

Kent County Council Environment Policy

Kent County Council has an important role in ensuring Kent's residents and businesses benefit from sustainable growth and a competitive, innovative and resilient economy. This should be balanced with protecting and improving our natural and historic assets, for their unique value and positive impact on our society, economy, health and wellbeing.

We know that the Council's activities and services have an impact on the environment. We have a responsibility to make sure environmental risks and opportunities are managed positively and our use of natural resources is minimised for the benefit of future generations.

This policy contributes to achieving the following outcomes in KCC's 2015-20 Strategic Statement, ['Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes'](#):

- **Strategic Outcome 2:** Kent communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life.
- **Supporting Outcome:** Kent's physical and natural environment is protected, enhanced and enjoyed by residents and visitors.

This policy also supports the priorities set out in the [Kent Environment Strategy – a strategy for environment, health and economy 2016](#).

What we want to achieve is to:

- Deliver positive change for Kent's environment, health and economy by working with our Kent partners to deliver the Kent Environment Strategy priorities;
- Maintain essential services and keep Kent moving during periods of severe weather;
- Minimise our use of natural resources and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels in order to contribute to the county's energy security;
- Minimise the impacts of our existing assets and new developments on the environment;
- Protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural and historic assets on Council owned land or land managed in partnership with others;
- Minimise air, light, noise, odour and other forms of pollution from our activities.

To deliver this we will:

- Engage with Kent's communities, businesses and partners to understand their expectations, minimise risks and maximise opportunities for innovation and shared resources, and raise awareness of our environmental priorities;
- Make sure Kent's environmental priorities and the risks and opportunities of a changing climate are taken into account when setting strategy and policy, taking key decisions and designing, planning and delivering services;
- Set environmental targets and provide public information about our performance, including our plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Effectively plan for and manage the impacts of severe weather on our services, estate and roads;

- Work with our partners and communities in Kent to understand flood risk and deliver appropriate flood risk management measures;
- Seek and invest in new technologies and approaches that deliver environmental benefits, reduced costs and lower risks, including meeting more of our energy and heat needs from local or renewable sources;
- Minimise waste from our activities by reducing our use of materials and re-using and recycling where possible;
- Support KCC's active travel strategy¹ by reducing our members' and employees' need to travel. This includes promoting healthier options such as walking, cycling and public transport and providing the technologies, workspaces and opportunities to work in new ways;
- Inform and encourage our staff to take positive action and contribute ideas, to improve our environmental performance and reduce our costs;
- Work with our supply chain partners, encouraging them to deliver innovation and social value in order to reduce the environmental impacts of providing goods and services;
- Maintain and continually improve an Environmental Management System certified to ISO 14001:2015, comply with relevant environmental legislation and prevent pollution.

This policy will be implemented and monitored through the council's environmental management system. This system is a structured approach to making environmental improvements, which is assessed against the [ISO14001:2015 Standard](#) by the British Standards Institute.

A progress report on the policy will be reviewed annually by the Council's corporate management team.

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Note 1: KCC's Active Travel strategy is scheduled for approval in Spring/Summer 2017

This leaflet is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages. Please call 03000 41 71 71 for details.