

Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy Implementation Plan 2020-2023

Year 2 activity monitoring report

Jan 2022 – Dec 2022



INTRODUCTION

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

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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.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (ELES) continues to provide the overarching Kent and Medway area net-zero plan. In 2020 it was formally endorsed or supported by all local authorities, in addition to its endorsement at Kent Leaders in October 2020.

Eleven Kent local authorities (LAs) and Medway Council have published local area net-zero plans, some of which have other names such as carbon action plans. Dover DC currently have plans in draft form. These all include a section regarding internal emissions within direct control of the local authority, focussing on scope 1 and 2 emissions.

In terms of external scope 3 emissions, which are harder for a local authority to influence, these are covered in plans by Canterbury CC, Dartford BC, Gravesham BC, Maidstone BC, Medway C, Swale BC, Thanet DC, Tonbridge and Malling BC and Tunbridge Wells BC. Both Folkestone and Hythe DC and Sevenoaks DC are looking at covering these emissions more fully as their plans progress. Ashford BC are adding scope 3 emissions with retrospective baselines to supplement existing scope 1 and 2 in early 2023.

Local authorities have agreed to work together to establish a method to consistently measure area-wide emissions across Kent and Medway.

The Kent Emissions Pathway Report was published in March 2021 and continues to inform other reports and plans across the area. Work to refine the pathways at a sector and area level, and to estimate costs, is needed alongside future sectoral plans, such as Kent's Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5), and the Kent and Medway Domestic Retrofit Action Plan. Internal consultation on the draft of Kent's Climate Adaptation Action Plan has led to a revised approach, where an internal steering group has been formed and actions refocused towards KCC's assets and services.

Progress with the ELES is being monitored through quarterly meetings with Priority Leads and quarterly discussion at the Kent Climate Change Network (CCN). Annual monitoring took place during November/December 2022 with a full report due to be presented to Kent and Medway Environmental Group (KMEG), before going to Kent Chief Executives and Kent Leaders. Most partners are monitoring their climate change activity using internal governance processes and some are providing annual updates of plans on their websites.

Other active members of the CCN group have also published their own net-zero plans. Kent Police have published a carbon management plan, and Kent Fire & Rescue Service have published an Environment and Assets Strategy which includes a Climate Action Plan.

Kent and Medway NHS published their Green Plan with investment to commit to Net Zero by 2040 for direct emissions and a 2045 target for indirect emissions. This plan sets out nine aims to meet the stated vision detailing influential areas such as estates and facilities, ways of working, medicines, and transport. For example, they have a commitment to train Growing Green Ambassadors in every department with time and resource allocated to support their role.

All the indicators under this heading are progressing apart from the action to develop detailed emissions reduction pathways for key sectors. This action suffers from a lack of lead partner, although some elements may be delivered going forward through the evidence base for LTP5 next year. There is a scarcity of staff resource in all councils to monitor and measure emissions in a consistent and co-ordinated manner.

X RED (1) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (2) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (3) 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)

PRIORITY 1: EMISSION REDUCTION PATHWAYS TO 2050

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>1.1: Agree evidence/baseline and set 5 yearly carbon budgets for Kent and Medway as a whole.</p> <p><i>LEAD partner: KCC</i></p>	<p>This action is complete. The Kent Emissions Pathway Report was published in March 2021 and contains the carbon emissions' baseline for Kent and Medway. 5 yearly carbon budgets were set for Kent and Medway as a whole. Page 19 of the report shows a 4 yearly carbon budget (CO2 only). These budgets are aligned to government reporting frameworks.</p> <p>RISK: None. Action completed.</p>	GREEN
<p>1.2 Develop Kent and Medway emission reduction pathway to Net Zero by 2050.</p> <p><i>LEAD partner: KCC</i></p>	<p>This action is complete. The Kent Emissions Pathway Report published in March 2021 set out a high ambition pathway based on tangible measures (achieving an 88% reduction in emissions by 2050) along with a 1.5°C compliant pathway which achieves 100% reduction by 2050. Kent County Council's (KCC) Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee agreed in July 2022 to track progress against the high ambition pathway. Future reporting will track both against the high ambition pathway and the 1.5°C compliant pathway.</p> <p>RISK: None. Action completed.</p>	GREEN

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>Eleven Kent local authorities (LAs) and Medway Council have published local area net-zero plans, some of which have other names such as carbon action plans. Dover DC currently have plans in draft form. These all include a section regarding internal emissions within direct control of the local authority, focussing on scope 1 and 2 emissions.</p> <p>In terms of external scope 3 emissions, which are harder for a local authority to influence, these are covered in plans by Canterbury CC, Dartford BC, Gravesham BC, Maidstone BC, Medway C, Swale BC, Thanet DC, Tonbridge and Malling BC and Tunbridge Wells BC.</p> <p>Both Folkestone and Hythe DC and Sevenoaks DC are looking at covering these emissions more fully as their plans progress. Ashford BC are adding scope 3 emissions with retrospective baselines to supplement existing scope 1 and 2 in early 2023.</p> <p>Review times for documents vary, but most are being reviewed annually as a minimum. Maidstone BCs document is being reviewed every three months and Ashford BCs is a live document.</p> <p>Internal consultation on the draft of Kent's Climate Adaptation Action Plan has led to a revised approach, where an internal steering group has been formed and actions refocused towards KCC's assets and services.</p> <p>RISK: Scarcity of staff resource (within KCC and local authority areas) to monitor and measure emissions in a consistent and co-ordinated manner.</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 remains outstanding. The intention is to develop more detailed emissions reduction pathways and actions for key sectors (transport, buildings, manufacturing and construction, agriculture, industry, waste, land use change and forestry). Elements of a transport pathway are being delivered through the evidence base for LTP5.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to the lack of a lead partner and resourcing.</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 Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (ELES) implementation plan is monitored quarterly, and an annual report (this document) will be published in summer 2023.</p> <p>Most of the Districts and Boroughs plan to report annually or more often on their area-wide carbon reductions plans.</p> <p>RISK: If there is any lack of consistency regarding local authority's methods for monitoring progress against net-zero targets, then this could hamper further progress.</p>	GREEN

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>1.6 Consider how emissions from consumption could be calculated and incorporated into future area pathways/targets.</p> <p><i>LEAD partner: TBC</i></p>	<p>Previously targets and pathways were focused on production emissions, in line with the UK's targets. These are the emissions occurring within our territorial boundaries. However, we must also consider the impact of consumption-based emissions, Consumption-based emissions can be defined as all emissions along the economic supply chain, no matter where they occur. This method allocates emissions to the area where the consumer of the final good or service is based. We are now using DEFRA data to track consumption-based emissions locally. However, these do not formally form part of our targets or implementation plan. Discussions on how to incorporate this into the 2023 version of the implementation plan and ELES targets are required.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to the lack of a lead partner and resourcing.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>

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.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

A Kent Climate Change Network (CCN) Procurement sub-group made up of local authority commissioners and climate change officers has made considerable progress. The group has produced a best practice guidance document and a Joint Market Position Statement to influence the market and assist with supplier engagement. The group is working on an Ethical and Sustainable Commissioning and Procurement policy which will determine net-zero requirements for contracts. Canterbury CC and Medway C have confirmed they are planning to use the Joint Market Position Statement in their procurement activities.

The Social Value Exchange element of contracting has been piloted within four KCC tenders.

KCC have developed a draft environment and climate change assessment pro forma. This action has been paused whilst the working group is re-established, and a decision is made by senior management on the direction and scope of the assessment process.

Many local authorities in Kent now ask that all decision-making reports should include a section to prompt officers to consider climate change/carbon impacts of their projects.

KCC continues to offer support to many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) within local public sector supply chains looking to effect positive environmental change through its Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) and Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) support programmes, which are funded until June 2023. A further 124 Kent and Medway businesses were supported with resource efficiency projects or development grants. STEM workshops assisted 16 Kent businesses with environmental management systems and benchmarking their footprint.

At a meeting of the Kent HR officer network in December it was agreed that net-zero issues should be a standing agenda item going forward.

Overall, it has become apparent that extra staffing resources are required to fully embed sustainable procurement and commissioning within organisations. For example, the long-term success of priority 2.4 is likely to be limited without additional staff resource, particularly within large public sector organisations.

X RED (1) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (1) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (2) 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)

PRIORITY 2: PUBLIC SECTOR DECISION MAKING

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>2.1 Develop a simple checklist to identify where significant environmental issues and opportunities may arise in response to Covid-19 recovery.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>This action has been completed.</p> <p>RISK: None. Action completed.</p>	GREEN
<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>The Climate Change Network (CCN) Procurement sub-group meets every 6 weeks and consists of procurement professionals and climate change officers from across Kent and Medway. The group has produced a best practice guidance document and a Joint Market Position Statement to influence the market and assist with supplier engagement. Last year KCC Commissioning Standards published guidance and templates for procurement activity which included elements to encourage staff to consider Net Zero more in contracts. The group is working on an Ethical and Sustainable Commissioning and Procurement policy which will determine net-zero requirements for contracts.</p> <p>Folkestone and Hythe DC started reviewing the hurdles to, and will identify solutions for, local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) engagement with Council tenders through their Carbon Innovation (CI-Lab) work with internal procurement. This was set up to explicitly encourage local SMEs to invest in bidding for Council-led contracts.</p> <p>RISK: There is a risk that procurement activities to encourage Net Zero could inadvertently dissuade SMEs from bidding for contracts. Lack of staff and training on sustainable procurement within councils could mean that net-zero requirements may not be fully embedded in contracts and opportunities could be lost.</p>	AMBER

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>KCC have initiated procedures to strengthen the environmental sections of the contract and commissioning process, for example, within the hard services contract between KCC and Skanska. The Social Value Exchange element of contracting has been piloted on four KCC tenders. This means that the tenderers had to commit to environmental programmes such as Plan Bee and Plan Tree as well as other measures such as limiting single use plastics.</p> <p>Canterbury CC have confirmed they are planning to use the Joint Market Position Statement in their procurement activities. Medway C will consider applying the Joint Market Position Statement within procurement activities once it has been through KCC's governance processes.</p> <p>Folkestone and Hythe DC are piloting an inclusive and quantitative sustainability section in the Council's tendering and contract award evaluation process.</p> <p>RISK: whilst some work in this area has started, this is the beginning of a major change to working practices with limited resource.</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><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC have developed a draft environment and climate change assessment pro forma. This action has been paused whilst the working group is re-established, and a decision is made by senior management on the direction and scope of the assessment process. KCC will allocate a responsible officer to deliver this piece of work.</p> <p>Many local authorities in Kent now ask that all decision-making reports should include a section to prompt officers to consider climate change/carbon impacts of their projects.</p> <p>Risk: This action is currently paused and at risk of non-completion due to staff resources.</p>	RED

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 237 629 363">2.5 Encourage and support SMEs within public sector supply chains to effect positive environmental change by utilising LoCASE and STEM support programmes (see 9.2 and 9.3).</p> <p data-bbox="125 675 479 703"><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p data-bbox="651 237 1962 571">In 2022, a further 124 Kent and Medway businesses have been supported with £946 000 of LoCASE funding. Of this figure, 75 SMEs were investing in resource efficiency projects and 49 businesses in the low carbon sector received development grants to help support Kent's green economy. 100 firms across Kent have also been supported in implementing low cost but high impact changes in their business activities through the Green Recovery Voucher scheme. The refreshed Steps to Environment Management (STEM) workshops have helped a further 94 regional firms with environmental management systems and benchmarking their footprint, 16 of these businesses are from Kent. 36 food and drink sector businesses were supported with decarbonisation plans through the Growing Green project with 24 of these also gaining grant support of up to £8 000 towards a diverse range of innovations. The Climate Change Network (CCN) Procurement sub-group have been engaged and supported in preparing a minimum standards Joint Market Position Statement to encourage more of our partners' supply chains into the STEM scheme and/or other Low Carbon Kent support.</p> <p data-bbox="651 624 1951 711">RISK: Tightening tender processes too much, too quickly, will risk disenfranchising the smaller, less-prepared SMEs. An open, supportive approach is needed to bring our supply chains with us on the Net Zero journey, alongside practical, relatable, local examples from those already engaged.</p>	<p data-bbox="2007 196 2074 225">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2018 432 2051 528">GREEN</p>

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.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Most local authority Local Plans in Kent have been or are in the process of being updated with net-zero commitments and related policies. However, the 5-year cycle of Local Plan refreshes means that it will still be a few years before all plans include Net Zero.

KCC have developed draft building standards for both new and refurbished public sector buildings. The Standards are ambitious, with performance-based targets and a focus on carbon reduction, health and wellbeing, and climate adaptation. The Standards need to be tested and refined to ensure they incorporate a whole-building approach. Current lack of resourcing means further development has been paused.

The Kent Design Guide refresh has been significantly delayed, and the consultation exercise was not completed, so all action will need to be relaunched when resources allow.

Work to coordinate the development of a clean growth strategic planning framework and associated training is under review during business planning for 2023/24.

All areas within this priority are at risk of non-completion due to lack of dedicated staff and resource. Whilst progress has been made on the training of local authority staff in Kent regarding climate change, more resource intensive carbon literacy training has been limited and work to create training programmes for specific groups has not yet been progressed.

X RED (5) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (1) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (0) 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)

PRIORITY 3: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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>During September 2021, the Kent Design Guide draft went through soft testing, followed by a public consultation (November 2021- January 2022). However, the consultation exercise was not finished due to a lack of resource and will need to be revisited. The Kent Design Guide website is not launched.</p> <p>RISK: Significant as it is referenced in the Framing Kent's Future strategy document. This action is currently paused and at risk of non-completion due to staff resources.</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>As the document is not completed it could not be adopted and so has not been directly referenced as a Supplementary Planning Document in Local Plan updates.</p> <p>RISK: High as it could take a minimum of 12 months for the Kent Design Guide to be adopted.</p>	RED
<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>Resource requirements were identified, however recruitment to a newly created 'Senior Climate Change Officer' role was unsuccessful. The scope of the role is currently under review during business planning for 2023/24.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to lack of staff resource.</p>	RED

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>Given 3.3, policy and guidance has yet to be prepared but best practice in terms of evidence, guidance and policy is routinely shared through well-established officer networks including Kent Chief Planners and the Kent Planning Policy Forum. Seven of the districts and borough councils have commented that they include net-zero carbon considerations in their local plans.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to lack of staff resource.</p>	RED
<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>This action has started, see notes for 3.3 and 3.4.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to lack of staff resource and time to train the target audience of planners, planning committee members, developers, and supply chain staff.</p>	RED
<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>KCC have developed draft Building Standards for both new and refurbished public sector buildings. The standards are ambitious, with performance-based targets and a focus on carbon reduction, health and wellbeing and climate adaptation. The Standards need to be tested and further refined to ensure they address the whole-building approach. Current lack of resourcing means that further development of the Standards has been paused, however KCC will allocate a responsible officer to deliver this piece of work.</p> <p>RISK: Whilst a draft has been produced, with the current lack of staff, this work has stalled.</p>	AMBER

Priority 4 Climate Emergency Investment Fund

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

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Various government departments have released substantial amounts of funding over the past year. This funding has tended to be one-off, with short timescales for bids and delivery. This has meant that activity under this priority has focused on responding to these funding calls (with many partners submitting successful bids), rather than establishing a strategic investment fund mechanism.

Work on the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funded “Accelerating Nature Based Climate Solutions” project continued through the year. The project is led by East Sussex, but Kent Wildlife Trust are commissioned to deliver much of the work. The project has produced a user guide to support buyers and sellers of nature-based carbon offsets which will be published in early 2023. There will also be a longer synthesis report which brings together all the findings as well as case studies and demonstration projects from this work.

The environmental consultancy “Economics for the Environment” (EFTEC) presented research commissioned as part of the SELEP funded project on nature-based solutions and market enablers at the July 2022 project steering group. The steering group are providing further comments on EFTEC's research which will then lead to a final report on how to support a brokerage hub.

Through Plan Tree, Kent sites suitable for tree planting, and tree establishment plans are continuing to be identified to develop a project pipeline that will enable carbon sequestration amongst other nature-based solution, ecological and societal benefits.

The Environment Act introduced a mandatory approach to biodiversity net gain (BNG) that will apply from late 2023. However, BNG and Kent Local Nature Recovery Strategy work has been restricted due to delayed secondary legislation and statutory guidance.

A proposal for an online system to register potential "green sites" for BNG units or carbon trading, and for developers to register their needs for such sites, has been developed by Kent Wildlife Trust and has the potential to create a more streamlined funding source.

The short time frame for bidding processes has reinforced the need for a pipeline of 'shovel ready' decarbonisation projects (as identified in the ELES implementation plan). Almost all partners are reporting a lack of staff skills and/or capacity to develop business cases, or funding to undertake feasibility studies to develop sufficient pipeline programmes.

In summary, a combination of lack of resource and expertise, lack of feasibility work for suitable projects, and delays to legislation are all combining to hinder the completion of actions identified under this priority.

X RED (0) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (3) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (3) 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)

PRIORITY 4: CLIMATE EMERGENCY INVESTMENT FUND

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>A review of existing internal and external funding streams that could be used to deliver ELES actions was conducted and a resource was developed which was published on the Climate Change Network (CCN) Teams site for collaborative use.</p> <p>RISK: None. Action completed</p>	GREEN
<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: East Sussex County Council</i></p>	<p>Work on the SELEP funded “Accelerating Nature-Based Climate Solutions” project continued through the year. The project is led by East Sussex, but Kent Wildlife Trust are commissioned to deliver much of the work. Progress has been faster in some areas than others. Notably the Kent case studies are further ahead with early drafts now produced for Swale, including Southern Water as a business and GH Dean as a landowner. An extension was agreed for the project to run through until December 2022.</p> <p>There are a variety of outputs from the project, including a user guide to support buyers and sellers of nature-based carbon offsets, to be published in early 2023 and spread via networks. A longer synthesis report is another key output, which brings together all the findings as well as case studies and demonstration projects from this work. One further meeting is planned, post publication of the main outputs, to discuss the next steps for this work and this may inform a new action for the 2023/24 ELES action plan.</p> <p>RISK: None. The project is on time.</p>	GREEN

Action	Progress	RAG
<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: East Sussex County Council</i></p>	<p>EFTEC (Economics for the Environment consultancy) presented research commissioned as part of the SELEP funded project on nature-based solutions and market enablers at the July 2022 project steering group. This identified four main market enablers (negotiators/local aggregators/intermediaries/validators and other enablers). The main themes of the research included a tendency to see the term 'brokerage' negatively and associate it with traditional finance markets.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the nascency of the market means many of the 'rules' are still in development. Some areas of nature-based solutions (NBS), e.g., carbon credits are more developed than others e.g., biodiversity credits. There is still a need for public sector support as many mechanisms are not yet financially sustainable.</p> <p>EFTEC also presented several recommendations for supporting a brokerage hub going forward. EFTEC were clear that local authorities should not be sellers in the market due to conflicts of interests with also being intermediaries and market operators e.g., for nutrient neutrality. The steering group are providing final comments on EFTEC's research which will then lead to a summary report on how to support a brokerage hub. Whilst this framework and brokerage hub was the early ambition for the SELEP funded project, this ambition was not delivered due to a concern that the market is still extremely underdeveloped and unregulated. This action will need to be reassessed following the final project meeting in 2023.</p> <p>RISK: None. The project is on time.</p>	GREEN
<p>4.4 Establish a working group and evaluate options for a Kent and Medway climate emergency investment fund/offset fund to support local natural capital and renewable energy projects.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>This action is dependent on the conclusion of the project under 4.3, which will develop a brokerage model.</p> <p>RISK: There are no dedicated resources (staff or funding) for the development of a climate emergency investment fund.</p>	AMBER
<p>4.5 Develop a portfolio of 'shovel-ready' domestic retrofit and renewable energy projects suitable for external funding</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>KCC have several renewable energy projects that have been developed. The difficulty is having the resource to constantly keep these up to date at a time when project costs and feasibility change so rapidly. Regarding domestic retrofit, districts, and boroughs along with the Greater South East Net Zero Hub continue to apply for external funding for both private and social domestic properties.</p> <p>RISK: Regarding the absence of the portfolio of shovel-ready projects, LA partners are reporting a lack of staff skills and capacity to develop business cases, and funding to undertake feasibility studies to develop a sufficient pipeline of domestic retrofit projects. In some cases, this lack of staff capacity has prevented organisations from bidding for funding.</p>	AMBER

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 237 725 363">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 data-bbox="125 852 533 884"><i>LEAD: Kent Nature Partnership</i></p>	<p data-bbox="757 237 1890 384">The Environment Act introduces a mandatory approach to biodiversity net gain (BNG) that will apply from late 2023. In respect of BNG and the Kent Local Nature Recovery Strategy, this work has been hampered by delays to secondary legislation and statutory guidance, which is still not published and is necessary to guide this work. It is expected that this will be available in the first quarter of 2023.</p> <p data-bbox="757 392 1890 480">Through Plan Tree, sites suitable for tree planting, and tree establishment plans, have been and continue to be identified to develop a project pipeline that will enable carbon sequestration amongst other ecological and societal benefits.</p> <p data-bbox="757 488 1890 663">A proposal for an online system to register potential "green sites" for BNG units or carbon trading, and for developers to register a need for such sites, has been developed by Kent Wildlife Trust. Initial discussions have been had with Kent's Local Planning Authorities (LPA)s regarding funding. Burdens Funding from Defra has not yet been confirmed which is hampering efforts to secure the resources needed to progress this, although there is interest for the online system.</p> <p data-bbox="757 671 1890 727">Kent Wildlife Trust have been working with BTF Partnership to assess opportunities for BNG and other nature-based solutions on privately owned land.</p> <p data-bbox="757 759 1890 847">RISK: There are multiple demands on land to deliver nature-based solutions and several organisations and authorities looking to secure land for different purposes and so going forward a co-ordinated approach is needed.</p> <p data-bbox="757 855 1890 903">There are also continued delays to secondary legislation, statutory guidance, and Burdens Funding.</p>	<p data-bbox="1973 201 2040 225">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="1973 528 2018 616">AMBER</p>

Priority 5 Building Retrofit Programme

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

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Most of the local authorities (LAs) have published carbon reduction plans for their estate. The remaining LAs are progressing with this work through a variety of plans and processes. Most councils are implementing public sector building retrofit programmes.

Medway C have started work on the £12 million Re:fit Phase One program, focusing on 12 public buildings.

Kent Police, the NHS and Kent Fire & Rescue Service also have similar plans for their estate.

A Strategic Domestic Retrofit Group (sub-group of Kent Housing Partnership) has taken ownership of delivering a comprehensive Kent and Medway Domestic Retrofit Action Plan (excluding social housing). A report will be completed regarding the resource and direction needed for this plan going forward. Actions continue within domestic retrofit; for example, through the Sustainable Warmth grant scheme and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

Further bids by LAs have been submitted for government funded energy efficiency schemes during the year, e.g. Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 2 (LAD2), Sustainable Warmth and the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG), whilst also continuing work to signpost residents to schemes.

During 2022, KCC's Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) programme has provided support and grant funding to a further 124 Kent-based small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to retrofit renewable energy technologies into their business premises. Grant funding is available through to spring 2023 only.

In summary, whilst considerable progress is being made for some sections in this priority, there is a combination of factors that are preventing large-scale progress in this area. These include a lack of resource, short time scales for bid applications, strict bid criteria, a lack of identified "shovel-ready" projects, scarcity of certain materials, increasing labour and resource costs, and a lack of expert staff.

X RED (2) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (7) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (2) 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)

PRIORITY 5: BUILDING RETROFIT PROGRAMME

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>All local authority areas have designated carbon targets for their estates and the majority also have carbon reduction plans for their estate with annual progress to be measured.</p> <p>Kent Police, the NHS, and Kent Fire & Rescue Service all have carbon reduction plans for their estate.</p> <p>RISK: Ongoing challenges of resourcing the development and monitoring of organisational net-zero plans.</p>	GREEN

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 244 560 368">5.2 Implement a public sector building retrofit programme (energy and water), identifying joint projects that maximise economies of scale where possible.</p> <p data-bbox="125 1050 479 1082"><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p data-bbox="618 244 1637 272">Most local authority areas are implementing public sector building retrofit programmes.</p> <p data-bbox="618 304 1883 395">Dartford BC are contributing to Salix funding for a retrofit program for the Civic Centre and Orchard Theatre complex which includes installing solar panels, air source heat pumps and upgraded lighting and new air conditioning.</p> <p data-bbox="618 400 1928 608">Medway C have started work on the £12 million Re:fit Phase One program, focusing on 12 public buildings. This is funding solar panels, water efficiency measures, energy efficient boilers and heat pumps and adding further electric vehicle charge points. Initial works which are due to be completed by spring 2023 are estimated to be saving 4,932 cubic metres of water (nearly 2 Olympic-sized swimming pools), and 2.05GWh of energy. At the end of 2022 Medway C were informed of a successful bid for £4.2 million of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding. This will support the delivery of heat pumps across 20 council owned buildings. The related survey work commenced at the end of 2022.</p> <p data-bbox="618 612 1928 804">Folkestone & Hythe DC are upgrading the energy efficiency of 109 social houses plus Ross House with the £1.9 million award from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1. The work improves the energy efficiency of homes to an energy performance certificate (EPC) rating of C and significantly reduces the amount of energy required to heat each home. The Wave 1 energy efficiency work at Ross House is supplemented by further Council funding to introduce renewable heat and energy to reach EPC A rating and be a low carbon exemplar in social housing retrofit.</p> <p data-bbox="618 809 1906 936">Folkestone & Hythe DC commissioned a report to create a pathway to net-zero carbon for the Folca2 (former Debenhams) building in the centre of Folkestone. The selection of measures defined by the pathway will align with public sector decarbonisation requirements and be used as a pilot for the other buildings in the Council's estate.</p> <p data-bbox="618 975 1890 1034">Kent Police are just commencing a large programme of works to review their estate for future policing needs and to meet carbon reduction objectives.</p> <p data-bbox="618 1066 1928 1123">RISK: Short timescales and the competitive nature of public sector decarbonisation scheme funding means that local authorities need to be prepared with 'shovel-ready' projects for when funding rounds open.</p>	<p data-bbox="1989 201 2063 229">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2011 655 2040 715">RED</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<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: Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership/SE Energy Hub</i></p>	<p>A Strategic Domestic Retrofit Group (sub-group of Kent Housing Partnership) has taken ownership of delivering this action point. A report will be going to Kent and Medway Environment Group in March 2023 setting out the resource needed to develop this plan and the broad direction for the action plan. This action plan will need to link in closely with anticipated work on local area energy planning.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to the lack of resourcing.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>5.4 Secure funding and implement projects identified in the Domestic Retrofit Action Plan (excluding social housing)</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership/SE Energy Hub</i></p>	<p>Action dependent on 5.3 and given the timelines for development of the Action Plan (Dec 23) it is unlikely projects will be delivered before Jan 2024. However, action on domestic retrofit is happening without an action plan in place, for example via Sustainable Warmth and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to the lack of resourcing.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>5.5 Develop costed action plans to deliver net-zero social housing by 2030. Monitor and report progress.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Stock holding authorities (Medway, Ashford, Canterbury, Dartford, Dover, Gravesham, Folkestone & Hythe, Thanet)</i></p>	<p>The eight Kent stock-holding local authorities continue to work on stock condition surveys and modelling to identify how they can reduce emissions from each housing type and build retrofit into their stock maintenance. Of these, Canterbury CC and Gravesham BC have outlined costs to deliver net-zero social housing by 2030, and Dartford BC and Folkestone and Hythe DC have costed action plans to deliver the same.</p> <p>RISK: Resource will be required to complete the surveys and modelling studies ahead of the development of action plans. In addition, concerns have been raised about the lack of resource, supply chain issues, increasing costs and lack of skills to deliver social housing retrofit.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>5.6 Support and facilitate Registered Providers to develop costed action plans to decarbonise their housing stock.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership/Registered Providers</i></p>	<p>The asset management group has had presentations from Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 2035 assessors, KCC and providers of solutions to support Registered Providers (RPs) in delivering plans. Information has been shared on applying for bids from BEIS and other sources. Costings for projects and the process have also been shared.</p> <p>RISK: The cost of works has significantly increased during 2022 along with a reduction in workforce and material availability. It is unlikely that any orders not yet submitted for external wall insulation works will be completed in 2023, due to shortages of materials.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>5.7 Implement projects to improve the energy efficiency of social housing, focusing on whole-house retrofit to PAS 2035 standards and identifying joint projects that maximise economies of scale where possible.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Stock holding authorities/Registered Providers</i></p>	<p>Gravesham BC have completed several projects and Clarion shared details of a retrofit project completed with United Living.</p> <p>Folkestone & Hythe DC was awarded £1.9 million of funding under Wave 1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Scheme. This is delivering warmer and healthier homes to its tenants.</p> <p>RISK: The cost of works has significantly increased during 2022 along with a reduction in workforce and material availability. It is unlikely that any orders not yet submitted for external wall insulation works will be completed in 2023, due to shortages of materials.</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: Kent Housing Group</i></p>	<p>Kent Housing Group began work in 2022 to update the existing Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy. First draft updates have been submitted from various partners as part of this process. Kent Housing Group also planned an event focused on fuel poverty and retrofit during the second half of 2022 (event itself delivered Jan 23).</p> <p>RISK: None</p>	<p>AMBER</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 245 568 336">5.9 Support and enforce private sector property owners to make improvements to rental properties.</p> <p data-bbox="125 1118 539 1217"><i>LEAD: District/Borough (Private Sector Housing/Environmental Health)</i></p>	<p data-bbox="618 245 1397 272">Various measures are being taken across all Kent LAs, as follows:</p> <ul data-bbox="667 293 1928 571" style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of category 1 hazards including damp and mould growth and excess cold. • Working with property owners to improve the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of F/G band rated properties, with enforcement action taken where necessary under the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations. • West Kent Landlords' Forum in March 2022 focused on MEES. • Participation in bids for government funded energy efficiency schemes, e.g. LAD2, Sustainable Warmth and Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) and signposting residents to these schemes. • Use of Housing Assistance policies to provide grants/financial assistance for energy efficiency improvements. <p data-bbox="618 592 1912 715">The next government funded scheme is HUG2 and bids have been submitted with most councils choosing to go forward with the Greater South East Net Zero Hub. The Hub co-ordinate bids, make the application, deliver the programme via managing agents, and provide support and guidance to applicants and councils. The outcome is not yet known, and this will be a two-year programme for off-gas properties.</p> <p data-bbox="618 751 1879 810">Energy Company Obligation 4 (ECO4) funding will continue until 2026 and is available for rented properties where tenants meet the eligibility criteria.</p> <p data-bbox="618 847 1928 1091">The MEES Regulations make it unlawful to let a property with an EPC rating below E, subject to various exemptions which must be registered online. The Government is proposing to raise the minimum EPC rating to C by 2030. Private sector housing teams ascertain the current EPC when receiving any complaint and investigate any below an E rating. However most LAs do not have the resources to fully implement the regulations. It is challenging to undertake this work proactively as EPC data must be comprehensively interrogated and cleansed to produce a list of properties believed to be tenanted and not owner-occupied. Then property owners' details need to be obtained from another source and confirmed, and casework/enforcement is undertaken on a property-by-property basis.</p> <p data-bbox="618 1144 1899 1294">RISK: 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 everywhere, 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 data-bbox="2007 730 2040 826" style="text-align: center;">AMBER</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>5.10 Support SMEs to retrofit energy efficiency and renewable technologies in business premises through LoCASE grant funding.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>In 2022, a further 124 Kent and Medway businesses have been supported with £946 000 LoCASE funding. 75 SMEs invested in resource efficiency projects and 49 businesses in the low carbon sector were awarded development grants to help support our local green economy. Improvements ranged from deep retrofit projects, simple insulation, or lighting projects through to differing sized photovoltaics (PV) and heat pump installations. Engagement and cross-referrals were common with KCC's NoUseEmpty as well as Locate in Kent MEES initiatives for and with commercial property owners. In addition, of the 24 local firms Low Carbon Kent supported with £180 000 grants through the Community Renewal Fund (CRF) project Growing Green, over half were for building efficiency improvements.</p> <p>RISK: Tightening building regulations mean that new builds are tougher to support but that gives greater opportunity to show good return on investment (ROI) on retrofit solutions. A lack of direct grant funding available to administer programmes puts more pressure on finding relatable propositions to champion as viable business cases given utility costs.</p>	<p>GREEN</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 action has not commenced yet as there is currently no one leading this action.</p> <p>RISK: There is currently no staff resource or funding to progress this action</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.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Business mile reduction targets or revised corporate travel policies have been included in all partners' corporate net-zero plans. Many are looking to adopt a post-Covid hybrid working model that encourages modal shift to active travel or public transport, including sustainable staff travel plans, car sharing, electric car lease schemes, hybrid working practices, improved cycle facilities and cycle to work schemes. There have been some issues in Kent with the supply of electric lease cars. Most public sector partners are starting to transition their fleets to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV), although in many cases this is dependent upon the continuation of ULEV funding.

KCC has embraced a hybrid working model enabling staff to work from various locations including KCC offices and remotely from home, additionally encouraging staff to hold virtual meetings when appropriate. KCC set an ambitious target of reducing business mileage by 35% which was achieved and continues to be achieved since COVID restrictions were eased. KCC staff have access to a KCC lift share site, a car club, a cycle to work scheme which includes e-bikes and cycle training including e-bike training.

KCCs Public Rights of Way (PRoW) team and Medway's PRoW team continue to extend and improve the public network for walking and cycling journeys.

Natural England continue progress in partnership with local authorities and landowners to improve coastal access in England. During 2022, two new large-scale sections of the England coastal path were opened from Woolwich to Grain and Whitstable to Iwade.

KCC, with district and borough partners, and Medway Council continue to improve and extend the Kent walking and cycling network.

KCC highways progressed further the design of four Active Travel England (ATE) funded schemes in Canterbury, Folkestone, Thanet, and Gravesham. A fifth scheme in Folkestone at Dymchurch is under construction. There were also two further successful ATE funding bids in 2022 to initiate new active travel routes in central Sevenoaks and Herne Bay.

All districts and boroughs have either a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in place or are in the process of developing an LCWIP or similar. Dartford BC, Gravesham BC, and Sevenoaks DC are progressing LCWIP type documents in collaboration with KCC using contribution funding from ATE.

KCC have started working on a Kent wide LCWIP (the KCWIP) which will contribute to Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5).

Kent and Medway continue work on sustainable school travel projects to encourage model shift whilst also improving safety such as school travel plans, school grants for sustainable travel, primary and secondary pupil road safety campaigns, responsible parking initiatives and bikeability training.

The recently formed Kent's Enhanced Bus Partnership works with the county's bus operators and has several environmental commitments. During 21-22 however, the bus industry has continued to operate in "recovery mode" from the impacts of the pandemic. Some services themselves are only viable due to Government financial support. Presently operators' predominant focus is on providing services themselves. There remains a commitment to develop vehicles and services as funding permits, however.

During 2021, KCC was successful in securing Department for Transport Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) funding to move the whole Fastrack bus rapid transit (BRT) fleet in Thameside and Dover to zero emission buses (£9.5 million for 33 buses). The funding was confirmed in October 2021 and procurement has begun.

KCC are developing plans to introduce Mobility as a Service (MaaS), a multimodal multi-operator digital transport technology platform as a new type of service. Initial plans focus on Ebbsfleet as a home grown 'Future Transport Zone' built around Fastrack BRT & local public transport in the Dartford, Ebbsfleet Garden City & Gravesend area.

District and borough supported car clubs are running in Gravesham, Thanet, Canterbury, Maidstone, and Tunbridge Wells areas with expansion planned. Folkestone and Hythe DC have a salary sacrifice scheme for electric vehicles.

Kent REVS Up for Cleaner Air scheme provides businesses with the opportunity to try an electric van. KCC runs the scheme which successfully secured £1.5 million funding from Highways England, having achieved well over 300 van loans across all districts in Kent.

KCC regularly rationalises all hired client school transport services to minimise the number of services operating and thereby reduce carbon emissions. KCC will explore ways to incentivise school transport providers to switch to ultra-low emissions vehicles (ULEV).

Medway C have obtained funding from the DEFRA Air Quality Grant to carry out a comprehensive taxi and private hire ultra-low emission vehicle feasibility study looking at the barriers and opportunities for ULEV uptake by the trade. KCC host a Climate Change Network (CCN) sub-group for district and borough taxi licencing officers to inform future licencing policy and has initiated a driver survey to identify barriers and concerns to ULEV uptake by the trade supported by the Energy Saving Trust.

All ULEV initiatives are dependent on developed charging infrastructure and suitable vehicles becoming readily available. However, as of 2022, Kent is ahead of forecast demand for infrastructure.

KCC is supporting the activity of the Sub-National Transport Body (STB) - Transport for the South East (TfSE) in its implementation of its freight strategy. KCC is also supporting its freight forum which aims to find opportunities for improving freight transport in Kent and the whole region that sector, government, or wider partnership working could address.

Each Kent LA carries out its own air quality assessments to determine if national air quality objectives have been achieved. All districts with an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) have a written Air Quality Action Plan to try to improve air quality. The Kent & Medway Air Quality Partnership (KMAQP) continues to meet quarterly to discuss current issues and concerns to ensure a joined-up approach to tackling poor air quality across Kent.

Progress has been made in many areas of this priority, but the nature of time-limited funding and increases in costs and scarcity of resources all impact on further progress in this area. Locally transport and travel are still being impacted by the effect of COVID restrictions. 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. Initiatives developed to promote and incentivise walking and cycling are often reliant on finite funding and often require contribution funding and extra resource. High inflation is causing cost increase in labour, fuel, and materials. There is also a significant shortage of materials and labour too. Funding for projects is insufficient to meet the demand for improvements.

X RED (0) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (5) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (10) 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)

PRIORITY 6: TRANSPORT, TRAVEL, AND DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.1 Review business mileage, set challenging reduction targets considering 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.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>KCC has embraced a hybrid working model enabling staff to work from various locations including KCC offices and remotely from home, additionally encouraging staff to hold virtual meeting where appropriate to reduce travel. KCC has an ambitious target of reducing our business miles by 35% which was achieved and continues to be achieved since COVID restrictions were eased.</p> <p>There are numerous initiatives being developed by public sector organisations in Kent to encourage modal shift to active travel or public transport, these include: developing sustainable staff travel plans, car sharing, staff travel planning, electric car lease schemes, reviewing business mileage policies, developing hybrid working practices, cycle to work and cycle hire schemes, employer travel clubs.</p> <p>Both Gravesham and Thanet have business mileage reduction plans in place.</p> <p>RISK: KCC continues to monitor business miles and regularly report these to senior service leads, however it remains up to each individual service to address spikes in mileage across their teams.</p>	GREEN
<p>6.2 Work in partnership to influence and develop plans to transition public sector fleets to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV).</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>Almost all local authorities have plans to transition public sector fleets to ultra-low emission (ULEV) vehicles. Some authorities have set targets e.g., Medway C plan for their car/van fleet (not including Refuse Collection Vehicles) to be electric by 2027 and KCC by 2030. Other public sector organisations such as the NHS, Kent Police and Kent Fire & Rescue Service also have plans to move to ULEVs.</p> <p>RISK: the availability of electric vehicle charging points. However, Kent has a robust plan to roll more charging points out. There is also the issue of insufficient electricity capacity at some sites to provide for the charging points.</p>	AMBER

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 233 432 424">6.3 Implement the Rights of Way Improvement Plans for Kent and for Medway; to develop motor-vehicle free routes for walking and cycling:</p> <p data-bbox="125 815 432 879"><i>LEAD: KCC & Medway Council</i></p>	<p data-bbox="477 233 1980 320">The Kent Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network length in 2021 was 6899km, the network length in 2022 is 6912km. There has therefore been an annual increase of 13 km Kent PRoW added to the network. Within these figures there is an annual increase to the bridleway network of 11Km, which can also be used by cyclists.</p> <p data-bbox="477 336 1980 400">Medway Council has been awarded £9 500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Rochester Community Trail. Work started to improve the trail using over 10km of local rights of way with further works due for completion in 2023.</p> <p data-bbox="477 416 1980 480">Approximately 90Km of the England Coast Path (ECP) opened in the county in 2022. Woolwich – Grain route includes sections in London and Medway. The Kent element of this is around 45Km. The Kent Whitstable to Iwade section is 46Km.</p> <p data-bbox="477 496 1980 560">Further work was completed in 2022 on a second Medway section between Grain and Otterham Quay ready for opening in 2023. This includes 3 super-steps allowing better access to seawall sections of the ECP at Grain and Hoo St Wedburgh.</p> <p data-bbox="477 576 1980 639">Much of this new access is only for journeys on foot and has been achieved through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 access provisions rather than through the PRoW network, so is not captured in the PRoW statistics.</p> <p data-bbox="477 791 1980 879">RISK: There are local issues with recruitment of experienced staff. High inflation is causing cost increase in labour, fuel, and materials. There is also a significant shortage of materials and labour too. Funding for projects is insufficient to meet the demand for improvements.</p>	<p data-bbox="2002 193 2089 225">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2002 512 2089 608">AMBER</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 233 443 520">6.4 Update and implement the Kent Active Travel Strategy and implement the Medway Sustainable School Travel Strategy to promote and incentivise walking and cycling through the provision of infrastructure, facilities, training, and engagement.</p> <p data-bbox="125 1078 286 1110"><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p data-bbox="477 233 1928 320">Kent ActiveTravel Strategy (ATS) has a webpage on the KCC website, with direct links to Kent Connected, a sustainable journey planner tool. The Kent ATS is not being updated but will be replaced with the Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) which is also linked to work on Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5).</p> <p data-bbox="477 336 1966 456">KCC sustainable school travel ambitions are continuing to progress with schools able to create their own travel plan supported by KCC's Jambuster website. Schools registered with Jambusters can also access other resources, such as travel data collection templates. 12 schools created School Travel Plans (STP)s in 2022 with engagement from a further 84 schools that have shown an interest in having a STP.</p> <p data-bbox="477 472 1957 592">KM Charity work and the Department for Transport (DfT) Capability Fund contributed to a KCC programme to incentivise and educate primary school children to walk to school. The Small Steps programme engaged with 33 schools and reached 1007 pupils (during the period Sept 21 - Aug 22). The Youth Travel Ambassador programmes educates and incentivises secondary school children to actively travel to school. This engaged with 6153 individuals during the period Sept 21 - Aug 22.</p> <p data-bbox="477 608 1968 799">Medway Council continue to work towards the aspirations set out within the Sustainable School Travel Strategy in terms of modal shift and active travel to school initiatives. The Walk on Wednesday 'WOW' initiative uptake increased from 3,000 pupils in Medway in 2021-22, to 5,328 pupils in 2022-23, accounting for 20% of all primary school children in Medway. Partnership working has also played a vital role during the year, in promoting active travel to school progress across Medway, with examples including the KM Charity Team, Modeshift, Living Streets, Sustrans, Public Health and the Kent Community Rail Partnership.</p> <p data-bbox="477 1046 1951 1110">RISK: Initiatives developed to promote and incentivise walking and cycling are often reliant on finite funding and often require contribution funding and extra resource.</p>	<p data-bbox="2002 193 2089 225">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2002 632 2063 727">GREEN</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.5 Work in partnership to prepare and implement local walking and cycling strategies.</p> <p>LEAD: KCC</p>	<p>All districts and boroughs have either a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in place or are in the process of developing LCWIPs or similar. KCC have started working on a Kent wide LCWIP (the KCWIP) which will contribute to LTP5.</p> <p>Dartford, Gravesham, and Sevenoaks LA areas are working on LCWIP type documents in collaboration with KCC using contribution funding from Active Travel England (ATE). Further funding for 2023 has now been allocated by ATE to Kent through the Capability Fund 22/23 to support Kent districts and boroughs with the development / enhancement of LCWIPs, walking and cycling network mapping and active travel scheme planning and design.</p> <p>RISK: Individual councils writing plans could lead to uncoordinated efforts across Kent. KCC are assisting councils so that plans have a consistent and coordinated approach which will be enhanced by the development of the KCWIP. ATE are continuing to expand to influence further areas of active travel highway infrastructure improvements to bring more uniformity to planned improvements and support behaviour change programmes. Whilst this is currently green in recognition of the partnership working that has gone into getting to this stage with LCWIPs or similar being worked towards in all LAs, consideration needs to be given to the actual implementation of route improvements identified in development plans.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>6.6 Work with public transport providers to achieve EURO VI emissions standards or better.</p> <p>LEAD: KCC</p>	<p>Kent's Enhanced Partnership (formed in April 2022) has several environmental commitments. KCC continues to encourage and work with the county's bus operators to develop their fleets to improved emissions standards. In 2021, KCC was successful in securing Department for Transport (DfT) Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) to move the whole Fastrack bus rapid transit (BRT) bus fleet in Thameside and Dover to zero emission buses (£9.5 million for 33 buses). The funding was confirmed in October 2021 and procurement has begun. As it stands on 1 November 2022, 3% of Medway C's bus fleet operated by commercial bus companies are EURO VI standard. During 21-22 however, the bus industry has continued to operate in "recovery mode" from the impacts of the pandemic, with several services themselves only viable due to Government financial support. Usage levels are at approximately 80 % (peak) and 60% (off peak) of pre-pandemic numbers. This has meant that, at this stage, operators' predominant focus is on providing services themselves. There remains a commitment to develop vehicles and services as funding permits, however.</p> <p>RISK: The pandemic has had an impact on the bus industry and efforts are focussed on providing services. Funding for low emissions buses remains a challenge.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 236 383 387">6.7 Trial new transport projects that drive the transition to Ultra Low Emission Vehicle public transport</p> <p data-bbox="125 799 282 831"><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p data-bbox="477 236 1951 352">KCC has continued to hold discussions with bus manufacturers and operators concerning zero emission technology. KCC's Fastrack service has been used to pilot various technology offers considering KCC's successful ZEBRA bid. A trial of a Volvo OPPCharge fully electric bus (which uses an inverted pantograph) took place in 2022 on Fastrack, the first of its kind developed in the UK.</p> <p data-bbox="477 371 1980 459">The KCC ZEBRA funding as detailed in 6.6 has been allocated for 28 Zero Emission buses for the Fastrack Electric Thameside operations. It also covers the Fastrack OPPCharge Electric Charging Solution Contractor in Thameside & Dover which supports fast recharge for fully electric buses. The funding includes 5 zero emission buses for Dover Fastrack.</p> <p data-bbox="477 478 1980 539">These procurements processes are currently underway for contract award during 2023. The ambition is for both the Thameside and Dover electric services to be launched during 2024.</p> <p data-bbox="477 558 1308 587">Medway C and KCC continue to monitor opportunities for further trials.</p> <p data-bbox="477 791 1375 820">RISK: Further procurement and trails are dependent on further funding bids.</p>	<p data-bbox="2029 491 2063 587">GREEN</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.8 Trial and implement projects that support modal shift away from car ownership and/or reduce car dependency.</p>	<p>In response to the government's National Bus Strategy, KCC and Medway Council each published a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which set out improvements to bus provision and passenger uptake in Kent and Medway, respectively. As required by the DfT, the BSIP was submitted to Government and Kent was awarded an indicative allocation of £35.1m, a successful result given several Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) received no allocation and Kent's was the 9th highest in England. To date, this funding has not been formally confirmed. The KCC BSIP includes 47 initiatives in areas such as fares, innovation, information, network development and highways management. Both KCC and Medway Councils' BSIPs seek to build back the bus network after the pandemic and to subsequently deliver growth.</p> <p>KCC are developing plans to introduce a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) multimodal multi-operator digital transport technology platform as a new type of service. KCC aims to procure a MaaS technology partner to introduce MaaS to Kent to encourage modal shift from private car ownership to increased public transport, active travel & shared transport journeys. MaaS will allow people to plan, book and pay for multimodal journeys in a new way. The digital platform will integrate real-time data from all forms of transport in or out of the MaaS zone, including all public transport, cycling walking, bike/e-bike hire, electric car club & shared transport.</p> <p>Ebbsfleet is planned as the home-grown Kent 'Future Transport Zone' built around Fastrack BRT & local public transport in the Dartford, Ebbsfleet Garden City & Gravesend area. The plan moving forward is to roll out MaaS across Kent & Medway. MaaS is a crucial part of Kent's BSIP as an enabler to increase public transport use & gain modal shift away from private car dependency.</p> <p>Area Car Clubs: Folkestone, Gravesham, Thanet, Canterbury, Maidstone, and Tunbridge Wells areas have set up car clubs and are hoping to expand them. Several other districts are looking to set up their own schemes. Folkestone and Hythe DC have a salary sacrifice scheme for electric vehicles.</p> <p>As part of the wider MaaS programme, KCC aim to introduce a Concession Electric Car Club in the MaaS Ebbsfleet zone which would be located at various multimodal transport hubs & key residential areas.</p> <p>Similar plans are being considered to support new development, e.g. The Otterpool Park development, adjacent to Westenhanger station, has mobility transport hub outline proposals for each of the 4 development stages.</p> <p>RISK: MaaS Risk: Procurement of a MaaS partner is delayed during 2022 due to the delayed DfT BSIP funding confirmation decision. A contribution towards MaaS has already been secured from Kent's Lane Rental Highways Innovation Fund & Fastrack. All these projects rely on external funding, not KCC funds.</p> <p>Public Bus network Risk: Whilst there has been financial support to subsidise some bus routes this is not a sustainable funding stream, and the commercial viability of routes must be considered when allocating further support funding. Following use analysis, KCC have had to reduce support for some bus routes which has had the effect of reducing timetables or removing routes. These negative effects on behaviour change work which might affect target groups more, need to be included and managed when considering further behaviour change programmes.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>LEAD: KCC</p>	<p>Page</p>	

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 233 427 424">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 data-bbox="125 1078 331 1142"><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p data-bbox="477 233 1951 384">KCC regularly rationalises all hired client school transport services to minimise the number of services operating and thereby reduce carbon emissions. KCC will explore ways to incentivise school transport providers to switch to ultra-low emissions vehicles (ULEV). However, this will require financial support from budget holders and is unlikely to progress until the charging infrastructure is developed and suitable vehicles become readily available. Progress should be made once the licencing framework is developed.</p> <p data-bbox="477 400 1966 488">Councils across Kent are reviewing taxi licencing policies to find ways to encourage the switch to ULEVs by the trade and adopt a coordinated approach. However, the impact of having a national licencing regulation position is likely to present further challenges.</p> <p data-bbox="477 504 1966 592">Medway Council have obtained funding from the DEFRA Air Quality Grant to carry out a comprehensive taxi and private hire ULEV feasibility study looking at the barriers and opportunities for ULEV uptake by the trade in Medway. The results of this will inform future incentivisation schemes.</p> <p data-bbox="477 608 1966 703">Kent Councils are conducting a taxi driver survey, working with the Energy Saving Trust, to better understand the trades views and issues relating to the move to ULEV. Several councils in Kent have also taken up the free online training, for taxi and private hire drivers to test drive an electric vehicle, provided by the Energy Saving Trust</p> <p data-bbox="477 863 1966 983">RISK: Electric vehicles remain prohibitively expensive up front, compared to internal combustion engine. Vehicles for taxi companies and ULEV Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) are particularly expensive. Whilst funding does exist towards the cost of these vehicles, small grants and eligibility are hampering uptake. Moreover, there is a global shortage of electric vehicles leading to supply issues. Insufficient charging infrastructure and electricity supply issues.</p> <p data-bbox="477 999 1966 1126">Wider issues of school travel, including the large distances some students are travelling, need to be addressed. National licencing regulations enable Kent based drivers to be licensed outside of Kent and hence avoid Kent councils' licencing requirements. Additional cost to KCC reflecting increased costs to the trade. Recent significant increases in client numbers, contracted services being operated, and increased distances travelled by operators all have an adverse impact on emissions.</p>	<p data-bbox="2002 193 2089 225">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2002 639 2089 743">AMBER</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 236 443 555">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 data-bbox="125 1114 443 1177"><i>LEAD: KCC & Medway Council</i></p>	<p data-bbox="477 236 1980 355">KCC is supporting the activity of the Sub-National Transport Body (STB) - Transport for the South East (TfSE) in its implementation of its freight strategy. KCC is also supporting the planned convening of its freight forum which aims to find opportunities for improving freight transport in Kent and the whole region that sector, government, and wider partnership working could address.</p> <p data-bbox="477 371 1980 435">KCC is also supporting a low carbon approach to construction of the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC), including making the case for the use of the River Thames for construction and removal of spoil, should this scheme be granted development consent.</p> <p data-bbox="477 451 1980 603">KCCs Vision Zero Team have appointed a new role, a Safer Driving and Fleets Officer. The role is at the research stage but has considered various fleet accreditation schemes such as Driving for Better Business (DfBB), Fleet Operators Recognition Scheme (FORS) and the Construction Logistics and Community Safety Scheme (CLOCS). All the schemes include measures to reduce fuel and emissions. Some of the partners (other than KCC) in the Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership have been promoting DfBB in recent months in the following ways:</p> <p data-bbox="477 619 1328 651">Information shared via email with members via the building safety team.</p> <p data-bbox="477 667 1765 699">A monthly email bulletin coordinated by Kent Fire and Rescue Service marketing team to businesses in Kent.</p> <p data-bbox="477 715 1753 746">Kent Police officers share DfBB information with businesses/business owners when stopped at the roadside.</p> <p data-bbox="477 762 1980 914">KCC's sponsored and part-funded new rail station at Thanet Parkway has progressed construction plans enough to deliver both the new station at Thanet Parkway and the associated line speed improvements for enabling High-Speed stopping services soon. The new station will provide a low carbon electrified form of travel for existing residents and the new development being delivered and planned for the area, (note that almost all the Kent Southeastern network is electrified and so effectively zero emission in operation).</p> <p data-bbox="477 1121 1980 1209">RISK: It is widely acknowledged within the public sector that there a lack of data and information about the freight sector, given it is operated largely by the private sector. As such, understanding the progress on fleet management towards low emission vehicles and practices is difficult for public sector organisations, like KCC and Medway C., to track.</p>	<p data-bbox="2022 196 2089 228">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2022 691 2067 786">GREEN</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 236 427 424">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 data-bbox="125 1422 333 1481"><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p data-bbox="477 236 1962 384">All LAs have strategy plans either adopted or in draft form to encourage more EV charging points within Kent. KCC continues to work alongside district and borough authorities to ensure that over the coming years, the public electric vehicle charge point (EVCP) network is, a) keeping up with projected demand (as set out by the nationally recognised projection tool - produced by Cenex), and b) chargers are installed in appropriate locations to facilitate modal shift, particularly for those without access to home charging.</p> <p data-bbox="477 389 1592 416">To ensure that the above objectives are being met, KCC are delivering the following initiatives:</p> <p data-bbox="477 421 1973 539">Kent EVCP car park project funded entirely by the EVCP operator. KCC led on this project which brought together participating LAs to procure one supplier to deliver EVCPs across a network of up to 150 local authority owned car parks across Kent & Medway. To date, delivery has been successful in Folkestone and Hythe, Gravesham, and Tonbridge & Malling. Conversations are underway with additional LAs who have shown interest.</p> <p data-bbox="477 544 1666 571">The number of charge point sockets delivered over the last 12 months and their respective uptake is:</p> <p data-bbox="477 576 1912 632">Folkestone & Hythe - 88 charger sockets, delivering 28,740 kWh of power across 2,150 charging sessions. This facilitates approximately 32,469 miles driven.</p> <p data-bbox="477 636 1173 663">Tonbridge & Malling – 22 sockets installed over 6 locations</p> <p data-bbox="477 668 1536 695">Gravesham -16 charger sockets installed and awaiting commissioning, due January 2023.</p> <p data-bbox="477 700 1980 786">Rapid taxi chargers funded by the Charge Point Operator and a government grant via the Office of Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEVs). 22 charger sockets (50 kWh) have been delivered to facilitate the transition to ULEV taxis in participating districts and boroughs. Several of the chargers provide public access via one of their sockets/bays.</p> <p data-bbox="477 791 1968 877">One further charger install is currently being programmed. There is also capacity to deliver a further 2 chargers, should UKPN connection costs not prohibit this. To date, the taxi charger network has seen 692 charging sessions, delivering 175,348 kWhs of energy, facilitating approximately 526,044 miles driven.</p> <p data-bbox="477 882 1912 1000">Parish Charger Network - This project focuses on providing EVCPs in rural locations and is funded by several sources including Kent Lane Rental and OZEVs On Street Residential Charge Point Fund. To date, 38 charger sockets have been installed across 16 locations. Usage data has shown a total of 548 charging sessions, delivering 12,503 kWhs of power, facilitating approximately 37,509 miles driven.</p> <p data-bbox="477 1005 1379 1032">Bus charger project and Mobility as a Service project as detailed in 6.8.</p> <p data-bbox="477 1037 1939 1123">Ultra rapid hubs. KCC continues to build a case for ultra rapid EVCP hubs across several locations at sites owned by KCC. An outline business case has been written and a dialogue is open between several internal partners to move the project forward.</p> <p data-bbox="477 1128 1957 1184">Local Electric Vehicle Fund (LEVI) - Pilot - in 2022, KCC were awarded £350,000 funding from OZEV to deliver multi-speed charging hubs across 4 locations. Procurement is currently being undertaken for delivery through 2023/24.</p> <p data-bbox="477 1189 1877 1244">EVCP mapping - KCC is developing a GIS mapping tool, bringing together relevant geospatial data sets to help inform intelligent location selection and prioritisation concerning charger locations.</p> <p data-bbox="477 1249 1883 1305">Transport for the South East (TfSE) EV Infrastructure Strategy - KCC is working alongside TfSE and its constituent authorities to produce an EVCP strategy for the region.</p> <p data-bbox="477 1310 1951 1428">On-street EVCP guidance - KCC recognises that there is interest within certain areas to provide on-street EVCPs. As such, KCC has issued guidance for district and borough use to help facilitate installation of infrastructure in a safe way. Canterbury, Gravesham, and Medway areas have received On-Street Residential Chargepoint funding, with Swale currently applying for funds.</p> <p data-bbox="477 1433 1928 1519">RISK: Development and installation of electric charging points is dependent upon the availability of grant funding. Electrical connection costs can be prohibitive. As of 2022, Kent is ahead of forecast demand (using Cenex forecast data - nationally recognised). Some locations may have insufficient electricity supply.</p>	<p data-bbox="2024 836 2058 932">GREEN</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.12 Support local SMEs to switch to ULEV vans through the Kent REVS Up for Cleaner Air scheme.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Kent REVS Up for Cleaner Air scheme provides businesses with the opportunity to try an electric van. KCC runs the scheme which successfully secured £1.5 million funding from Highways England and is nearing the end of the programme having achieved well over 300 van loans across all LAs in Kent. The aim is that organisations will see the benefits of electric vehicles and are encouraged to purchase their own. As the scheme nears the end, some vans will be integrated into KCCs fleet.</p> <p>RISK: None. Action almost completed with project completion actions all due in 2023.</p>	GREEN
<p>6.13 Assess the feasibility of developing 'low carbon transport hubs' for EV cars, e-bikes, and push bikes.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC & Medway</i></p>	<p>KCC is investigating this option as part of its Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) development. If taken forward, KCC will estimate the impact of any policy and proposal that arises in terms of its benefits including emissions and include those in the planned draft LTP for consultation, aimed for late 2023.</p> <p>KCC worked with the DfT as a pilot location for an Electric Scooter Rental Trial at Canterbury University sites with the consultation report published. The trial was to help inform on the legality of e-scooters in the future and provide a sustainable alternative to the car for short journeys. Since the trial launched in 2020, over 76,000 journeys have been taken on Bird e-scooters, resulting in an estimated 1.88 metric ton saving in carbon emissions. Most journeys had been completed safely and without incident.</p> <p>There is an ongoing procurement started during 2022 for a Fastrack Living Roof Bus Shelter contractor who is expected to have the ability to create ' Multimodal Mobility Hubs'. It is the intention to develop Multimodal transport hubs at strategic locations in Ebbsfleet Garden City, Dartford & Gravesend initially.</p> <p>A draft concession specification has already been developed ready to go to tender for an electric car club for the MaaS zone once the DfT funding decision has been finalised for the Kent's BSIP, including the MaaS technology Platform.</p> <p>RISK: Dependent on council policy decisions.</p>	GREEN

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>Since 1997, each Kent LA carries out its own air quality assessments to determine if national air quality objectives have been achieved. If an objective is not achieved, then the LA must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and put together an action plan to tackle those poor air quality hotspots. In Kent, all but two (Ashford and Folkestone & Hythe) LAs have AQMAs, with the number of management areas constantly fluctuating as some are revoked but new ones are declared. All LAs with an AQMA have a written Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) with the aim to improve air quality. These require revising at least every five years or on declaration of a new AQMA. Whilst the implementation of AQAPs remains the duty of individual LAs, Kent & Medway Air Quality Partnership (KMAQP) continues to meet quarterly to discuss current issues and concerns to ensure a joined-up approach to tackling poor air quality across Kent.</p> <p>In 2022 Ricardo Plc continued to run the Kent and Medway Air Quality Monitoring Network data management contract. Ricardo Plc also maintain the Kent Air website as a single point resource for residents seeking information on air quality in Kent.</p> <p>RISK: 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 LAs in Kent and whether extra resourcing will be required for implementation.</p>	GREEN
<p>6.15 Continue to work with government to increase the number of homes and businesses with access to fast broadband.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The final phase of the Building Digital (BDUK) Superfast Broadband project has now achieved its delivery targets. 97% of properties across Kent now have access to a superfast broadband service of at least 24 megabits per second (mbps) compared to less than 70% when the programme delivery started. In total, the Kent BDUK project has delivered faster broadband connections to over 145 000 premises. The coverage targets for the national superfast programme to achieve (which this project was part of) was 95% of premises. The Government's new Project Gigabit Programme will focus on improving broadband connectivity moving forward - including increasing the availability of gigabit capable connections which 70% of Kent premises can currently access.</p> <p>RISK: None. The replacement programme "Project Gigabit" will be led centrally.</p>	GREEN

Priority 7 Renewable Energy Generation

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

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Most public sector organisations have identified renewable energy projects within their corporate net-zero plans.

KCC were successful in being awarded 100% grant funding from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) to commission individual heat decarbonisation plans for 35 of the top energy consuming sites across the estate.

KCC also bid to BEIS' Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Fund (PSDS) Phase 3b which, if successful, will cover conversions from gas boilers to air source heat pumps for 5 buildings, and will include other measures such as insulation, LED lighting, and solar PV.

The KCC Bowerhouse II solar farm in Somerset was operational from May 2022 and, up until 31st December 2022, it has generated 9 million 823 881 kW.

KCC also recently commissioned a solar mapping program which will influence future solar photovoltaic PV programs and enable districts and boroughs to plan their own solar programs.

Community Energy South have funding from BEIS to support Kent to progress a Community Energy Pathways Action Plan. This includes reviewing the current community energy capacity within a LA boundary and identifying the support needed to maximise its contribution to achieving net-zero strategies.

KCC are continuously developing a pipeline of renewable technology projects, focusing on LED, solar, solar farm opportunities, and heat pumps for future phases of PSDS funding, low carbon skills funding, Salix funding, net-zero funding, and others. For example, Solar Together Phase Two. There has been a mixture of outcomes for this priority with issues such as lack of resource and co-ordination, only short-term funding bids, funding with stricter criteria and a lack of internal funding creating barriers to progression.

X RED (4) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (3) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (1) 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)

PRIORITY 7: RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>7.1 Undertake a renewable energy (and storage) opportunities study for Kent and Medway focusing on all existing and emerging technologies and avoiding unintended negative impact.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC/Medway Council</i></p>	<p>The action has not been completed due to time and resource issues. It is intended to take place as part of Local Area Energy Planning requirement, but this is still dependent on funding and is affected by the current KCC team internal redesign. Officers from the Kent CCN have formed a new energy sub-group to progress ambitions for a Local Area Energy Plan for Kent.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at serious risk of non-completion due to funding, staff resource and co-ordination issues.</p>	RED

Action	Progress	RAG
<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><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC were successful in being awarded 100% grant funding from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) to commission individual heat decarbonisation plans for 35 of the top energy consuming sites across the estate. Alongside individual reports, the consultants will also develop a high-level strategic heat decarbonisation plan to support the development and delivery towards decarbonising our estate as set out in the net-zero programme. The grant total was £208 627, and reports will be completed by 31st March 2023. KCC also bid to BEIS' Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Fund (PSDS) Phase 3b which, if successful, will result in an award of £1 824 832. This funding will cover conversions from gas boilers to air source heat pumps for 5 buildings (including one which is still reliant on oil) and include other measures such as new Building Management systems (BMS), insulation, LED lighting, and solar PV. These projects will see annual direct and indirect carbon savings of 113.87 tonnes per annum. (Annual direct carbon savings in tCO₂e per annum for direct emissions, i.e., fossil fuels, and annual indirect carbon savings in tCO₂e per annum for traded emissions, i.e., electricity).</p> <p>KCC continue to develop a pipeline of renewable technology projects, focusing on LED, solar, solar farm opportunities, and heat pumps for future phases of PSDS funding, Low Carbon Skills funding, Salix funding, net-zero funding, and others.</p> <p>The KCC Bowerhouse II solar farm in Somerset was operational from May 2022 and up until 31st December 2022 it has generated 9 million 823 881 kW.</p> <p>KCC Kingshill solar farm is due to operational in spring 2023.</p> <p>RISK: No internal core funding allocated, so complete reliance on external funding. The rapid release of Government funding, with short timescales for bidding and delivery, has meant that partners are focused on responding to these immediate funding calls, rather than looking at longer-term opportunities.</p>	<p>AMBER</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>KCC continued to bid for further funding to install solar PV on KCC buildings, having completed several installs across the estate from previous rounds of funding. KCC continues to invest in solar across KCC's estate and have recently commissioned a solar mapping program which will influence future solar PV programs and enable districts and boroughs to plan their own solar programs.</p> <p>Ashford BC have produced 357 000 kW in a year with their program.</p> <p>RISK: Availability of funding opportunities across government is becoming less with more stringent criteria on funding agreements.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>7.4 Develop and implement the Maidstone Heat Project.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The project was progressed to the commercialisation phase, but latest cost estimates meant it was not economically viable. The project has been put on hold to be re-activated if project redesign or other changes make it cost effective.</p> <p>RISK: Rising costs outweigh the benefits. Internal funding unavailable so completely reliant on external funds.</p>	<p>RED</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>The identification of barriers and the local authority role referred to here was not completed due to time and resource issues.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at serious risk of non-completion due to funding and co-ordination issues</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RED</p>
<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>KCC are continuously developing a pipeline of renewable technology projects, focusing on LED, solar, solar farm opportunities, and heat pumps for future phases of PSDS funding, low carbon skills funding, Salix funding, net-zero funding, and others. For example, Solar Together Phase Two, the county's first group-purchasing scheme for solar panels and battery storage.</p> <p>RISK: Funding for future retrofit schemes is uncertain and the simpler, most cost-effective interventions have been addressed in previous schemes, leaving more costly and complex retrofit for future schemes to tackle.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GREEN</p>
<p>7.7 Provide technical support for community renewable energy projects.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Community Energy South have funding from BEIS to support Kent to build a Community Energy Pathways Action Plan. This includes reviewing the current community energy capacity within a local authority boundary and identifying the support needed to maximise its contribution to achieving net-zero strategies. They are due to report back to KCC in early 2023. It is not presently feasible for KCC to provide direct technical support to community energy projects, but this action plan should identify the best routes for supporting community energy generation.</p> <p>Swale are progressing with Orchard Community Energy and a solar array community energy project.</p> <p>RISK: Funding for project implementation and long planning timescales.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">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>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to resource constraints.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">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.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

KCC previously commissioned a Natural Solutions to Climate Change report, which has been used to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Kent. This will map existing and potential opportunities for nature-based solutions and support local planning authorities in reaching such solutions. KCC has been appointed provisional authority role for the Kent and Medway LNRS, but progress is stalled due to delays to secondary legislation and guidance.

Kent's Plan Tree was agreed and adopted in October 2022. This includes the ambition stated in 2019 for 1.5 million new trees to be established in the county. Currently KCC has delivered over 109,291 new trees and 6,032m² of natural regeneration (up until March 2022).

KCC successfully secured £500,000 from the Shared Outcomes Fund, to deliver a range of pilot programmes through the Trees Outside Woodland project (2020-23). The project is exploring novel, cost-effective way to expand tree cover outside of woodlands in a sustainable, bio-secure manor. This includes a community tree nursery within the grounds of HMP Maidstone being set up and mid-Kent urban trial plots of Miyawaki method 'mini' woodland creation.

Activity in this priority is progressing well, with strong public and political will to improve the natural environment and successful bids for funding streams. However, we are also in a period of significant legislative change, with the recent Environment Act. Once this legislation process is completed a review of appropriate short/medium-term actions and risks will be needed.

X RED (0) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (1) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (3) 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)

PRIORITY 8: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>8.1 Undertake an assessment of Kent and Medway’s opportunities for natural solutions to climate change.</p> <p><i>LED: KCC</i></p>	<p>Burro Happold were commissioned by KCC to research and write the Natural Solutions to Climate Change Report, which was published in Spring 2021.</p> <p>RISK: None, action completed.</p>	GREEN
<p>8.2 Using the results of the opportunity study, develop a framework for natural solutions to climate change, considering both mitigation and adaptation.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>In 2021 it was agreed that this action would be part of the broader work to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Kent, as it had been indicated that these strategies will be required to map existing and potential opportunities for nature-based solutions and set out actions to realise these. Also given that local planning authorities will have a statutory duty to consider the LNRS within planning, this approach will provide a more robust framework for nature-based solutions (NBS) in Kent. KCC has been appointed provisional responsible authority for the Kent and Medway LNRS. Secondary legislation and statutory guidance are required before KCC can be formally appointed to assume the responsible authority role and commence the work. Further central government funding for the strategy’s development has not yet been confirmed. DEFRA last stated that they expected work on LNRS to commence from April 2023.</p> <p>Despite delays to the legislation, we have progressed some work on the LNRS, with Kent Wildlife Trust and Kent and Medway Biological Record Centre (KMBRC) support in mapping existing core/protected areas and discussions on how to potentially define recovery areas. We have also outlined principles for the LNRS, using the Kent Biodiversity Strategy as a framework for ambition and undertaken stakeholder analysis. In the interim period until April, we intend to review the Kent Biodiversity Strategy to ensure its targets remain relevant and appropriate; review data; and continue work designing stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>RISK: Dependency on the outstanding secondary legislation, statutory guidance, and Burdens funding from government. Engagement in the strategy’s development by all relevant stakeholders. Ability to build capacity/commission services to deliver LNRS.</p>	AMBER

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="129 236 716 328">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 data-bbox="129 895 604 959"><i>LEAD: KCC with support of all Local Authorities</i></p>	<p data-bbox="757 236 1982 691">Kent's Plan Tree was finalised and adopted in October 2022. Since stating the ambition in 2019 for 1.5 million new trees to be established in the county, Kent County Council has delivered over 109,291 new trees and 6,032m2 of natural regeneration (until March 2022); and more planting is scheduled over the coming years, with funding already secured for 2023/24 trees. Plan Tree looks to build on this action and provide a more robust framework for tree establishment in Kent and the collaborative action needed to deliver on the ambitious tree targets for the county. In October funding from the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (WCAF) was secured. Designed to enable capacity building in upper tier authorities, the £300 000 will enable us to recruit two full time officers to work with partners and landowners to develop opportunities for tree establishment, secure the funding necessary to bring these projects to reality and then oversee their delivery. We will also have the funding to recruit two graduate project officers. These roles will add further support to Plan Tree work and, importantly, develop entry level skills which can hopefully then be utilised in Kent by experienced staff going on to work for one of the Plan Tree partners. We also have funding to commission work to map opportunities for tree establishment, to help develop our project pipeline. The WCAF project will run until March 2025.</p> <p data-bbox="757 697 1926 879">In November 2022, KCC hosted the inaugural meeting of the newly formed Kent and Medway Plan Tree Partnership (KMPTP). The KMPTP steering group will start by reviewing the supply chain production capacity (tree nurseries and seed providers) and the provision of aftercare for the newly planted trees. There will also be investment in mapping to support the project pipeline, monitor progress, and maximise value for money by utilising natural regeneration techniques wherever appropriate.</p> <p data-bbox="757 895 1951 987">RISK: 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 data-bbox="2000 194 2085 229">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2022 568 2063 663">GREEN</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="129 233 712 357">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 data-bbox="129 1401 291 1430">LEAD: KCC</p>	<p data-bbox="757 233 1980 628">KCC successfully secured £500 000 from the Shared Outcomes Fund, to deliver a range of pilot programmes through the Trees Outside Woodland project (2020-23). The project is exploring novel, cost-effective way to expand tree cover outside of woodlands in a sustainable, bio-secure manor. This project has successfully established over 3,000 native trees in seven urban trial plots across mid-Kent including trialling the Miyawaki method of ‘mini’ woodland creation. Data continues to be gathered from the trial plots throughout the course of the project. Four trial plots have also been delivered within the M20 corridor at Platt’s Heath, which include 700 new native trees planted, 30 000 tree seeds sown and areas of natural regeneration. Data also continues to be gathered from the trial plots over the course of this project. A community tree nursery within the grounds of HMP Maidstone is being set up, with the assistance of Seeding Hope, a community interest company. The long-term aim is to produce local-provenance, locally rare, native tree, and shrub species, to restore landscape biodiversity. The scheme will also provide educational, therapeutic and rehabilitation opportunities for inmates including the possibility of gaining a horticultural qualification.</p> <p data-bbox="757 647 1966 799">KCC has created a ‘Tree Planting Advice’ page on kent.gov to provide accessible advice on the funding available for individuals, businesses, schools, landowners, and managers wishing to access trees to plant on their land. KCC has successfully delivered the first phase of our Free Tree Scheme. Overall the scheme will supply 17,500 native trees to be planted across Kent. KCC has commissioned three research studies which began in September 2022, and which will conclude by April 2023:</p> <p data-bbox="757 818 1957 1123">Trees and Development: is investigating optimal approaches to tree planting, including design, species, setting, configuration, maintenance, and long-term sustainability - to address the wider benefits for people, wildlife, and ecosystem services within new urban developments (including residential, commercial and infrastructure schemes). This study is reviewing relevant local authority planning guidance related to trees and soft landscaping. It is also identifying the current barriers and issues faced by local planning authorities when seeking to deliver resilient and sustainable urban tree cover. The study will produce recommendations including model planning conditions, policies, and guidance which can be used as a resource to inform future long-term planning for, and provide increased influence on, local planning authorities nation-wide to support an expansion of urban tree cover and the aspiration for “tree lined streets.”</p> <p data-bbox="757 1142 1980 1230">Utilities and Trees – Overcoming the Challenges: Is looking into current and future routing of utilities and other infrastructure, encompassing a literature review, evidence gathering exercise and analysis of policy and practice.</p> <p data-bbox="757 1249 1912 1337">Delivering Sylvan Transport Corridors: is analysing the benefits arising from an expansion and reconnection of tree cover in highway and other highway corridors, optimal tree cover design in highways and other highway corridors to maximise holistic benefits.</p> <p data-bbox="757 1356 1966 1444">RISK: The biggest risk to the success of the project is the increasing costs of material, severe weather impacting the establishment and survival of trees planted, the current supply of UK stock of native species and the changing policy landscape.</p>	<p data-bbox="2002 193 2085 228">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2002 818 2085 927">GREEN</p>

Action	Progress	RAG

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.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funding allowed the full completion of a report regarding the supply chain analysis of the economic opportunities from the low carbon sector in Kent and the wider SELEP area. The Clean Growth South East pilot highlighted nearly 13 000 businesses in the region who have collectively grown their business base by 20% over the past 5 years.

KCCs refreshed Steps to Environment Management (STEM) workshops have helped a further 16 Kent firms with environmental management systems and benchmarking their footprint Over half of the 100 Green Recovery Voucher Scheme recipients also received a net-zero action plan to help identify improvements across their businesses.

The Inn2POWER project gained an extension in 2022 to further enhance the offering to local, regional, and international markets in offshore wind and help embed green hydrogen opportunities into the region.

Most of the programmes and activities in this priority have been funded through EU funding programmes such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Interreg. Identifying and securing new funding to continue low carbon business support beyond spring 2023 is the biggest risk to delivery. Significant skills and supply chain gaps need to be addressed if we are to hit net-zero targets. Further work to identify and address gaps will be needed.

X RED (0) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (3) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (2) 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)

PRIORITY 9: SUPPORTING LOW CARBON BUSINESS

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>9.1 Undertake a supply chain analysis of the economic opportunities from the low carbon sector in Kent and the wider South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) area.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>This piece of work, funded by South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), was completed in October 2022 with a final report and two interim reports published separately. The Clean Growth South East pilot highlighted nearly 13 000 businesses in the region across Low Carbon & Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) and Environmental Goods & Services Sector (EGSS) supply chains who have collectively grown their business base by 20% over the past 5 years. A myriad of opportunities and challenges lie ahead but the potential shows that supporting and developing the green economy is central to and pivotal for clean economic growth.</p> <p>RISK: None, action complete.</p>	GREEN
<p>9.2 Support local SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) and public sector suppliers to complete Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) training.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The refreshed Steps to Environment Management (STEM) workshops have helped a further 94 regional firms with environmental management systems and benchmarking their footprint, 16 of these businesses are from Kent but many others operate within our county. We have also undertaken a green audit and needs assessment with every firm supported through LoCASE (a further 124 within 2022) plus 36 SMEs in the Kent and Medway food and drink sector with decarbonisation action plans. Over half of the 100 Green Recovery Voucher Scheme recipients also received a net-zero action plan to help identify improvements across their businesses.</p> <p>RISK: None, action ongoing.</p>	AMBER

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>9.3 Offer a low carbon support programme (LOCASE), for SMEs, including grants to reduce costs and carbon, and contribute to growth of the low carbon goods and environmental services sector.</p> <p>LEAD: KCC</p>	<p>In 2022, a further 124 Kent and Medway businesses have been supported with £946 000 LoCASE funding. 75 SMEs were investing in resource efficiency projects and 49 businesses in the low carbon sector with development grants to help support our local green economy. 100 firms across Kent have also been supported in implementing low cost but high impact changes in their business activities through the £150 000 Green Recovery Voucher Scheme. 36 food and drink sector businesses were supported with decarbonisation plans through our Growing Green project with 24 of these also gaining grant support up to £8 000 towards a diverse range of innovations.</p> <p>Folkestone & Hythe DC introduced a Green Business Grant Scheme to help small businesses to save carbon, become more energy efficient and, in turn, to save money. Grants from £10,000 to £25,000 have allocated.</p> <p>RISK: A lack of comparable and immediate follow-on funding may stop the momentum so legacy work needs to point to quick wins and other viable business cases across a range of sectors</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>9.4 Support the development of the offshore wind sector and local supply chain.</p> <p>LEAD: KCC</p>	<p>The Inn2POWER project gained an extension in 2022 to further enhance the offering to local, regional, and international markets in offshore wind and help embed green hydrogen opportunities into the region. An improved business directory was launched, and events and publicity rolled out to reinvigorate the local SMEs and support networks. This has forged closer links with research teams at University of Kent. This work has also fed into planning policy and pilot enterprise projects across the region</p> <p>RISK: The risk of marginalisation and wider political policy could mask the 'on the ground' opportunity of supporting wind as a cost-effective part of the renewable energy mix and how best to innovate and integrate green hydrogen production and infrastructure in the region to realise a sea change in transportation & infrastructure improvements</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>9.5 Drive an increase in the local circular economy within SMEs and Social Enterprises.</p> <p>LEAD: KCC</p>	<p>2022 saw some great progress through dovetailing of two EU projects, BLUEPRINT to a Circular Economy and Upcycle Your Waste raising the profile and relevance of the movement away from the linear (take-make-waste) model to a more circular approach. The former project has involved pilots covering flat recycling, food waste, repair cafes, reusable cups, sustainable sanitary wear, school and community engagement and training. The latter has focused on the 130 waste surveys carried out previously on Kent businesses and helping facilitate waste matches. In the post-covid re-launch the first 2 workshops saw 50+ businesses and organisations link up to re-purpose their 'waste' as a resource and raw material for another local firm. This is set to report in Spring 2023, but the intention is for this service to continue alongside a host of partners.</p> <p>RISK: The incineration, landfill or transporting out the county of valuable resource needs to be highlighted and viable business cases for a range of waste streams publicised. The 25+ pilot examples we are looking to showcase should pave the way for follow on activity that shows its own worth as a service to Kent SMEs and for Kent's communities</p>	<p>AMBER</p>

Priority 10 Communications

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

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Joint environmental communication, engagement and behaviour change strategy and an action plan across all areas continues through a communications sub-group of the Kent Climate Change Network (CCN) meeting twice quarterly and sharing resources across designated MS Teams Channels.

KCC's annual Kent Environment Strategy conference took place on 19th November 2022 at Canterbury Cathedral Lodge with over 160 people from over 100 different organisations. The attendees rated the conference highly with delegates finding the speakers inspiring and the opportunity to network invaluable.

Many organisations worked to promote "The Great Big Green Week" in September, a national campaign for climate and nature, with 51 events mapped out to be shared.

The Kent & Medway Air Quality Partnership worked together on their first Kent Air Week combined with the national Clean Air Day in June. This was promoted for minimal cost by sharing through at least 6 partners' social media platforms and achieved a 20% increase in the number of people registering for the air quality forecast service during Kent Air Week.

Pollution Patrol materials for schools were launched in April 2022, funded by Department of Environment, food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Air Quality grants, with all partners promoting these resources. At least 30 schools have registered to access the educational portal although a full evaluation will be conducted by the University of Kent.

A consortium of 8 districts, KCC, Medway and the NHS were successful in a bid to fund a behaviour change project which focused on low-cost actions that would help low to medium income households save energy.

A second phase of Solar Together, a collective solar panel buying scheme, ran in Kent in 2022 with all 14 districts and boroughs participating. Demand for the scheme was unparalleled and registrations had to be capped. Over 1,500 installations are projected and over 1,100 homes have been installed with panels.

Actions for this priority are progressing very well, but with issues such as lack of resource and conflicting priorities for partner organisations having negative impacts.

X RED (0) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	X AMBER (2) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	X GREEN (10) 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)

PRIORITY 10: COMMUNICATIONS

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>The joint communications, engagement and behaviour change strategy and plan was completed in April 2021.</p> <p>RISK: Buy in from communications officers across districts. Resource across districts and boroughs to invest in joint campaigns</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>‘Kent Green Action’ is a communication subgroup of the CCN set up in June 2021. It includes climate change officers and communication officers from all Kent district councils and Medway Council. Meetings occur twice quarterly, and a Teams site was created to facilitate joint working and consistency of messaging.</p> <p>RISK: Attendance is variable and does not currently include all relevant communications professionals. Resource and agreement across districts and boroughs to deliver messaging and joint projects.</p>	GREEN
<p>10.2b Hold an annual environment conference to raise the profile and facilitate cross-sector collaboration and collective action.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>This took place on 19 November 2022 at Canterbury Cathedral Lodge. Over 160 people representing over 100 different organisations attended and we received anonymous feedback from 63 attendees. The respondents rated the conference very highly with a score of 8.97/10. There was positive verbal feedback too and many delegates found the speakers inspiring and the discussions and opportunity to network invaluable. 116 green actions were formally pledged because of the conference including participation in campaigns and contacting other delegates after the event. Contact names and emails were shared with all attendees after the event to maximise connections and opportunities for future collaboration.</p> <p>RISK: Funding to host in-person events. No-shows are high for in-person events ~20% on this occasion.</p>	GREEN

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>10.3 Maximise the impact of COP26 by developing and promoting a shared calendar of events and resources.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>This year the CCN supported the annual Great Big Green Week in September with local engagement events and activities. A map of 51 events was shared on our KCC engagement tool to promote the activities across the county. The map was promoted through organic social media and resident newsletters and the pages were visited 2000 times in the build up to and during Great Big Green Week. 52 participants engaged with the material completing the survey and adding ideas or additional events.</p> <p>RISK: Funding to host events and promote activities effectively. External factors affecting the promotion and attendance at events- in this case the death of Queen Elizabeth II ceased all promotion during the build-up to Great Big Green Week</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>10.4 Implement joint communication campaigns to reduce air pollution around schools and children's centres.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership, KCC/Medway Council</i></p>	<p>The Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership comms subgroup has met regularly throughout the year and worked together on the first Kent Air Week and Clean Air Day in June. We reached over 155,000 social media users on various platforms with an excellent rate of engagement (2.5% of users that saw posts interacted with the posts by sharing, liking, commenting.) It was a success to reach so many users without paying for any advertising and this was due to sharing through at least 6 partners' social media platforms. We achieved a 20% increase in the number of people registering for the air quality forecast service during Kent Air Week.</p> <p>Pollution Patrol materials for schools were launched in April 2022, funded by DEFRA Air Quality grants, all partners have been promoting these resources. To date 30 schools have registered to access the educational portal although a full evaluation will be conducted by the University of Kent to assess the impact of the project.</p> <p>RISK: 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 & Medway Council</i></p>	<p>This has been delayed as the Active Travel England Capability and Ambition funding that KCC active travel team successfully bid for in 2022 was not transferred to KCC until early 2023.</p> <p>RISK: Funding remains a risk as ongoing revenue is required for continued paid for social media advertising.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>10.6 Implement joint communication campaigns to help residents reduce their fuel bills/ save energy (linked to action 5.4).</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership</i></p>	<p>A consortium of 8 districts and boroughs, KCC, Medway and the NHS were successful in a bid to the Local Government Association (LGA) to fund a behaviour change project. The group chose to focus on low-cost actions that would help low to medium income households save energy. Despite thousands of visitors to the webpages that provided energy saving tips, only just over 200 people joined the challenge to share what they had learnt with others. This was the aim of the project, to reach beyond our social media audience. Data is still being analysed for this project. However, a further outcome of the scheme was the opportunity to upskill partners and the creation of a consortium who will now have a better understanding and experience in planning future similar behaviour change projects.</p> <p>RISK: Lack of funding to promote schemes and tight timelines to get the project launched, meaning it was difficult to effectively reach the target audience. Other similar campaigns have produced better outputs but have had more funding and resource.</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>The second round of a campaign to encourage South East Water (SEW) and Southern Water customers to reduce water use, via take-up of water saving devices and water use audits took place in 2022. Postcard drops from SEW have seen an unprecedented increase in uptake for water saving devices as the campaign also coincided with a drought in the south-east. Data is still pending to demonstrate the uplift in orders for devices because of the campaign materials.</p> <p>A social media campaign on Kent Green Action, using a small budget for sponsored advertising achieved reach of over 95,000 residents and a 4% engagement rate, which is very high.</p> <p>RISK: Difficulty measuring water saved by these campaigns. Buy in from water companies required who have other compelling priorities for communications.</p>	AMBER
<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>Solar Together collective solar panel buying scheme ran a second phase in Kent in 2022 with all districts and boroughs, KCC and Medway C. participating, (only 10 took part in the first scheme). Demand for the scheme was unparalleled and registrations had to be capped. Over 1,500 installations are projected and over 1,100 homes have been installed with panels and the majority with batteries too. As a comparison, under 300 installations were achieved in the first phase, which was seriously impacted by the pandemic.</p> <p>RISK: Ensuring 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

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>See 9.3 for progress on working with SMEs. The communication campaign for 2021 had issues with reaching new networks, so the focus was changed. The SME program is developing further case studies which can then be shared in future.</p> <p>RISK: Limited staff resource to implement a campaign at present. Some programme funding ending in 2023.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>10.10 Develop shared resources for public sector staff engagement.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>We shared a calendar of awareness days in 2022 for colleagues across the public sector to use to plan environmental communications. We are also sharing resources for staff to run events within the KCC Environmental Champion network of volunteers. For example, materials on activities to support pollinators and a guide to running a swap shop in your office or community. We are also actively engaging our partners in climate action including tree planting sessions.</p> <p>RISK: That councils are producing multiple individual resources and duplicating efforts, the Kent Green Action network will help to reduce replication and share these resources more widely.</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>All communications campaigns are monitored and reviewed with lessons learnt incorporated into plans for campaigns for 2023.</p> <p>RISK: Evaluations to date evidence the need to fund media campaigns or have commitment from multiple active partners to reach significant numbers of residents. Currently our audiences reached by social media and newsletters are skewed towards a much older and predominantly female demographic. As a result, it is also likely that they are not diverse in respect of other protected characteristics, but we do not have data to confirm that. They also highlight the lack of measurement of the behaviour change or difference made by the campaign, as it is far more efficient in terms of time, effort, and money to measure how many people have seen a campaign or message, rather than the impact of the campaign.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>