

Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy

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.

- Agree evidence and current baseline for five-year carbon budgets.
- Set local authority carbon budgets with emission reduction pathways to net zero by 2050, with significant reduction by 2030.

PRIORITY 2: PUBLIC SECTOR DECISIONMAKING

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.

- Develop a simple checklist to identify where significant environmental issues and opportunities may arise, for use on imminent key decisions, major commissions and procurements.
- Revisit existing social value commitments within contracts and align to climate change and net-zero ambitions where possible.
- Stronger emphasis on reducing carbon miles and on buying local goods and services where possible.

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.

- Secure agreement for a joint Kent and Medway clean growth and climate change evidence base and planning resource, to ensure that planning decisions are fully informed by the latest evidence and advice.
- Refresh the Kent Design Guide to reflect clean growth, net-zero and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

PRIORITY 4: CLIMATE EMERGENCY INVESTMENT FUND

Establish a trusted Kent and Medway 'climate emergency' carbon offset scheme and renewable energy investment fund

- Review existing funding streams and see how they can be tweaked to provide additional resource.
- Package up quick wins and 'oven-ready' projects suitable for external funding such as crowd funding or business sponsorship
- Review external funding expertise and opportunities and look at increasing access to finance through collaboration and development of a central resource.

PRIORITY 5: BUILDING RETROFIT PROGRAMME

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

- Undertake 'quick-wins' in public and commercial premises such as converting lighting to LEDs, installing energy and water efficiency measures and controls and training building managers.
- Utilise and promote existing funding pots: e.g Kent and Medway Warm Homes Programme, LOCASE (Low Carbon Across the South East) grant support programme to improve efficiency of local businesses.

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.

- Set a challenging 2030 business miles reduction target for the public sector.
- Work collaboratively with the public and private sector to roll out EV charging points and infrastructure for walking and cycling.
- Support public transport providers, including school transport providers, to use lower emission vehicles.
- Tackle poor air quality hotspots through the implementation of Air Quality Management Plans.

PRIORITY 7: RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION

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

- Install roof-top solar panels on all suitable public sector buildings.
- Support residents and small businesses to install roof-top solar panels, by offering a group purchasing scheme such as Solar Together Kent.

PRIORITY 8: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Develop 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.

- Identify natural environment ‘quick-wins’ and areas where tree establishment is needed, especially in relation to Ash Dieback.
- Produce tree planting guidance to ensure the right tree species are planted in the most appropriate places.

PRIORITY 9: SUPPORTING LOW CARBON BUSINESS

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

- Support public sector suppliers to complete Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) training (or equivalent), in order to identify supply chain emissions and drive efficiencies where possible.
- Promote and refer businesses and supply chain to LOCASE, for support and access to grant funding to reduce their costs and access new markets.

PRIORITY 10: COMMUNICATIONS

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

- Link up existing stakeholder communications and agree shared messages on topics such as air quality, fuel poverty, active travel and energy efficiency.
- Use the Kent Environment Strategy Conference as a mechanism to raise the profile of local authority collective action.