

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

ELES Progress Report

January 2023 – December 2023

Executive Summary of Achievements

Priority 1 Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050

- Council core estates and activities

Kent County Council (KCC) set a Net Zero target for 2030. This target includes emissions from owned estates, owned fleet, street lighting, traffic light signals as well as emissions from the grey fleet. KCC can report a reduction in core emissions by 50% in 2023 from a 2019 baseline.

Medway Council (Medway C) set a 95% carbon reduction on emissions target by 2030 and aim to reach net zero carbon by 2050. They achieved a 31.4% reduction in carbon emissions by 2021 compared to the 2019 baseline.

All local authorities (LA)s have published their own estate and core activities climate action plans, with a focus on emissions from buildings that they own and their owned fleet. Most LAs also include emissions from water use, grey fleet, and emission from their leisure centres for this target. Most LAs aim to be net zero by 2030 within these core emissions or have a reduction target agreed.

- Scope 3

Scope 3 emissions are covered in plans by KCC, Ashford Borough Council (Ashford BC), Canterbury City Council (Canterbury CC), Dartford Borough Council (Dartford BC), Gravesham Borough Council (Gravesham BC), Maidstone Borough Council (Maidstone BC), Medway Council (Medway C), Swale Borough Council (Swale BC), Thanet District Council (Thanet DC), Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (Tonbridge and Malling BC) and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (Tunbridge Wells BC).

Both Folkestone and Hythe District Council (Folkestone and Hythe DC) and Sevenoaks District Council (Sevenoaks DC) are looking at covering these emissions more fully as their plans progress.



Review times for all documents vary, but most are being reviewed annually as a minimum.

- Area wide emissions

The Kent Emissions Pathway Report set out a high ambition pathway based on tangible measures published in 2021 and was agreed to by all partner authorities following meetings of Kent Leaders and Chief Executives in 2022.

KCC's Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee also agreed to track progress against the high ambition pathway. Future reporting will track against the high ambition pathway and the Tyndall Centre pathway.

The evidence base for Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) considers carbon emissions from the managed highway network in terms of the road assets themselves and the emissions from road users across Kent.

Priority 2 Public Sector Decision Making

Many LAs in Kent now ask that all decision-making reports should include a section to prompt officers to consider the carbon impacts of projects.

- Ashford Borough Council piloted a Climate Change (CC) Assessment tool to link in with larger scale decision making.
- Folkestone and Hythe DC require that every cabinet paper and Leadership Team submission includes a carbon impact assessment.
- Dartford BC ensure that every Committee report includes a CC Impact Assessment.
- Dover DC require that every Cabinet and CMT paper requires a CC section which is review by the CC officer.
- Sevenoaks DC require all committee reports to have a mandatory section on CC impact.

The Kent Climate Change Network (CCN) procurement sub-group has been relaunched with direct support from members of the KCC procurement team following a restructure. The group will continue to share best practice and support the inclusion of net zero and adaptation measures in procurement and contract documents across all Kent local authorities.

Kent contracts that include stronger climate change commitments include an energy retrofit contract at Folkestone and Hythe DC, a LASER renewal contract at Gravesham BC, and LED lighting and energy contracts at Swale BC. The draft Contract Procedure being developed at Gravesham BC has detailed references to all areas of Net Zero commissioning work including waste management, reducing road miles, and help to decarbonise the supply chain.

Priority 3 Planning and Development

- 10 of the 12 Kent district and borough councils and Medway Council have commented that they now include net zero carbon considerations in their adopted and emerging local plans.
- KCC has developed draft building standards for both new and refurbished public sector buildings.

Priority 4 Climate Emergency Investment Fund

Work on the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funded 'Accelerating Nature Based Climate Solutions' project continued. Kent Wildlife Trust is commissioned to deliver much of the work. New resources include a guide for buyers and sellers of nature-based carbon offsets.

The Environment Act introduced a mandatory approach to biodiversity net gain (BNG) that applied from late 2023 following delays to secondary legislation.

Kent and Medway Plan Tree Partnership is managing the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (WCAF) project which will support new BNG measures.

SELEP has been replaced by the Greater SE NZ hub through which future Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNEZ) funding will be channelled for the south-east. KCC and Medway will be represented on the board.

Kent and Medway Environment Group (KMEG) membership has been expanded to include the Kent Chamber of Commerce.

Priority 5 Building Retrofit Programme

All LAs have published carbon reduction plans for their estate. Most councils are implementing public sector building retrofit programmes.

Kent Police, Kent NHS, and Kent Fire & Rescue Service all have carbon reduction plans for their estate.

Regarding residential housing retrofitting, funding bids were applied for and allocated across Kent from the Home Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG2), HUG 2 for park homes, Energy Company Obligations (ECO) scheme 4, UK Power Networks (UKPN) funded initiatives, Solar Together schemes, The Behaviour Change Initiative and Green Doctors.

Medway C led on the delivery of six residents' energy lectures across Kent and Medway working with the University of Greenwich, KCC, Tonbridge and Malling BC, Gravesham BC, and Swale BC.

With regards to social housing, 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. Dover DC, Folkestone and Hythe DC and Dartford BC all have a target for EPCs to be rated C or above by 2035.

KCC supported the Hyde Group South-East New Energy project with Osborne Energy and the University of East London to retrofit 46 homes in Kent.

For the business retrofit program, the LoCASE funding, (which ended in June 23), supported 47 Kent and Medway Small and Midsize Enterprises (SME)s with £333,101 to fund energy efficiency projects in this period, with project savings totalling over 426 tonnes of CO2e annually.

Priority 6 Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity

KCC has funding agreed to introduce Mobility as a Service (MaaS), a multi-operator digital transport technology platform for Ebbsfleet, Dartford and Gravesend areas. MaaS will help modal shift away from private car ownership to more use of public transport, active travel & shared transport. MaaS will allow people to plan, book and pay for multimodal journeys in a way that's not been possible before.

Almost all Kent LAs have plans to transition their owned fleet to electric vehicles.

The next section of the King Charles III England Coast path opened from Ramsgate to Whitstable.

KCC developed the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan further during 2023 with priority routes agreed.

Both Medway C and KCC have launched school streets schemes.

KCC has been allocated £12 million from the Local Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) in capital funding to support on-street charging infrastructure. Medway Council has submitted an expression of interest for £2.1 million for similar LEVI funding.

Priority 7 Renewable Energy Generation

1,090 Kent homes have had Solar PV and/or battery storage installed as part of the Solar Together 2023 project. This group purchasing scheme is supported by all LAs across Kent.

All LA officers have been offered briefing sessions run by UK Power Networks (UKPN) regarding access to their free energy mapping tool to assist development plans.

All LAs are continuously developing a pipeline of renewable technology projects, solar farm, and wind opportunities, to prepare for future funding bids.

KCC solar array in Somerset (Bowerhouse II) produces 22,000 MWh per year.

KCC Kings Hill Solar Farm started operating in Nov 2023 and is expected to produce 3,000 MWh per year.

Ashford and Folkestone have started researching a Local Area Energy Plan (LEAP) for their districts. KCC has started a CCN energy sub-group to move forward a Kent -wide LEAP and support partnership working on renewable energy generation.

Priority 8 Green Infrastructure

Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway is working with partners and stakeholders to collaboratively establish shared priorities for the delivery of nature recovery and environmental improvements, to create a network of wildlife-rich places across the county. This local nature recovery strategy will be one of 48 – together these will cover the whole of England, with no gaps or overlaps, to deliver the government's commitment to ending the decline of nature and supporting its recovery. This work is due to be completed in 2025.

Kent and Medway Plan Tree Partnership developed and delivered over 61 sites and planted 62,565 trees.

Phase 2 (2023-2025) of the Trees Outside Woodlands programme has enabled the launch of several grant funds supporting landowners across Dover to restore historic tree features.

Kent Plan Tree is managing three rounds of the Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF).

Priority 9 Supporting Low Carbon Business

KCC's refreshed Steps to Environment Management (STEM) workshops helped a further 24 Kent firms develop environmental management systems and benchmark their environmental footprint.

131 SMEs in the wider South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) region were supported with £1,038,811 of claimed funding in this period, saving over 472 tonnes of CO2e per year.

94 Kent and Medway LoCASE grant applications (including needs assessments & energy audits) totalling £768,768 were approved for Kent and Medway SMEs.

The final Upcycle Your Waste (UYW) report was sent by KCC to all 247 SMEs actively engaged in the project. This included follow-up contact with 49 active circular economy businesses.

Priority 10 Communications

All LAs promoted “The Great Big Green Week” in September, with 39 events mapped out to be shared.

Medway Council:

- launched a water a tree scheme.
- ran a Free Bus Weekend campaign (9-10 December 2023) in conjunction with local bus operators.
- delivered two new walking campaigns for primary and secondary schools in support of International Walk to School Month. Across both campaigns, participation doubled to 16 schools compared to the 2022 competition.

KCC ran a successful campaign with South East Water (SEW) and Southern Water which saved water and reduced residents’ bills. KCC’s social media campaign supported a leaflet drop from SEW encouraging people to make savings for financial benefit. Approximately 100,000 leaflets were delivered and this drove ~4,500 clicks through to their webpages for more tips and support.

KCC made a successful application for funding from environmental charity Hubbub to increase on-street recycling in Ashford Town Centre.

KCC worked with Kitche on a campaign to collect data on food wastage across the county. 673 residents completed a related survey, and 691 Kent residents use the Kitche food waste app.

LAs members of the Kent & Medway Air Quality Partnership worked together to promote the annual Kent Air Week.

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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.

RED (1) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	AMBER (4) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	GREEN (1) Activity on track or completed
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Table 1: Priority 1 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>The Anthesis 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. However, the Kent and Medway five-year carbon budget for the agreed high ambition pathway is missing from the Anthesis Pathways to Net Zero report.</p> <p style="color: red;">Additional wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Monitor delivery against the five-year carbon budgets for Kent and Medway as a whole.</p> <p>RISK: Resource is required to extend the Kent Emissions Pathway Report to include Kent and Medway five-year carbon budget for the agreed high ambition pathway</p>	amber

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>1.2 Develop Kent and Medway emission reduction pathway to Net Zero by 2050.</p> <p><i>LEAD partner: KCC</i></p>	<p>The Kent Emissions Pathway Report set out a high ambition pathway based on tangible measures published in 2021 and was agreed to by all partner authorities following meetings of Kent Leaders and Chief Executives. Future reporting will track both against the high ambition pathway and the Tyndall Centre pathway.</p> <p>However, as mentioned above, the Kent and Medway five-year carbon budget for the agreed high ambition pathway is missing from the Emissions report, further work in this area is required.</p> <p>Additional wording for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Monitor delivery against the high ambition pathway and the 1.5° compliant pathway set by the Tyndall Centre.</p> <p>RISK: Resource is required to extend the Kent Emissions Pathway Report to include Kent and Medway five-year carbon budget for the agreed high ambition pathway.</p>	<p>amber</p>

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>Kent County Council (KCC) set a Net Zero target for 2030. This target includes emissions from owned estates, owned fleet, street lighting, traffic light signals as well as emissions from the grey fleet. KCC can report a reduction in core emissions by 50% in 2023 from a 2019 baseline.</p> <p>Medway Council (Medway C) set a 95% carbon reduction on emissions target by 2030 and aim to reach net zero carbon by 2050. They achieved a 31.4% reduction in carbon emissions by 2021 compared to the 2019 baseline.</p> <p>All Kent districts and boroughs have published their own estate and core activities climate action plans, with a focus on emissions from buildings that they own and their owned fleet. Most LAs also include emissions from water use, grey fleet, and emission from their leisure centres for this target. Most LAs aim to be net zero by 2030 within these core emissions or have a reduction target agreed.</p> <p>In terms of scope 3 emissions, which are harder for a local authority to influence: KCC is working on reducing emissions from buildings that they lease out. Many LAs are working on recording the emissions from the buildings that they lease out, from social housing and from contracts and procurement. Work on reducing emission in all these areas is at the early stages. Scope 3 emissions are covered in plans by Ashford Borough Council (Ashford BC), Canterbury City Council (Canterbury CC), Dartford Borough Council (Dartford BC), Gravesham Borough Council (Gravesham BC), Maidstone Borough Council (Maidstone BC), Medway Council (Medway C), Swale Borough Council (Swale BC), Thanet District Council (Thanet DC), Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (Tonbridge and Malling BC) and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (Tunbridge Wells BC). Both Folkestone and Hythe District Council (Folkestone and Hythe DC) and Sevenoaks District Council (Sevenoaks DC) are looking at covering these emissions more fully as their plans progress. Review times for all documents vary, but most are being reviewed annually as a minimum.</p> <p>Adaptation plan: The NHS in Kent have set up a partner working group to progress an adaptation plan for the county. KCC is developing an adaptation plan for its buildings and services, which is due to be adopted in 2024/25</p> <p>RISK: Scarcity of staff resource in many LAs to monitor and measure emissions in a consistent and co-ordinated manner. Also lack of resources in many to create effective action plans.</p>	<p>amber</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<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 which will marry up with DESNEZ data sets e.g. emissions from transport, residential housing, commercial and industry, public sector buildings, agriculture, waste, land use change and forestry. The highest emitting sector in Kent is transport and the second highest is housing.</p> <p>The evidence base for Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) considers carbon emissions from the managed Highway network in terms of the road assets themselves and the emissions from road users across Kent.</p> <p>RISK: Focusing on sector emissions is a policy adopted by DEFRA after the ELES was first adopted. Different sectors are further ahead in developing detailed emission reduction pathways. There is a limited Kent-wide approach to address the emissions from housing.</p>	red
<p>1.5 Monitor and publicly report progress against net zero targets.</p> <p><i>LEAD partner: All local authorities</i></p>	<p>The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (ELES) implementation plan is monitored bi-annually, and an annual report (this document) will be published in summer 2024. Most of the districts and boroughs plan to report annually or more often on their area-wide carbon reduction plans.</p> <p>RISK: Some local authorities include different scope 3 measurements when monitoring their core carbon footprint. Lack of consistency could affect this reporting process.</p>	green
<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.</p> <p>Additional wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Incorporate consumption-based emissions into ELES targets and implementation plan.</p> <p>RISK: Discussions on how to incorporate this into the 2024 version of the implementation plan and ELES targets are required</p>	amber

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.

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

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><i>This action has been removed from the 2024 implementation plan.</i></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 Kent Climate Change Network (CCN) procurement sub-group has been relaunched with direct support from members of the KCC procurement team following a restructure. The group will continue to share best practice and support the inclusion of net zero and adaptation measures in procurement and contract documents across Kent and Medway local authorities. The KCC restructure has recruited into two new posts in 2024: A Commercial Ethics and Sustainability Lead and supporting Officer role. One of the key areas of focus for these roles is to develop and embed procurement policies and processes on Net Zero across KCC.</p> <p>RISK: Embedding net zero into contracts and commissioning processes is a new area, is resource intensive and may require dedicated procurement officers. Tightening tender processes too quickly will risk disenfranchising smaller, local businesses, so an open, supportive approach is needed. (Hence larger value contracts could be targeted first).</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>All L.A.s are considering their current procurement and commissioning processes in line with including the requirement of net zero policies for high value contract suppliers and potential expansion of social value policy.</p> <p>Kent contracts that include stronger climate change commitments include an energy retrofit contract at Folkestone and Hythe DC, a LASER renewal contract at Gravesham BC, and LED lighting and energy contracts at Swale BC. The draft Contract Procedure being developed at Gravesham BC has detailed references to all areas of Net Zero commissioning work including waste management, reducing road miles, and help to decarbonise the supply chain.</p> <p>RISK: Lack of staff and training on sustainable procurement within councils could mean that net zero requirements may not be fully embedded in contracts and time sensitive opportunities could be lost.</p>	amber
<p>2.4 Develop, test, and roll out 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>Many LAs in Kent now ask that all decision-making reports should include a section to prompt officers to consider the carbon impacts of projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashford Borough Council piloted a Climate Change (CC) Assessment tool to link in with larger scale decision making. • Folkestone and Hythe DC require that every cabinet paper and Leadership Team submission includes a carbon impact assessment. • Dartford BC ensure that every Committee report includes a CC Impact Assessment. • Dover DC require that every Cabinet and CMT paper requires a CC section which is reviewed by the CC officer. • Sevenoaks DC require all committee reports to have a mandatory section on CC impact. <p>RISK: Whilst some work in this area has started, this is the beginning of a major change to working practices.</p>	amber

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 237 629 427">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="125 788 479 818"><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p data-bbox="651 237 1962 300">The European Union funded Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) program which began in 2016 ended in June 2023.</p> <p data-bbox="651 320 1939 419">During 2023, 131 small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the wider South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) region were supported with £1 038 811 of claimed funding in this period, saving over 472 tonnes of CO₂e per year.</p> <p data-bbox="651 440 1944 502">LoCASE and other Low Carbon Kent project legacy work led to more case studies being developed to update environmental toolkits for use in 2023 and 2024.</p> <p data-bbox="651 523 1962 620">Replacement wording for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Encourage and support SMEs within public sector supply chains to effect positive environmental change by utilising Low Carbon Kent and linked support programmes across the county.</p> <p data-bbox="651 641 1962 837">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. The ending of the LoCASE funding in 2023 with no obvious replacement funding means that there is no continuation of support currently for SMEs in Kent and Medway to further decarbonise their business practices.</p>	<p data-bbox="2002 197 2074 225">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2002 507 2047 579">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.

RED (5) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	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)

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>The Kent Design Guide was produced by the Kent Design Initiative in 2005/2006 and was aimed at developers. Many LAs had adopted this document as supplementary planning guidance. KCC initiated work to refresh this guide in 2022. This work is currently stalled due to lack of resource at KCC.</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 lack of 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

Action	Progress	RAG
<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 with KCC, however recruitment to a newly created 'Senior Climate Change Officer' role in 2023 was unsuccessful. The scope of the role is still under review.</p> <p>RISK: This action is at risk of non-completion due to lack of staff resource.</p>	red
<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.</p> <p>Medway C. Canterbury CC, Dartford BC, Dover DC, Gravesham BC, Maidstone BC, Medway C, Sevenoaks BC, Swale BC Tonbridge and Malling BC and Tunbridge Wells BC have commented that they now include net zero carbon considerations in their adopted and emerging local plans.</p> <p>RISK: Lack of resource in many district and borough councils to embed net zero in Local Plans. The National Planning Policy Framework does not meet full net zero standards at present.</p>	amber
<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 3.4, but further resource is required.</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. However, these aspects will be raised at Kent and Medway Environment Group and Kent Planning Policy Forum.</p>	red

Action	Progress	RAG
<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.</p> <p>RISK: Whilst a draft has been produced, with the current lack of staff, this work has stalled.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">red</p>

Priority 4 Climate Emergency Investment Fund

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

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

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. A monthly funding update continues to be shared with the CCN group.</p> <p>South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) has been replaced by the Greater SE Net Zero hub through which future Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNEZ) funding will be channelled for the south east. KCC and Medway C will be represented on the board.</p> <p>Also, Kent and Medway Environment Group (KMEG) membership has been expanded to include Kent Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>RISK: There is limited staff resource within districts and boroughs to investigate investment opportunities. Some councils do not have a system to ringfence income from net zero projects to fund future net zero projects.</p>	green

Action	Progress	RAG
<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. The project has created a number of resources including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An introductory guide for buyers and sellers of nature-based carbon offsets. - Project synthesis report. - Natural Capital Carbon Offsetting. - Resources for Sellers of Nature-based Carbon Offsets. - <p>RISK: None. The project is on time.</p>	green
<p>4.3 Create the framework for a South East 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>Please see project outputs detailed in 4.2.</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>No working group has been created. See the agreed amended wording below for this action.</p> <p style="color: red;">Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Review and act on the outcomes of the SELEP Sector Support Fund project, and Accelerating Nature Based Climate Solutions conclusions. (Note that SELEP has been replaced by the Greater SE Net Zero Hub.)</p> <p>RISK: There has been no dedicated resource for the rapid development of a climate emergency investment fund, however significant work is being carried out to understand the various funding sources for climate related activity, particularly around green finance.</p>	red

Action	Progress	RAG
<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 further. The difficulty is 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>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Grow and maintain a portfolio of 'shovel-ready' renewable energy projects suitable for external funding.</p> <p>RISK: There is a lack of resources for the retrofitting agenda in the majority of councils across Kent. Discussions are ongoing as to whether funding can be found to appoint a dedicated Retrofit Officer to work countywide.</p>	<p>amber</p>
<p>4.6 Develop a portfolio of quick wins and 'shovel-ready' natural capital / carbon sequestration projects suitable for delivery through Net Gain or other external funding.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Kent Nature Partnership</i></p>	<p>The Environment Act introduced a mandatory approach to biodiversity net gain (BNG) that applied from late 2023 following delays to secondary legislation. Kent and Medway Plan Tree Partnership is managing the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (WCAF) project which will support this area.</p> <p>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>amber</p>

Priority 5 Building Retrofit Programme

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

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

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 within council estates teams for the development and monitoring of estates heat decarbonisation and estates net zero plans.</p>	green

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>5.2 Implement a public sector building retrofit programme (energy and water), identifying joint projects that maximise economies of scale where possible.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>KCC awarded £1,824,830 from Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) 3b. Changes to scope result in the grant amount later being reduced to £1,081,821.</p> <p>Dartford BC awarded £1,508,475 from PSDS 3b.</p> <p>Gravesham BC awarded £22,000 from the Material Focus Electrical Recycling Fund.</p> <p>Gravesham BC installed control flow regulators to water appliances at 13 of their highest consuming sites, with expected yearly savings of 292,000 litres of water and energy savings of 9,840 kWh.</p> <p>Medway C awarded £4,270,429 from PSDS 3b.</p> <p>Canterbury CC awarded £644,975 from PSDS 3b.</p> <p>Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust received £543,167 from PSDS 3b.</p> <p>MidKent college awarded £5,010,254 from PSDS 3b.</p> <p>Kent Fire and Rescue awarded £77,000 SALIX Finance Ltd. Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) 4</p> <p>Most local authority areas are implementing public sector building retrofit programmes.</p> <p>RISK: Lack of resources in teams to deliver public sector decarbonisation projects in climate change teams and in estates departments.</p> <p>Short timescales and the competitive nature of public sector decarbonisation scheme funding means that LAs need to be prepared with 'shovel-ready' projects for when funding rounds open and have limited time for joined-up approaches across Kent and Medway.</p> <p>PSDS is no longer 100% funded and many projects currently need up to 50% match funding.</p>	<p>amber</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/Greater 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. This group has created a paper identifying gaps to progress.</p> <p>The newly formed KCC Energy and Climate Change team has recruited a community and domestic energy support officer who is leading on Solar Together.</p> <p>Discussions are ongoing as to whether funding can be found to appoint a dedicated Retrofit Officer to work countywide.</p> <p>RISK: Whilst some L.A.s collaborate in this area to progress bids and delivery; this is not always possible as the bids can be short notice and complex.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">amber</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>Funding bids were applied for and allocated from Home Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG2), HUG 2 for park homes, Energy Company Obligations (ECO) scheme 4 schemes, UK Power Networks (UKPN) funded initiatives, Solar Together schemes, The Behaviour Change Initiative and Green Doctors. There has been funding received in this area for the various advice services in the county, marketing activities, local parish schemes, schools, and community groups.</p> <p>Medway C led on the delivery of six residents' energy events across Kent and Medway working in collaboration with the University of Greenwich, KCC, Tonbridge and Malling BC, Gravesham BC, and Swale BC. This program provided a post event FAQ sheet/signposting. The program evaluation report was used to support a further joined-up bid led by the University of Greenwich.</p> <p>Medway C have rolled out three energy efficiency schemes: Energy Company Obligation (ECO4), Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS) and Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2). All focus on energy efficiency and insulation in private residential properties. They also worked with the University of Kent on the Net Zero Innovation Programme. This included an event for Medway landlords in May 2023 to understand the barriers and challenges to retrofitting their properties.</p> <p>RISK: Short timescales and the complexity of bidding processes, with tight time scales for delivery mean that progress in this area can be delayed. There is a lack of resources for the retrofitting agenda in the majority of councils across Kent. Discussions are ongoing as to whether funding can be found to appoint a dedicated Retrofit Officer to work countywide.</p>	<p>RAG</p> <p>amber</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>5.5 Develop costed action plans to deliver net zero social housing by 2030. Monitor and report progress.</p> <p><i>LEAD:</i> Stock holding authorities (Medway C, Ashford BC, Canterbury CC, Dartford BC, Dover DC, Gravesham BC, Folkestone & Hythe DC, Thanet DC)</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.</p> <p>Folkestone and Hythe DC's social housing target is for a minimum rating of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) C for rented properties by 2035. They have implemented a pilot scheme that has delivered EPC A to selected properties.</p> <p>Gravesham BC has a social housing target for a minimum rating of EPC C for rented properties by 2035.</p> <p>Dover DC have a target of 2035 for all social housing to have an EPC rating of C or above.</p> <p>Medway C. completed an exercise to understand the current energy rating of council owned homes and the cost to retrofit them to EPC rating C by 2030, (currently 68.6% of homes are rated C or above).</p> <p>Additional wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: For new builds as well as existing housing stock.</p> <p>RISK: Resource to complete the surveys and modelling studies ahead of the development of action plans is required. 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>
<p>5.6 Support and facilitate registered providers to develop costed action plans to decarbonise their housing stock.</p> <p><i>LEAD:</i> Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership/Registered Providers</p>	<p>The Kent Housing Group (KHG) asset management sub-group discuss energy efficiency works regularly. The decarbonisation of stock is a regular topic for the group. Members with a costed action plan have been sharing their experience as to what is involved, such as the importance of data. Regular discussion has taken place at the group in regard to the rising costs associated with this type of work.</p> <p>Additional wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: This should include the costs of material and labour.</p> <p>RISK: The cost of works has continued to increase during 2023 along with scarcity of trained workforce and material availability.</p>	<p>amber</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>5.7 Implement projects to improve the energy efficiency of social housing, focusing on whole house retrofit to PAS2035 standards and identifying joint projects that maximise economies of scale where possible.</p> <p><i>LEAD: Stock holding authorities/Registered Providers</i></p>	<p>Medway C awarded over £1million from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) to improve the energy efficiency rating of 190 council owned homes with current energy efficiency rating of D or below. The planned upgrades will also help to lower residents' energy bills.</p> <p>Dartford BC awarded £1 700 000 from SHDF to complete external wall insulation (EWI) on 200 properties. Also, through the Dartford Low Carbon Exchange Project, Dartford BC partnered with Low Carbon Exchange to deliver an EWI upgrade programme to approximately 75 homes.</p> <p>Folkestone and Hythe DC awarded SHDF to complete whole house retrofits, some of which include renewable generation and air source heat pumps (ASHP). Wave 1 totalled £2.5m and treated 125 homes. Wave 2.1 is £4.48m and will treat 300 homes in the same way over 2 years. The programmes outcomes include ensuring that the resident's energy use falls.</p> <p>Gravesham BC completed communal LED lighting replacement programme at Pegasus Court, Portreeve Court and Longferry Court and this will result in annual carbon savings of 56 tonnes. The programme of heat pumps and solar panel installation for 15 homes at Springvale Court has also been completed. All 15 homes have net zero energy, an EPC of A, and an annual carbon savings of 83 tonnes. Gravesham BC improved the energy efficiency of its housing stock with an EPC Rating of C or above to 79%, (up from 73% in 2022 and 58% in 2021).</p> <p>RISK: The cost of works has continued to increase during 2023 along with a reduction in workforce and material availability. Again, concerns have been raised about the lack of resource, supply chain issues, increasing costs and lack of skills to deliver social housing retrofit. Due to the location of stock, joint projects are hard to identify.</p>	<p>RAG</p> <p>amber</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<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. LEAD: Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership</p>	<p>KHG began work in 2022 to update the existing Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy.</p> <p>KCC analytics published a Fuel Poverty Bulletin in July 2023 providing analysis of 2021 Kent fuel poverty data.</p> <p>RISK: Further resource in this area is required if a full review of the Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy is required.</p>	red
<p>5.9 Support and enforce private sector landlords to make improvements to rental properties.</p> <p>LEAD: District/Borough (Private Sector Housing/Environmental Health)</p>	<p>Various measures continue to be taken across all Kent LAs, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of category 1 and 2 hazards including damp and mould growth and excess cold. • Working with landlords to improve the EPC of properties, and enforcement action under the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) Regulations where necessary. • West Kent Landlords' Forum (Sevenoaks DC, Tonbridge, and Malling BC & Tunbridge Wells BC) in March 2023 covered a legal update, an update on energy efficiency schemes and damp and mould issues. • Folkestone & Hythe DC held a Landlord Forum in March which included a guest speaker on alleviating damp and mould. • Participation in bids for government funded energy efficiency schemes and delivery, currently Sustainable Warmth and HUG2, and signposting residents to schemes. • Use of Housing Assistance policies to provide grants/financial assistance for energy efficiency improvements. • Several local authorities are exploring working with an energy provider on ECO4 and ECO flex. <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Provide advice and guidance to private sector property owners, taking enforcement action where necessary, to ensure improvements are made on privately rented properties.</p> <p>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 in all councils, with this work often being undertaken alongside the delivery of other priority areas of work, further impacting on the opportunity to be proactive.</p>	green

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>The LoCASE funding which ended in June 23, supported 47 Kent and Medway SMEs with £333 101 to fund energy efficiency projects in this period, with project savings totalling over 426 tonnes of CO2e annually.</p> <p>LoCASE and other Low Carbon Kent project legacy work was set to update environmental toolkits for 2024 use.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Support SMEs to retrofit energy efficiency and renewable technologies in business premises through Low Carbon Kent support and signposting to local solutions. (LoCASE grant funding ended in June 2023.)</p> <p>RISK: There is no identified funding stream to replace the LoCASE funding or similar support for SMEs.</p>	<p>amber</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.</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.

RED (0) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	AMBER (4) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	GREEN (11) Activity on track or completed
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Table 6: Priority 6 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.1 Review business mileage, set challenging reduction targets in light of COVID ways of working and expand sustainable travel polices that reduce the need to travel, encourage modal shift to active travel/public transport or increase car sharing.</p> <p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></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 and employer travel clubs.</p> <p>KCC continues to work towards a reduction target of 35% across business miles. Teams across KCC follow hybrid working practices and embed a hot desk process to enable a more flexible process to where staff work.</p> <p>Gravesham BC implemented a hybrid working policy and implemented a “cycle-to-work” scheme. They implemented an Employer Travel Club linked with Arriva which provides discounted bus travel.</p> <p>Ashford BC completed staff travel plans.</p> <p>Canterbury CC and Ashford BC developed plans to move lead offices and have considered how to encourage active travel for staff and visitors within these plans.</p> <p>RISK: There is a lack of co-ordination, and actions plans to reduce business mileage and emissions across LAs. Environmental sub-groups or task and finish groups to influence this area are required.</p>	amber

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 236 607 384">6.2 Work in partnership to influence and develop plans to transition public sector fleets to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV).</p> <p data-bbox="125 655 479 683"><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p data-bbox="629 236 1771 263">Almost all Kent LAs have plans to transition public sector fleets to electric vehicles (EV).</p> <p data-bbox="629 284 1917 379">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. KCC has progressed work to electrify its fleet in 2023 to now include 10 electric vans.</p> <p data-bbox="629 400 1917 464">Gravesham BC have installed 18 EV charge points at their Brookvale site and have electrified 15 % of their fleet vehicles.</p> <p data-bbox="629 485 1917 549">Maidstone BC has a Green Fleet Strategy which uses a Cost Viability Matrix to analysis the viability of buying any new fleet EVs.</p> <p data-bbox="629 569 1877 633">Other public sector organisations such as the NHS, Kent Police and Kent Fire & Rescue Service also have plans to move to commercial EVs.</p> <p data-bbox="629 654 1917 718">RISK: EV replacement vehicles can be considerably more expensive, the improvements planned in the EV charging infrastructure have not yet been fully delivered.</p>	<p data-bbox="1984 201 2063 228">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2007 432 2040 512">amber</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.3 Implement the Rights of Way Improvement Plans for <u>Kent</u> and for <u>Medway</u>; to develop motor-vehicle free routes for walking and cycling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify areas where most benefit will be achieved. • Identify gaps in the network and develop schemes to join up existing routes. • Identify opportunities linked to new developments. <p>Work in partnership to access government funding and maximise developer contributions to fund new schemes.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC & Medway Council</i></p>	<p>Medway C's cycle counter data indicated an increase in cycle trips across Medway in Q1 2023.</p> <p>Details of Medway C's 81 miles of cycle network have been made available online as a new mapping layer which also shows cycle storage locations.</p> <p>Medway C's Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 bid has delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New advanced stop line and segregation for an on-carriageway cycle lane on Dock Road j/w Khartoum Road. • Wand segregation, resurfacing and widening of the on-carriageway cycle lanes on Dock Road. • Dropped kerb/tactile paving installations on strategic routes, 18 junction improvements in total. • Installation of approximately 20 cycle storage hoops across various sites in Medway <p>KCC Public rights of Way (PROW) team completed the three year "Experience" project, delivering access improvements to PROW within the Kent Down Area totalling over £600 000. This work included the removal of many sets of steps. A new cliff top path was constructed linking Langdon Bay to the St Margarets lighthouse, supporting the increase in visitor numbers, and protecting an ecologically sensitive area. Funding secured to upgrade to cycle routes a section of England Coastal path along the Thames at Dartford and also MR474 (Medway Towpath extension at Mill Hall), Aylesford.</p> <p>The next section of the King Charles III England Coast path opened from Ramsgate to Whitstable.</p> <p>RISK: There are local issues with recruitment of experienced staff. High inflation is causing cost increase in labour, fuel, and materials. Funding for projects is insufficient to meet the demand for improvements.</p>	<p>RAG</p> <p>green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.4 Update and implement the <u>Kent Active Travel Strategy</u> and implement the <u>Medway Sustainable School Travel Strategy</u> to promote and incentivise walking and cycling through the provision of infrastructure, facilities, training and engagement.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC & Medway Council</i></p>	<p>(The Kent Active Travel Strategy has not been updated since 2019). To fulfil the KCC county-wide role as the Local Transport Authority, to supplement the existing Local Cycling and Walking infrastructure Plans (LCWIP)s and to aid future LCWIP development in parts of Kent, KCC are developing a KCWIP. This is to ensure that the public and stakeholders are clear about where priorities are for improvements to walking, wheeling, and cycling and to ensure that each district LCWIP forms a coherent county-wide plan for delivery.</p> <p>KCC are running the WOW scheme with Living Streets in 11 schools. WOW is a pupil-led initiative where children self-report how they get to school every day using the interactive WOW Travel Tracker. If they travel sustainably (walk/wheel, cycle, or scoot) once a week for a month they get rewarded with a badge. On average, WOW schools see a 30% reduction in car journeys taken to the school gate and a 23% increase in walking rates.</p> <p>The Medway WOW initiative recorded a 117% increase in participation by children in summer 2023. Medway schools achieved 7th and 8th place nationally for the Sustrans Big walk and Wheel campaign.</p> <p>The Medway Sustainable School Travel Strategy will be updated in 2024.</p> <p>Both Medway C and KCC have progressed School Streets initiatives.</p> <p>During 2023 Medway C delivered Bikeability and Scooter skills training to 1212 children. Medway C delivered road safety training to 6852 pupils across 75 schools during the 22/23 budget year. KCC Member training to train and educate elected members on active travel has been developed.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Update and implement the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) and related strategies and the Medway Sustainable School Travel Strategy to promote and incentivise walking, wheeling, and cycling through the provision of infrastructure, facilities, training, and engagement.</p> <p>RISK: Active travel schemes can attract local opposition, which then impacts on the delivery of final Schemes. The behaviour change required by residents to reduce emissions has a number of barriers.</p>	<p>RAG</p> <p>green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 389 589 496">6.5 Work in partnership to prepare and implement local walking and cycling strategies.</p> <p data-bbox="125 1015 271 1038"><i>LEAD: ALL</i></p>	<p data-bbox="633 389 1912 448">KCC is working with all 12 districts and boroughs to promote walking and cycling through improved infrastructure.</p> <p data-bbox="633 480 1912 544">They are also working with districts and boroughs on their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP)s. All Kent districts are currently engaged in this process.</p> <p data-bbox="633 576 1912 671">KCC consulted on a Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. During 2023 KCC worked on the plan with the consultants AECOM and ran a public consultation exercise. Priority routes have been decided for further development in 2024.</p> <p data-bbox="633 703 1794 735">Medway C are developing a Medway LCWIP with Systra planned for consultation in 2024.</p> <p data-bbox="633 767 1912 863">KCC are developing an air quality corridor hierarchy taking account of Kent Air Quality Management Areas, and plan to use this as the basis on which to prioritise future funding for zero emission corridors.</p> <p data-bbox="633 895 1912 975">Additional wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Measure the amount of new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure delivered in Kent.</p> <p data-bbox="633 1007 1912 1134">RISK: 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, hence the amended implementation wording above.</p>	<p data-bbox="2007 743 2040 815">green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.6 Work with public transport providers to achieve EURO VI emissions standards or better.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>During 22/23 KCC established a BSIP workstream to research air quality bus corridor hierarchy to prioritise future external funding bids for zero emission corridors and further refining of the hierarchy with other factors. The top three worst air quality areas in Kent are Maidstone's Upper Stone Street/A20 Sutton Road corridor, Sittingbourne's A2/A249 crossroads bus corridor and Dartford's Homes Gardens bus corridor. Currently, KCC is awaiting DfT ZEBRA funding or other external funding opportunities to bid for future ZEBRA funding for the top three priority bus corridors identified. The original BSIP bid requested £16.5m funding towards these three bus corridors.</p> <p>Targets are framed as the percentage of buses meeting at least the Euro 6 standard for diesel bus emissions or zero-emission technology. The baseline is 2019/20 when 26.1% of vehicles in the local bus fleet met this standard. There are no zero emission buses in Kent.</p> <p>The target for 2024/25 is for 40% of vehicles in the local bus fleet to meet this standard with more zero emission buses.</p> <p>The target is unlikely to be met due to lack of investment by bus operators in moving to electric whilst they try to survive financially post Covid. Fastrack Thameside & Dover electrification will help this target with 33 zero emission buses due to be operational during 2024/25 using KCC ZEBRA funding.</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>
<p>6.7 Trial new transport projects that drive the transition to Ultra Low Emission Vehicle public transport.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC received ZEBRA funding from the DfT for the electrification of the Fastrack BRT Thameside electric bus service and new Fastrack Dover BRT electric service. Procurement commenced during 2022 for both the Fastrack Electric Thameside operations including 28 Zero Emission buses and for the Fastrack Opp Charger Electric Charging Solution Contractor in Thameside & Dover. There will be five zero emission buses for Dover Fastrack. These procurements were targeting contract award during Sept 2023 for Fastrack Thameside electric operator and Nov 2023 for Fastrack electric charging solution Contractor. The Fastrack Dover electric services are to be launched during 2024 and Fastrack Thameside electric service is to be launched during Spring 2025.</p> <p>RISK: Further procurement and trials are dependent on further funding bids which may require match funding. There may be short time scales for bid writing and delivery.</p>	<p>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><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC are planning to introduce a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) multimodal multi-operator digital transport technology platform as a new type of service to the Thameside area and then continue roll out for the rest of Kent. KCC have received funding for Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in March 2023 which includes funding for introduction of MaaS to the Ebbsfleet area. KCC started procuring a MaaS technology partner and initiating a marketing and behavioural change campaign in winter 2023 (completing Summer 2024) to introduce MaaS to the Thameside area initially during 2025. MaaS will help modal shift away from private car ownership to more use of public transport, active travel & shared transport. MaaS will allow people to plan, book and pay for multimodal journeys in a way that's not been possible before.</p> <p>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. Ebbsfleet is KCC's home grown 'Future Transport Zone' built around Fastrack Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and local public transport in the Dartford, Ebbsfleet Garden City & Gravesend area. The aim is to roll out MaaS across Kent & Medway in the future subject to National Highways funding decision due Autumn 23.</p> <p>Three districts (Canterbury CC, Maidstone BC, and Tunbridge Wells BC) have set up successful car clubs which they are hoping to expand. Several other districts are looking to set up their own schemes.</p> <p>RISK:</p> <p>Electric Car club: Electric Car club for MaaS Ebbsfleet is on hold until the MaaS scheme procurement progresses.</p> <p>Bike/ebike hire scheme: Bike/ebike hire scheme for MaaS Ebbsfleet zone is dependent on separate grants which are due to be agreed during Autumn 2023. (These projects rely on external funding, not KCC funds.)</p>	<p>RAG</p> <p>green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 236 595 419">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 1225 479 1249"><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p data-bbox="629 236 1912 363">All Kent districts and boroughs and Medway C. have separate taxi licencing policies. Taxi licencing officers from these LAs meet at the CCN EV taxi licence sub-group and work together to develop their licencing policies to further support Kent-based taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to move to Electric Vehicles (EV)s and/or Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV)s.</p> <p data-bbox="629 387 1939 515">Medway C. have progressed a successful funding bid from the DEFRA Air Quality Grant to carry out a comprehensive taxi and private hire EV feasibility study looking at the barriers and opportunities for EV uptake by the trade in Medway. The results of this including the measuring of taxi vehicle emissions and behaviour change work will inform future incentivisation schemes.</p> <p data-bbox="629 539 1939 699">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 EVs. 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="629 722 1854 786">Please see details in 6.11 regarding the Kent LEVI funding of £12m and Medway LEVI funding regarding improving EV infrastructure.</p> <p data-bbox="629 810 1912 970">RISK: EVs remain expensive up front, compared to internal combustion engine. Vehicles for taxi companies and ULEV Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) are particularly expensive. There are limited national grants available to support EV purchase and private charge points. Moreover, there is a global shortage of EVs leading to supply issues. There are issues with insufficient charging infrastructure and electricity supply issues.</p> <p data-bbox="629 994 712 1018">RISK:</p> <p data-bbox="629 1042 1912 1169">School travel: Students are travelling longer distances to school. This creates an 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="629 1193 1912 1289">EV taxi uptake: National licencing regulations enable Kent-based drivers to be licensed outside of Kent and hence avoid Kent councils' licencing requirements. Lack of government requirements for EV taxi uptake within licencing regulations.</p>	<p data-bbox="1989 196 2063 220">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2011 730 2040 802">amber</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="120 236 607 539">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="120 858 539 890"><i>LEAD: KCC & Medway Council</i></p>	<p data-bbox="629 236 1939 363">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="629 387 1939 547">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. National Highways have made the construction of the LTC their pilot scheme for embedding low carbon procurement and construction methods within large scale Highway improvements.</p> <p data-bbox="629 571 1939 699">KCC freight officers are working to clarify the baseline data to work from in terms of reducing the emissions of freight vehicles. They have identified all road haulage companies in Kent that have Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) accreditation. Consideration is being given as to how to approach those who do not yet have this accreditation.</p> <p data-bbox="629 818 1939 914">RISK: Freight fleet in Kent 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="1984 196 2067 228">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2007 547 2040 619">green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>6.11 Work collaboratively with the public and private sector to roll out electric charging points across Kent and Medway, in line with local EV strategies.</p>	<p>Medway C awarded £68 000 Local Electrical Vehicle infrastructure (LEVI) Capability funding to secure a dedicated Project Officer to help deliver EV charging infrastructure. An Expression of Interest for £2.1m capital funding has been submitted for the implementation of EV charging infrastructure in Medway. Funding due to be allocated in 2024.</p> <p>KCC EV Chargepoint Network, work to date up to December 2023:</p> <p>Chargers in District car parks - 137 charge point sockets have been installed and are operational across 3 Districts (Folkestone and Hythe DC, Gravesham BC and Tonbridge and Malling BC). 27,730 charging sessions have been recorded across the network, delivering 433,700 kWhs of electricity providing 1,517,950 driving miles (On average, EVs have an efficiency of 3.5 miles per kWh).</p> <p>Parish Charger Network - Chargers in rural locations, including Parish Council car parks. To date, 56 charge point sockets have been installed across 22 locations across the county. 12,833 charging sessions have been recorded across the network, delivering 196,910 kWhs of electricity providing 689,185 driving miles (On average, EVs have an efficiency of 3.5 miles per kWh)</p> <p>Rapid taxi charger Network - 50kWh rapid chargers installed across 12 locations. Hackney carriage and private hire access is prioritised, but some allow for public charging as well. Across the network, 15,649 charging sessions have been recorded, delivering 332,872 kWhs of electricity, providing 1,165,052 driving miles (On average, EVs have an efficiency of 3.5 miles per kWh)</p> <p>New Thanet Parkway rail station - 10 x 7kWh sockets have been installed, – 181 charging sessions delivering 2,481 kWhs of electricity.</p> <p>Ultra rapid charger project - Officers continue to develop a business case to use KCC owned land at locations on the strategic road network to facilitate ultra rapid EV charging hubs.</p> <p>LEVI Pilot - Three public sector destination car park sites have been identified to deliver charging hubs of various speeds for use by residents and visitors.</p> <p>LEVI capital funding - KCC allocated £12m in LEVI capital funding. Officers are building a business case to deliver primarily low power, on-street charging infrastructure in Kent to help accelerate the commercialisation of and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector.</p> <p>KCC received £80 000 from the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS) grant fund.</p>	<p>green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p><i>LEAD: All Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>Swale BC received £106 506 from the ORCS fund. Gravesham BC installed two 22kWh electric vehicle chargers at Valley Drive for resident's use, to support residents in converting to electric vehicles.</p> <p>RISK: Development and installation of electric charging points is dependent upon the availability of grant funding. Electrical connection costs can be prohibitive, however, imminent changes to how connection chargers are implemented is expected to reduce the overall costs. There is a risk of not keeping up with forecast demand and some locations may have insufficient electricity supply.</p>	
<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>The Kent REVs (electric van loan scheme) concluded in January 2023 with 335 electric van loans to Kent SMEs over the two-year period.</p> <p>All LAs promoted the Kent REVS scheme to local businesses.</p> <p>The LoCASE EU grant scheme concluded in June 2023. The grant supported ten SMEs in 2023 with £75K towards a range of EVs, from vans and taxis through to e-bikes and a street-cleaner.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Support further measures to encourage Kent business to switch to electric vehicles.</p> <p>RISK: Without designated grant schemes to support this program, LAs do not have the start-up funding to support such measures and SMEs may not have the initial investment funding for replacement electric vehicles and charging infrastructure installation.</p>	green

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="125 236 595 379">6.13 Assess the feasibility of developing ‘low carbon transport hubs’ for EV cars, e-bikes, and push bikes.</p> <p data-bbox="125 1043 427 1075"><i>LEAD: KCC & Medway</i></p>	<p data-bbox="629 236 1939 603">Ebbsfleet- As part of the Fastrack Living Roof Bus shelters project & Introduction of MaaS Ebbsfleet there was an intention to develop Multimodal transport hubs at strategic locations in the Ebbsfleet Garden City, Dartford & Gravesend town centres & surrounding residential areas. There has been an ongoing procurement during 2022/2023 for a Fastrack Living Roof Bus shelter Contractor who is expected to have the ability to create ' Multimodal Mobility Hubs'. There have been ongoing funding bids led by the KCC public transport team for the introduction of an ebike/bike hire scheme for the MaaS Ebbsfleet zone. A draft Concession specification has been developed ready to go to tender for an electric car club for the MaaS zone once the MaaS partner procurement is further progressed. The intention is to establish the new bike/ebike hire and electric car club physical infrastructure and service in the MaaS Ebbsfleet zone then integrate these new travel modes into the MaaS multimodal technology platform.</p> <p data-bbox="629 624 1906 783">The Otterpool residential development also has a planning condition & S106 obligations to provide multimodal mobility hubs in the development of the new residential areas in the Folkestone and Hythe district to encourage sustainable travel behaviours as people move into the new residential developments. This is expected to include electric car clubs, bike/ebike hire and EV charging infrastructure co-located with bus services in low carbon transport hubs.</p> <p data-bbox="629 858 1939 1023">Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Support progress in Kent regarding “low carbon multimodal transport hubs” to include measures such as multimodal integrated transport next to Fastrack electric BRT network, train stations, key bus corridors, public EV infrastructure, bike/e-bike share schemes, secure bike storage, electric car clubs with associated EV infrastructure, e-cargo bike trials.</p> <p data-bbox="629 1091 1648 1123">RISK: Lack of planning policy influencing developments to expand in this area.</p>	<p data-bbox="1989 197 2063 225">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2011 651 2040 719">green</p>

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>Each Kent LA where there are declared Air Quality Management Areas will have their own Air Quality Action Plans to tackle areas of poor air quality. Full details of the relevant authorities' actions can be found in their Annual Status Reports published every year. A full library of these documents can be found at https://www.kentair.org.uk/ with Sevenoaks using https://londonair.org.uk/london/asp/lahome.asp</p> <p>A group meets quarterly for district air quality officers in Kent to share best practice and develop partnership working in this area. There are also groups that meet to support measures focusing on air quality improvements around schools and support air quality communication campaigns.</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>This action has been removed for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan due to the closure of the national superfast programme in 2022.</p> <p>(The successor 'Project Gigabit' programme will be led centrally and will not be devolved.)</p>	green

Priority 7 Renewable Energy Generation

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

RED (2) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	AMBER (2) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	GREEN (4) Activity on track or completed
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Table 7: Priority 7 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>7.1 Undertake a renewable energy (and storage) opportunities study for Kent and Medway focusing on all existing and emerging technologies and avoiding unintended negative impacts.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC/Medway Council</i></p>	<p>Kent County Council commissioned a Kent-wide Geospatial insights solar and wind mapping tool. A training session for district staff to use the tool has been held.</p> <p>A district energy group (as a sub-group of the Climate Change Network) has met three times to discuss and share progress in the areas of Local Area Energy Plans (LEAP), Heat Network Zoning and funding opportunities. The group will move forward a Kent-wide LEAP and support partnership working on renewable energy generation.</p> <p>All L.A. officers have been offered briefing sessions run by UKPN regarding access to the beta version of their energy mapping tool and explanation as to how this may assist county-wide development and bidding processes.</p> <p>Ashford BC and Folkestone and Hythe DC have initiated a pilot LEAP for Kent working with companies piloting supportive mapping tools in this expanding area.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Undertake a LEAP for Kent (or multiple smaller LAEP's) that focus on all existing and emerging technologies.</p> <p>RISK: Support for developing LEAPs is a new area with limited companies able to support the development of such plans. The rapid release of Government funding, with short timescales for bidding and delivery in this area, has meant that partners are focused on responding to these immediate funding calls, rather than looking at longer-term planning opportunities.</p>	green

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 bid to DESNZ Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Fund (PSDS) Phase 3b and were awarded £1 824 832 which covers conversions from gas boilers to air source heat pumps for five buildings (including one which is still reliant on oil), and also includes other measures such as new double glazing, new Building Management Systems (BMS), LED lighting, and solar PV.</p> <p>These projects will see annual direct and indirect carbon savings of 113.87 tonnes per annum. (Annual direct carbon savings in tnCO₂e per annum for direct emissions, i.e. fossil fuels, and annual indirect carbon savings in tnCO₂e per annum for traded emissions, i.e. electricity).</p> <p>KCC solar array in Somerset (Bowerhouse II) produces 22 000 MWh per year.</p> <p>KCC Kings Hill Solar Farm started operating in Nov 2023 and is expected to produce 3 000 MWh per year.</p> <p>All LAs are continuously developing a pipeline of renewable technology projects, solar farm, and wind opportunities, to prepare for future funding bids.</p> <p>Folkestone and Hythe DC, Sevenoaks DC and Swale BC are at the early stages of implementing specific renewable energy projects.</p> <p>RISK: As renewable energy projects often have no internal core funding allocated, they are reliant on external funding.</p>	green
<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>The solar panels on KCC buildings produced 405 960 kW during 2023.</p> <p>Dartford BC implemented works to decarbonise Fairfield Leisure Centre including the installation of a 500KW solar panel system to provide electricity to the building.</p> <p>Gravesham BC: Carl Ekman House, Chantry Court, and Springvale Court (all social housing stock,) produce 38 863 kW of Solar PV per annum.</p> <p>Solar PV projects often return on investment within 10 years.</p> <p>RISK: Availability of funding opportunities for solar PV across government is reducing with more stringent criteria on funding agreements. Capacity issues with the local grid can cause delays to projects.</p>	green

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>7.4 Develop and implement the Maidstone Heat Project.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>This project was halted through 2023 due to rising costs in all areas. The program is being reconsidered, with renewed partners, during 2024.</p> <p>RISK: Rising costs outweigh the benefits. Reliant on external funds.</p>	<p>red</p>
<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>KCC supported the Hyde Group South-East New Energy (SENE) project with Osborne Energy and the University of East London (UEL) to retrofit 46 homes in Kent. The homes had energy saving measures such as LED lighting, roof insulation, underfloor insulation and smart heating systems installed. The project achieved 130.4 tonnes of carbon savings and provided a detailed report regarding barriers and issues.</p> <p>RISK: Availability of funding opportunities across government is reducing with more stringent criteria on funding agreements. Lack of understanding around air and ground source heat pumps.</p>	<p>amber</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>Solar Together Kent is a solar panel and battery storage group-purchase scheme. It enables householders and small businesses to install solar panels on their homes and businesses at a competitive price. The scheme is supported and promoted by KCC, Medway C and all Kent district and borough councils.</p> <p>During 2023, Solar Together Kent recorded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,090 Kent homes have had Solar PV and/or battery storage installed as part of the Solar Together 2023 project. • 1 460 roof surveys have been delivered. • For comparison, during 2022, Solar Together Kent facilitated over £13.8m investment in renewables by Kent residents, which is set to deliver approximately 39 000 tonnes of carbon reduction over 25 years. <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>green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>7.7 Provide technical support for community renewable energy projects.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC commissioned Community Energy South to complete an initial investigation into the possibilities for community renewable energy opportunities in Swale, Dover, Ashford, Canterbury, and Thanet districts.</p> <p>KCC Energy team has begun initial conversations in this area with several groups in a variety of locations.</p> <p>Swale BC are progressing with Orchard Community Energy and a solar array community energy project.</p> <p><i>Additional wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan to include recommendations from Community Energy South on how to support community energy generation across Kent and Medway.</i></p> <p>RISK: Funding for project implementation and long planning timescales.</p>	<p>amber</p>
<p>7.8 Support the development of future housing micro-grids, smart energy grids, and low carbon heat networks for new build homes.</p> <p><i>LEAD: TBC</i></p>	<p>The action has not yet been progressed.</p>	<p>red</p>

Priority 8 Green Infrastructure

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

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

Action	Progress	RAG
8.1 Undertake an assessment of Kent and Medway’s opportunities for natural solutions to climate change. <i>LEAD: KCC</i>	Burro Happold were commissioned by KCC to research and write the Natural Solutions to Climate Change Report, which was published in Spring 2021. RISK: None, action completed.	green
8.2 Using the results of the opportunity study, develop a framework for natural solutions to climate change, considering both mitigation and adaptation. <i>LEAD: KCC</i>	KCC launched a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Kent which is planned to conclude in 2025. LNRS maps existing and potential opportunities for nature-based solutions and supports local planning authorities. Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Kent and Medway that agrees priorities for nature recovery, maps the most valuable existing areas for nature, and maps opportunities for creating or improving habitat for nature and delivering wider environmental goals (nature-based solutions). RISK: Dependency on the outstanding secondary legislation and statutory guidance. Engagement in the strategy's development by all relevant stakeholders. Ability to build capacity/commission services to deliver LNRS. Consideration of carbon credits needs to embed into the planning stages of projects, but further resource is required in this area.	amber

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>8.3 Develop and implement a strategy to establish 1.5 million new trees (or their carbon sequestration equivalent) in Kent and Medway.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC with support of all Local Authorities</i></p>	<p>The Kent and Medway Plan Tree Partnership was adopted in 2022 and work is ongoing in respect of tree establishment. The Partnership developed and delivered over 61 sites and planted 62 565 trees during 2023.</p> <p>Dartford BC planted 290 trees, Gravesham BC 160 trees and Maidstone BC 6000 trees. Swale BC planted 295 trees and 14053 tree whips and Thanet DC 293 trees and 14053 tree whips.</p> <p>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. Uncertainty where the next tranche of funding will come from.</p>	green
<p>8.4 Develop cost effective and innovative approaches to establishing trees outside woodlands whilst strengthening biosecurity, through the Promoting Trees Outside Woodlands Project.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>The Trees Outside Woodlands programme has been extended to March 2025.</p> <p>Phase 2 (2023-2025) of the Trees Outside Woodlands programme has enabled the launch of several grant funds supporting landowners across Dover to restore historic tree features, funding the development of community tree nursery projects across the county, and helping Kent-based commercial tree nurseries to improve their biosecurity measures. New trial planting plots (phase 2) are continuing to be developed, while the monitoring and maintenance of Phase 1 trial plots continues.</p> <p>Kent Plan Tree is managing three rounds of the Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF).</p> <p>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>	green

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.

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 (3) Activity on track or completed
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Table 9: Priority 9 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>9.1 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.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Utilise and build on the Clean Growth South East supply chain analysis to help realise and link the economic opportunities from the low carbon sector across Kent and the wider South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) area.</p> <p>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>KCC's refreshed Steps to Environment Management (STEM) workshops, helped a further 24 Kent firms with environmental management systems and benchmarking their footprint.</p> <p>Revision of STEM course and anticipated combining and adapting IEMA course content was underway with a view to 2024 offerings in this regard for LA supply chains.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Support local SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) and public sector suppliers to progress through Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) training accreditation and enhance their knowledge of the key themes through Low Carbon Kent's Sustainable Business Toolkit.</p> <p>RISK: With the closure of LoCASE funding, few similar sized funding schemes are open for bid application.</p>	green

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><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>94 Kent and Medway LoCASE grant applications (including needs assessments & energy audits) totalling £768 768 were approved for Kent and Medway SMEs in this period.</p> <p>Medway C have launched a Green Growth grant, using a Shared Prosperity Fund allocation, to offer up to £2,500 to businesses who have a decarbonisation plan and want to implement it and take a step further towards net-zero. To compliment this, a Green Audit scheme has been launched with Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, to offer free audits and decarbonisation plans for businesses who want to start their net-zero journey.</p> <p>Experiences and process advice has fed into localised UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Regional Prosperity fund (RPF) projects being delivered in pockets of Kent and Medway.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Offer a low carbon support programme for SMEs, including support to highlight and signpost to funding, reduce costs, and carbon, and actively contribute to growth of the low carbon and renewable energy economy (LCREE) and environmental goods and services sectors (EGSS) through tailored support and collaboration.</p> <p>RISK: Funding for LoCASE business support program ended in June 2023 and no equivalent funding stream has been identified.</p>	green
<p>9.4 Support the development of the offshore wind sector and local supply chain.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>Due to post Brexit changes, the UK is no longer a full partner in the Inn2POWER project. Previously there was a potential funding stream supporting the UK offshore wind market and green hydrogen companies. However, Kent companies can still access the linked business directory and events.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Support the continued development of the onshore & offshore wind sector, green hydrogen, and related local supply chain.</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 and infrastructure improvements.</p>	amber

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="129 233 674 344">9.5 Drive an increase in the local circular economy within SMEs and Social Enterprises.</p> <p data-bbox="129 754 293 783"><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p data-bbox="757 233 1910 331">The final Upcycle Your Waste (UYW) report was sent by KCC to all 247 SMEs actively engaged in the project across Kent and Medway. This included follow-up contact with 49 active circular economy businesses.</p> <p data-bbox="757 352 1839 451">Further engagement and collaboration undertaken with circular economy firms to complete case studies and populate a searchable database using the GIS team for publishing on Low Carbon Kent site in February 2024.</p> <p data-bbox="757 472 1832 571">Following the KCC Environment and Waste group redesign in 2023, there are now postholders in place re-focused on considering circular economy projects and opportunities across Kent into 2024.</p> <p data-bbox="757 592 1906 691">Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Drive an increase in the local circular economy within Kent's resident and business communities through effective support, benchmarking, collaboration, and business case support.</p> <p data-bbox="757 711 1890 772">RISK: Valuable resource opportunities are being missed when recyclable materials are not separated for recycling and instead sent for disposal.</p>	<p data-bbox="1989 193 2056 228">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="1995 472 2029 555">amber</p>

Priority 10 Communications

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

RED (1) Activity on hold or significantly behind schedule with a risk of non-delivery	AMBER (0) Activity changed and/or timeline revised, but on track for delivery within life of ELES 2023	GREEN (11) Activity on track or completed
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Table 10: Priority 10 action RAG status (Delivery of actions as set out in the 2020 Implementation Plan)

Action	Progress	RAG
10.1 Develop a joint communications, engagement and behaviour change strategy and action plan. LEAD: KCC	Completed in 2021 - but planned for review when resource allows. RISK: Nil, as action complete	green
10.2a Develop a communication working group/network to ensure consistency of messages and facilitate joint working. LEAD: KCC	'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 C. Meetings held to support specific campaigns and a Teams site facilitated joint working and consistency of messaging. Engagement and communications meetings during 2023 held regarding schools, active travel promotion and Great Big Green Week held. 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.	green
10.2b Hold an annual environment conference to raise the profile and facilitate cross-sector collaboration and collective action. LEAD: KCC	Due to budget and resourcing issues, a conference was not held in 2023. Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Consider the impact of reviewing and potentially rebranding the annual environment conference. RISK: The extra expense and resource needed to host in-person events. No-shows can be high for in-person events and events cancelled at short notice due unexpected circumstances.	red

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>A calendar of events produced for Great Big Green Week 2023. 39 events were cited, and the on-line site was visited 1 373 times with 68 people contributing ideas, completing the survey and adding further events. (For comparison, 2022 saw 82 events taking place, mainly due to funding being available to support organisers to host activities and higher engagement, with 1 700 visits to the site.)</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Maximise the impact of Great Big Green Week in Kent by promoting a shared calendar of events and supporting local activities.</p> <p>RISK: Funding to host events and promote activities effectively. External factors affecting the promotion and attendance at events at short notice.</p>	green
<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>Kent Air Week ran again in 2023, content was created to celebrate actions and initiatives to improve air quality. At least four partners shared the content on social media, but the campaign coincided with elections and so some districts and boroughs were not able to participate. Social media stats for 2023, (reach is the number of times the post was seen on individuals' feeds and engagement is any action taken because of that post e.g. clicking on a link, liking or sharing that post): Facebook reach 24 127 Twitter engagement 5 675 Instagram reach 3 097 The campaign had no funding to boost posts on social media.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Implement joint communication campaigns to raise awareness of the health impacts of air pollution and ways to protect health and improve air quality. Include progress on Kent air quality funding projects/programmes.</p> <p>RISK: Limited resources to maintain and develop the activities of this group.</p>	green

Action	Progress	RAG
<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>KCC supports the Kent Connected travel planner and linked active travel promotion sites and works with Explore Kent to promote measures to Kent residents. The travel planner had additional start and end journeys added in 2023, such as KCC owned buildings. The planner has a built-in carbon calculator and compares different options for journeys. KCC held meetings with NHS staff in Kent, so that Kent hospital local travel websites can link to the Kent Connected travel planner to assist patients and staff travel more sustainably. Social media accounts in the control of KCC such as Explore Kent, Kent Green Action and Kent Connected continued throughout 2023 to promote events and resources supporting active travel widely without extra funds to target these marketing campaigns.</p> <p>Medway C:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched a Free Bus Weekend (9-10 December 2023) in conjunction with local bus operators. • Delivered two new walking campaigns for primary and secondary schools in support of International Walk to School Month. Across both campaigns, participation doubled to 16 schools compared to last year's competitions. <p>RISK: Funding remains a risk as ongoing revenue is required for continued paid-for social media advertising.</p>	green
<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>Share the Warmth energy saving campaign successfully ran during winter 2022.</p> <p>Replacement wording added for the 2024 - 2027 implementation plan: Support joint communication campaigns on behaviour change projects focused on tackling residents' carbon emissions.</p> <p>RISK: Funding remains a risk as ongoing revenue is required for continued paid-for social media advertising. Communication resources vary across districts and boroughs to support joint campaigns.</p>	green

Action	Progress	RAG
<p data-bbox="129 236 680 344">10.7 Implement joint communication campaigns to help residents reduce their water bills/save water</p> <p data-bbox="129 496 680 563"><i>LEAD: KCC, Southern Water, South East Water, Affinity Water</i></p>	<p data-bbox="728 236 1944 435">Campaign with South East Water (SEW) and Southern Water to save water and money. In total for the 2023 portion of the campaign we received 567 898 impressions with a reach of 329 644 and 709 engagements derived from our sponsored posts. The social media campaign supported a leaflet drop campaign from SEW encouraging people to make savings for financial benefit. Approximately 100 000 leaflets were dropped in their catchment and this drove ~4 500 clicks through to their webpages for more tips and support.</p> <p data-bbox="728 504 1912 568">RISK: Difficulty measuring water saved by these campaigns. Buy-in from water companies required who have other compelling priorities for communications.</p>	<p data-bbox="1989 201 2063 225">RAG</p> <p data-bbox="2007 373 2045 440">green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>10.8 Implement joint communication campaigns to reduce residents' environmental impact (Kent Green Action and District-level campaigns).</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC made a successful application for funding from environmental charity Hubbub to increase on-street recycling in Ashford Town Centre.</p> <p>KCC worked with Kitche on a campaign to collect data on food wastage across the county. 673 residents completed a related survey, and 691 Kent residents use the Kitche food waste app. This data and seven in-depth qualitative studies collated to inform future food waste campaigns.</p> <p>Medway C:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continued to promote #small changes campaign in monthly climate change e-newsletter. launched a 23 community actions for 2023 campaign. Ran the prelaunch of our 2024 campaign "What's good for the climate is good for me" in Medway Matters, the free magazine delivered to every household in Medway. The campaign provides examples of healthy lifestyle changes that also help residents reduce their carbon footprint. Environmental Engagement team have provided an information programme and talks to schools, colleges, and youth groups about the effects of waste on the environment. In total they spoke to 6207 young people (aged 4-19 years). Launched a water a tree scheme: https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200348/climate_change/1696/water_a_tree_scheme Continued to promote the Climate Change Staff Volunteering Initiative to staff, which enables them to take one days paid leave each year to support the delivery of actions in the climate change action plan. <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>	<p>green</p>

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>As part of the multi-LEP programme covering the wider South and East, a range of methods were employed in this period in this regard. This covered not just LA partners but also the University of Brighton through their NetZero360 set of workshops. Though the LoCASE funding did not need any more promotion, there was awareness raising of the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) and Environmental Goods and Services Sector (EGSS) with case studies including circular economy and retrofit featuring heavily, rather than just energy efficiency project support. Some dissemination of case studies and business cases on re-use and upcycling linked to Upcycle Your Waste and BLUEPRINT to a Circular Economy had begun in this period, as well as reporting of wider effects and results of INN2power (offshore wind and green hydrogen supply chain engagement).</p> <p>Total Low Carbon Kent Tweet Impressions for the period: 3 527.</p> <p>Low Carbon Kent LinkedIn Page Views for Period: 174</p> <p>Follow on work as part of project legacy for the Low Carbon Kent portfolio has included dissemination of case studies and best practice examples as well as some speaker engagements (including Circular Economy week and a SELEP lesson learned seminar), augmented by revision and publication of more best practice examples from the Low Carbon Kent portfolio.</p> <p>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. LoCASE business support funding ended in June 2023 and has not been replaced with similar funding streams.</p>	<p>green</p>

Action	Progress	RAG
<p>10.10 Develop shared resources for public sector staff engagement.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>A KCC Carbon Literacy Training pilot scheme was completed with 11 KCC officers trained and accredited and 1 staff member accredited as a Carbon Literacy Facilitator. KCC also shared resources for staff to run events within the KCC Environmental Champion network of volunteers. The KCC Environmental Behaviour Change team actively engaged with partners across CCN to promote events such as numerous tree planting and maintenance sessions. Many L.A.s across Kent have delivered further carbon literacy training to officers, councillors, and businesses. Maidstone BC trained 46 officers, Gravesham C 15 officers and Swale C trained over 50 staff in Carbon Literacy.</p> <p>RISK: Lack of resource for implementing campaigns and costs for accredited training schemes.</p>	green
<p>10.11 Monitor and review effectiveness of communication campaigns and develop targeted behaviour change programmes.</p> <p><i>LEAD: KCC</i></p>	<p>KCC carried out a continual, annual review of Kent Green Action campaigns with evaluation of all supportive communication campaigns carried out at the end of each project.</p> <p>At time of review (January 2023): Total Twitter Followers: 631 Total Facebook Followers: 864 Total Facebook Reach for Period: 341 835 Total Twitter Impressions for Period: 23 907</p> <p>RISK: 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>	green