEAD: KCC</p>	<p>Local authorities continued to seek partnership opportunities for renewable energy generation and storage, with projects for solar car ports, battery storage and studies for heat networks currently underway.</p> <p>Across Kent and Medway, UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) has been allocated to a range of initiatives, including those aiming to improve sustainability skills and training, and the energy efficiency of homes and commercial buildings.</p>	Amber

	<p>Whilst renewable energy projects are under exploration by various Kent authorities, these are generally dependent on pots of funding which are applied to independently. The CCN must establish an approach to facilitate partnership projects.</p>	
<p>7.3 Continue to install solar panels on suitable public sector buildings and land, including offices, schools and landfill sites.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>Several authorities were previously awarded Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funding and continue to install rooftop solar and other measures on public sector buildings. Most Kent and Medway local authorities applied for PSDS 4 funding in Autumn 2024.</p> <p>Solar panels were installed on public sector buildings in Ashford BC, Canterbury CC, Dartford DC, Dover DC, Tonbridge and Malling BC and Tunbridge Wells BC in 2024.</p> <p>Availability of funding opportunities across government is decreasing, with more stringent criteria on funding agreements.</p>	Green
<p>7.4 Develop and implement the Maidstone Heat Project.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Progress was paused for the Maidstone Heat Network due to an increase in costs.</p> <p>A private company in connection with the Allington Energy from Waste Facility has submitted proposals to develop the Maidstone Heat Network.</p> <p>The private bid was awarded commercialisation funding. KCC is currently engaging with this process.</p>	Amber
<p>7.5 Identify the barriers and local authority role in supporting households to install renewable heat and electricity technologies. Incorporate findings into action 5.3 (domestic retrofit strategy).</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>Learning and recommendations from a series of energy events were collated and discussed as part of an on-going domestic-retrofit and community energy group among KCC and Medway C and the University of Greenwich.</p> <p>KCC must now work to incorporate the findings into a Domestic Retrofit Plan.</p>	Amber
<p>7.6 Develop and implement projects to support households to install renewable heat and electricity technologies. (linked to action 5.4 – deliver domestic retrofit strategy)</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>All Kent and Medway local authorities, including KCC, promote iChoosr's Solar Together opportunity.</p> <p>Participating households and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) benefit from competitive prices due to the collective purchasing model, and greater energy independence with Solar PV and storage battery installations.</p>	Green

	<p>Between January and December 2024, installations for the Autumn 2023 and Spring 2024 iterations were completed, and installations for the Autumn 2024 iteration began.</p> <p>In Kent and Medway, through the Solar Together initiative, 3,485 installations of Solar PV systems and storage batteries were completed between 2020 and the end of December 2024.</p> <p>From 2020 to January 2025, Solar Together has facilitated rooftop Solar PV installations totalling more than 15MW capacity in Kent and Medway.</p> <p>The next iteration will open for registrations in Spring 2025.</p>	
<p>7.7 Provide technical support for community renewable energy projects to include recommendations from Community Energy South on how to support community energy generation across Kent and Medway.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC engaged with community groups in Medway, Tonbridge and Malling, Sevenoaks and Maidstone and others to consider how Councils can best support local sustainability initiatives and connect them with other organisations and valuable resources.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>7.8 Support the development of future housing micro-grids, smart energy grids, and low carbon heat networks for new build homes</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The action has not been completed due to time and resource issues.</p>	<p>Red</p>

## Priority 8 Green Infrastructure

Develop and implement a multi-functional, natural capital opportunity and investment programme – focusing on environmental projects that store carbon, increase climate change resilience, improve air quality and soil health, and increase biodiversity.

Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway continued working with partners and stakeholders to collaboratively establish shared priorities. This enabled the delivery of nature recovery and environmental improvements, to create a network of wildlife-rich places across the county.

The [Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) will be one of 48 – together these will cover the whole of England, with no gaps or overlaps, to deliver the government’s commitment to ending the decline of nature and supporting its recovery. Multiple stakeholder engagement workshops were held across the County, and the draft Strategy was taken to pre-consultation review with supporting authorities.

Kent and Medway Plan Tree Partnership has secured over £1.37 million in grant funding and delivered approximately 375,000 trees across the county since 2019. The rate of planting remains above the required 50,000 tree per annum.

### Summary of progress

<b>X RED (0)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (0)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (4)</b> Activity on track or completed
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**Table 8: Priority 8 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
8.1 Undertake an assessment of Kent and Medway’s opportunities for natural solutions to climate change.  <i>LEAD: KCC</i>	This action was completed in previous years. The current Local Nature Recovery Strategy is building upon the work previously undertaken.	Complete
8.2 Develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Kent and Medway that agrees priorities for nature recovery, maps the most valuable existing areas for nature, and maps opportunities for creating or improving habitat for nature and delivering wider environmental goals (nature-based solutions).	A strategy was developed in 2024. The first stakeholder workshops started in January and that engagement carried on through to October.  The strategy was then finalised and taken to pre-consultation review in November with the supporting authorities in preparation for public consultation.	Green

<p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>		
<p>8.3 Develop and implement a strategy to establish 1.5 million new trees (or their carbon sequestration equivalent) in Kent and Medway.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC with support of all Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>To date, the Plan Tree project has secured over £1.37 million in grant funding. The team will have facilitated the planting of 11,000 trees across 15 sites as part of the final year of Round 3 of the Local Authority Treescape Fund.</p> <p>Round 4 is already underway, with an additional 13,500 trees planned for the upcoming planting season. Additionally, KCC suppliers have planted 100,000 trees to fulfil their social value commitments.</p> <p>In terms of performance, the planting rate remains above the required 50,000 trees per annum, with a cumulative total of approximately 375,000 trees since 2019.</p> <p>The implementation of the Tree Establishment Strategy is dependent upon resources, funding, and the active participation of Plan Tree partners. Additionally, finding suitable land for tree establishment remains challenging.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>8.4 Develop cost effective and innovative approaches to establishing trees outside woodlands whilst strengthening biosecurity, through the Promoting Trees Outside Woodlands Project</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>As part of the Trees Outside Woodlands Project KCC undertook the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Urban Tree Establishment Pilot - Miyawaki method trials (Phase 2): Decompaction Trials at Cornwallis Park, Maidstone and Poplar View, Boughton-under-Blean</li> <li>• Boosting Community Tree Nurseries: Brogdale Nursery supported with Biosecurity Grant Funding.</li> <li>• Targeted Tree Planting - Dover using Historic Treescapes Grant Scheme led to 10 successful recipients and 5,472 trees planted</li> </ul> <p>KCC's Wider Project Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in International Miyawaki Research Network</li> <li>• Urban Tree Establishment project report publication and promotion: <a href="#">Urban Tree Establishment - Trees Outside Woodland project report</a></li> </ul>	<p>Green</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forestry Commission CEO visit to KCC Miyawaki trial plot</li><li>• Presentation at International Symposium on Miyawaki and Urban Forests</li><li>• Co-signatory to United Nations and G20 Yokohama Declaration on Miyawaki Forests</li><li>• Various media publications on KCC Urban Tree Establishment trials</li></ul>	
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## Priority 9 Supporting Low Carbon Business

Develop and implement a business recovery and support programme for Kent and Medway businesses to cut costs and win new business.

The Economy team was formed to help identify sector support opportunities, as SELEP was dissolved in March 2024. This meant a requirement to incorporate sustainability themes into each of the Kent and Medway Economic Framework.

Opportunities were taken to collaborate with Greener Kent's Greener Schools Programme and using higher education links to support bids for growing awareness, innovation and scope. This included feeding into some of the Kent LAs' UKSPF Green Skills projects, working with Opergy on the Hydrogen East cluster development and supporting Growing Kent and Medway plan and develop a follow on to its Growing Green project to be launched in 2025 for food and drink manufacturers.

Due to funding and staff restraints, Low Carbon Kent could not launch any follow up to previous EU funded projects which supported and developed the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy & Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services sectors. In 2024, the entire Low Carbon Kent portfolio of activities was presented to a Whitehall and wider local authority audience.

The Inn2POWER partnership company directory still includes 252 forms from across Kent and Medway, as well as 273 in the wider region. This exposes Kent and Medway as potential partners and has been used to help inform a wider piece of work by Hydrogen East on development of alternative energy supply chains.

Two dedicated posts were created within KCC, in what was previously the waste team, to focus on local circular economy development. This has realised the launch of the 'Repair, Reuse and Upcycling Locator' on the LCK website with a dedicated network group covering 69 members and 18 repair café groups. The consolidation of case studies and summary of the Upcycle Your Waste and Blueprint to Circular Economy pilot projects enabled the inclusion of KCC into two successful projects.

Regarding green skills education, Kent colleagues had previously created facilities and courses and continue to do so to support green skills.

In the tourism space, 7 business were onboarded onto the VisitKent Impact Hero Programme between January and December 2024 taking the total to 32. In January 2024, the first annual business survey was sent out gather baseline metrics to inform the monitoring project. In July 2024, VisitKent launched their first annual sustainable tourism action plan report outlining ambitions, activity and successes over the last year with the hope that the report can emphasise VisitKent's ambition for Kent to become a more sustainable tourism destination.

## Summary of progress

<b>X RED (1)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (3)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (3)</b> Activity on track or completed
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**Table 9: Priority 9 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>9.1 Utilise and build on the Clean Growth South East supply chain analysis to help realise and link the economic opportunities from the low carbon sector across Kent and the wider South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) area.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC liaised with stakeholders to help identify opportunities of support, as SELEP was dissolved in March 2024. This meant incorporation of sustainability themes into each of the ambitions of the Kent and Medway Economic Framework.</p> <p>Opportunities were taken to collaborate with Greener Kent's Greener Schools Programme and using higher education links to support bids for growing awareness, innovation and scope.</p> <p>This included feeding into some of the Kent local authorities' UKSPF Green Skills projects, working with Opergy on the Hydrogen East cluster development and supporting Growing Kent and Medway plan and develop a follow on to its Growing Green project to be launched in 2025 for food and drink manufacturers.</p> <p>Further mapping and benchmarking work was undertaken through the Kent Food Partnership and REGENYSYS project with a view to material waste flows which will form the basis of 2025 workplans.</p>	Amber
<p>9.2 Support local SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) and public sector suppliers to progress through Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) training accreditation and enhance their knowledge of the key themes through Low Carbon Kent's Sustainable Business Toolkit.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Following LoCASE programme closure, the legacy content and case studies were consolidated and incorporated into two IEMA courses, environmental sustainability skills for the workforce and for managers.</p> <p>Low Carbon Kent is now an accredited training centre to deliver these courses to a range of audiences, consisting of 7 business organisations and 41 delegates covering a broad range of roles and departments across the public sector.</p> <p>Within 2024, some of the terminology around the classification of these sectors shifted. The team fed into a number of pieces of research such as the 'Green Workforce Transformation' blueprint (April 2024) the UK Net Zero Business Census report (September 2024).</p>	Amber

<p>9.3 Offer a low carbon support programme for SMEs, including support to highlight and signpost to funding, reduce costs, and carbon, and actively contribute to growth of the low carbon and renewable energy economy (LCREE) and environmental goods and services sectors (EGSS) through tailored support and collaboration.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Given funding and staffing restraints, Low Carbon Kent could not launch any follow on to LoCASE to support and develop the LCREE/EGSS sectors.</p>	<p>Red</p>
<p>9.4 Support the continued development of the onshore &amp; offshore wind sector, green hydrogen, and related local supply chain.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The Inn2POWER partnership still retains 252 firms from across Kent and Medway, as well as 273 in the wider region. This means that Kent and Medway firms are still visible for potential partners and commissioners to link up with for their relevant capabilities.</p> <p>Hydrogen East developed a piece of work on alternative energy supply chains in collaboration with stakeholders and suppliers. This fed into a regional piece of work by the Greater South East Net Zero Hub on Industrial Clusters.</p> <p>The continued presence of Vattenfall in Ramsgate harbour remains a key hub of activity, though the stalling of a Green Hydrogen production facility which was set to move forward at Herne Bay has seen progress in this sector slow a little more than anticipated.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>9.5 Drive an increase in the local circular economy within Kent's resident and business communities through effective support, benchmarking, collaboration, and business case support.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Creation of 2 dedicated posts within KCC, in the Circular Economy team has afforded a focus on development within the region.</p> <p>This has realised the creation and launch of the 'Repair Reuse and Upcycling Locator' on the Lower Carbon Kent website, together with a dedicated network group for all repair café workers, owners and sites. This currently has 69 members covering 18 repair cafes around the county.</p> <p>KCC work in this area has led to two significant projects. United Circles is a Horizon Europe project focussing on setting up circularity hubs and industrial symbiosis solutions across the South East which will run for 4 years.</p>	<p>Green</p>

	<p>REGENYSYS led by University College London is a collaboration with Essex County Council looking for opportunities to improve wellbeing and place-making across the Thames Estuary by encouraging community involvement in circular economy and developing circular solutions in agriculture, food, textiles and beyond.</p>	
<p>9.6 Investigate workforce upskill/ training requirements for retrofit and green business.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Some retrofit and green skills education was created in previous years in Kent Colleges and continues to operate but no further developments have been undertaken in the 2024 year as we understand.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>9.7 To consider the environmental impact of tourism in Kent and work with partners to measure the impact and benefit of tourism. Also, support tourist business to be more sustainable.</p> <p><i>LEAD: TBC</i></p>	<p>To date, VisitKent had 32 businesses sign up to the Impact Hero Programme, which included 7 businesses onboarding between Jan-Dec 2024.</p> <p>In January, KCC sent our first annual business survey to gather feedback from Kent visitor economy businesses on their sustainability journey allowing us to gather 16 baseline metrics to inform our monitoring programme, alongside helping to shape business support &amp; guidance &amp; future sustainable activities.</p> <p>VisitKent visited their first annual sustainable tourism action plan report outlining ambitions, activity, and successes over the last year, alongside being a key opportunity to reinforce some of the main challenges experienced by the destination and our priorities over the coming year. We hope that the report can help further emphasise our ambition for Kent to become a more sustainable destination and ensure we are committed to monitoring key targets and reporting in a clear and transparent way.</p> <p>Measuring and quantifying the environmental impact of tourism is challenging with the data available.</p>	<p>green</p>

## Priority 10 Communications

Develop a comprehensive communications, engagement and behaviour change programme targeted at residents, employees, businesses and visitors

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Joint environmental communications across Kent were encouraged and facilitated in 2024 at two meetings hosted by the Communications and Behaviour Change Team, via the Climate Change Network. A new approach for the Climate Change Network (CCN) has been agreed, whereby 'task and finish' groups will be created for subject specific matters. The intention is to embed communications and behaviour change at each of these groups.

KCC's sustainability communications was previously branded as Kent Green Action, which underwent a rebrand in 2024, now known as Greener Kent. Across social media accounts, Greener Kent saw an increase of 60% in following compared to a 14% increase in 2023. More work is being undertaken to ensure that Greener Kent continues to raise its' profile among Kent residents.

In 2024, there was no budget, political or strategic support to run a Kent Environment Strategy Conference, so the formerly annual 'KES Conference' did not take place.

Medway C helped to form the Medway Community Climate Working Group, which supports initiatives and messaging focused on carbon reduction and climate resilience. During 2024, Medway C and KCC officers attended the Community Group meetings to discuss domestic retrofit in Medway, as well as providing updates on emerging plans for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and Medway's draft Local Plan which went out to consultation in 2024.

Many organisations worked to promote Great Big Green week in September. As part of ongoing communications efforts, KCC shared a map of activities across Kent which consisted of 38 events, which gained 1,300 viewers. A total of 23 businesses and local groups supporting the campaign were promoted across Kent during the week.

KCC launched the Nothing Wasted Campaign, which aims to reduce waste and increase recycling rates through various promotional methods. The campaign reached 510,000 residents through social media, 429,000 listeners through radio, and over 100 people engaged with directly at recycling sites in 2024.

Other key communications campaigns of note:

- Kent and Medway local authorities promoted various cycling campaigns and accompanying bicycle repair events.
- Domestic retrofit sessions were held at locations across Kent to educate our residents, in a collaboration between the University of Greenwich and KCC.

- Medway C ran “What’s good for the climate is good for me” campaign and social media posts.
- Clean Air Day is supported annually within Kent through social media campaigns.

Internally, KCC developed introductory training materials to tackle climate change, which was shared with authorities across Kent. Carbon Literacy training is also now offered to local authority staff across Kent with courses starting in November.

**Summary of progress**

<b>X RED (2)</b> Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	<b>X AMBER (1)</b> Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES	<b>X GREEN (10)</b> Activity on track or completed
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**Table 10: Priority 10 action RAG status** (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>10.1 Develop a joint communications, engagement and behaviour change strategy and action plan.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC’s Behaviour Change and Engagement team previously wrote a strategy which is reviewed and refreshed annually.</p> <p>Without the Climate Change Network (CCN) Communications Network, the council must work to ensure they sustain contact with districts to align on communications priorities.</p>	Green
<p>10.2a Develop a communication working group/network to ensure consistency of messages and facilitate joint working.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC hosted two Climate Change Network (CCN) Communications subgroup meetings in 2024. Communications and behaviour change support will be embedded within task and finish groups in future as explained above.</p> <p>Medway C’s Community Climate Working Group was formed to support initiatives and messaging focused on carbon reduction and climate resilience. The group is made up of representatives from a range of communities including business, education, inter-faith and the military.</p> <p>KCC are hoping to create a Kent Sustainable Communities Network to engage all active community groups in Kent, to help facilitate joint working, collaborations and consistency.</p> <p>Attendance was variable and did not include all relevant communications professionals. Resource and agreement across Kent local authorities to deliver messaging and joint projects.</p>	Amber

<p>10.2b Consider the impact of reviewing and potentially rebranding the annual environment conference.</p>	<p>This has been reviewed. Currently, there is no budget, political or strategic support to run a conference this year.</p> <p>A Kent and Medway Environment Group (KMEG) workshop in spring agreed on support for a cross-party members group to lead on environmental engagement.</p>	<p>Red</p>
<p>10.3 Maximise the impact of Great Big Green Week in Kent by promoting a shared calendar of events and supporting local activities.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>This action was complete in 2024. A map of activity across Kent was shared by KCC.</p> <p>1,300 people checked the map of activity and 72 engaged with content by completing surveys, adding tips and ideas and adding pins to the map.</p> <p>The success of Great Big Green Week is dependent on promotion and support from other Kent authorities.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>10.4 Implement joint communication campaigns to raise awareness of the health impacts of air pollution and ways to protect health and improve air quality. Include progress on Kent air quality funding projects/programmes</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership, KCC/Medway Councils</i></p>	<p>Kent authorities annually promote the national clean air day (June) on our social channels and continue to do so, this usually mentions Kent Air Quality alerts.</p> <p>Limited resources to maintain and develop the activities of this group.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>10.5 Implement joint communication campaigns to increase modal shift to active travel/public transport.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC &amp; Medway C</i></p>	<p>KCC implemented a number of campaigns to promote modal shift. These consisted of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A KCC staff travel poster campaign.</li> <li>• The addition of KCC children's centres and family hubs to the Kent Connected travel planners.</li> <li>• 'Cycle for Summer' series of posts and collaboration with Explore Kent</li> <li>• Explore Kent launched a children's bike challenge which 45 children participated in.</li> </ul> <p>Medway C supported the 'Summer of Cycling' campaign, including hosting Medway's first Climate Bike Ride.</p> <p>Social media comms included promotion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The national cycling network to encourage use on designated cycle ways</li> </ul>	<p>Green</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Fix free bike maintenance at the Sticks and Stones festival.</li> <li>• Weekly led rides in Medway to build confidence</li> <li>• Cycle to School week</li> <li>• The Medway Climate Bike Ride</li> </ul>	
<p>10.6 Support joint communication campaigns on behaviour change projects focused on tackling residents carbon emissions.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership</i></p>	<p>KCC have bid for £1.5million from the National Lottery Climate Action Fund to support a Kent-wide engagement campaign to tackle residents' carbon emissions.</p> <p>Medway C promoted a number of campaigns throughout the year, focussed on tackling resident carbon emissions.</p>	Green
<p>10.7 Implement joint communication campaigns to help residents reduce their water bills/ save water</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC, Southern Water, South East Water, Affinity Water</i></p>	<p>This action was discontinued by KCC as there was limited impact after several years of campaigns.</p>	Discontinued.
<p>10.8 Implement joint communication campaigns to reduce residents' environmental impact (Kent Green Action and District-level campaigns).</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC re-branded Kent Green Action to Greener Kent. Greener Kent has continued to promote environmental campaigns across social media accounts in 2024.</p> <p>District-level campaigns have also continued through 2024, including Solar Together which ran in the spring and autumn.</p> <p>Medway C promoted a "What's good for the climate is good for me" campaign and shared social media posts showing changes that Medway C staff are making and the reasons why to inspire others to make changes - via their Climate Change social media pages.</p> <p>We must ensure that we are gathering and utilising insight to supplement generic messaging with more targeted campaigns. This requires more resource and analysis in advance of campaigns, to develop specific messaging via the most appropriate channels to a target audience, to support behaviour change in future.</p>	Green

<p>10.9 Implement joint communication campaigns to encourage and support SMEs to adopt environmentally sustainable practices.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Low Carbon Kent are now an accredited training centre, delivering environmental training courses to a range of audiences.</p> <p>LCK has trained 48 learners in 2024 across the course offering. 8 of these were from the SME/VCSE community, and 40 from across a range of public sector roles, including commissioning and procurement, with a view to helping link ideals and processes with local supply chains.</p> <p>Previous EU funded schemes are no longer available, so SME support has reduced.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>10.10 Develop shared resources for public sector staff engagement.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Training materials have been developed for an introductory unit on climate change, to be shared with local authorities across Kent.</p> <p>KCC now offers Carbon Literacy training to other authorities across Kent.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>10.11 Monitor and review effectiveness of communication campaigns and develop targeted behaviour change programmes.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The Engagement and Behaviour Change team monitors the effectiveness of KCC campaigns by assessing varied KPIs such as impressions, followers, likes.</p> <p>This year, the team has maintained particular focus on a year-long campaign called 'Nothing Wasted'. The approach has consisted of social media, in addition to bus and radio adverts to encourage more recycling, reuse and prevention of waste.</p> <p>Over 510k residents were reached with messages on social media which generated nearly 1200 link clicks to webpages.</p> <p>Radio ads were heard by 429k listeners, with 3.5million impacts</p> <p>Over 100 people were engaged at recycling sites. This consisted of positive conversations about recycling and sorting on-site. The team is awaiting Dec survey results to provide more evidence of impact of this campaign.</p> <p>Medway C set up a Community Working Group to discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with domestic retrofitting in Medway, following the events delivered in Summer 2024. The feedback gathered is being used by Medway C and KCC climate officers to inform future initiatives in partnership with the University of Kent in 2025.</p>	<p>Green</p>

<p>10.12 Investigate the training, skills and education needs for climate awareness for Kent &amp; Medway (including schools, residents).</p>	<p>The Greener Kent schools programme was established and has engaged with a network of 120 schools so far. This programme shares information on resources and funding opportunities to encourage schools to create climate action plans and reduce their impact on the environment.</p> <p>The first 2 webinars hosted by Greener Kent Schools attracted 68 attendees.</p> <p>143 schools have signed up to the Let's Go Zero pledge and 44 are working with a programme advisor.</p> <p>The Medway Climate Response team delivered a Medway Champions training masterclass. The course was aimed at anyone who works on the Medway Champions programme who wanted to learn more about climate change. 17 people attended from numerous community groups.</p> <p>The group learnt about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An introduction to climate change</li> <li>• The carbon footprint of everyday items</li> <li>• Medway C's climate action plan</li> <li>• How you can play your part</li> </ul> <p>The capacity needed to implement training, skills and education requirements is significant.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Green</p>
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