



Climate Change Action Plan November 2024

Overview

Our Climate Change Strategy (2024) marks the Council’s commitment to tackling the challenge of climate change across the District. It provides a framework for our actions aimed at reducing carbon emissions (mitigation) and adapting to the effects of climate change that are already happening (adaptation), to provide a better environment for future generations. The Strategy was agreed earlier this year and identifies six climate change priority areas to focus our efforts, ensuring we are doing all we can with our available resources to tackle the challenge of climate change.

This Action Plan follows on from the Strategy, setting out the key projects we are working on across the six climate change priority areas, to accelerate the reduction in carbon emissions and associated improvements in air quality across the District. In doing so, it seeks to harness the significant benefits of climate action to the health and wellbeing of our communities, our economy and the natural environment.

Reporting and Review

The Action Plan will be reviewed and reported on annually. Progress in achieving the actions will be delivered through specific delivery projects as detailed below, however, it is anticipated that new project opportunities will arise and circumstances may change, which means that the quantum and range of delivery projects may change from year to year.

Our Climate Change Priorities



MOVEMENT, TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

Action	Delivery project	Responsible service area(s)	Responsible portfolio(s)	Delivery partner(s)	Carbon saving potential	Project cost	Level of funding in place	Timescale for delivery	Key indicator of success
MOV1 – Promote and facilitate low carbon travel and sustainable movement	Continue to deliver the Movement Strategy	All	All	SDC KCC Infrastructure providers	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An improvement in air quality across the District in line with our Air Quality Action Plan
MOV1 – Promote and facilitate low carbon travel and sustainable movement	Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans	Strategic Planning	Cleaner & Greener	SDC KCC	Higher	Government funding of £1.5 million and officer time	100%	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver at least three active travel projects across the District
MOV1 – Promote and facilitate low carbon travel and sustainable movement	Incorporate low carbon travel and sustainable movement into the Local Plan	Strategic Planning	Development & Conservation	SDC Infrastructure providers	Higher	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust Local Plan policy on sustainable movement
MOV1 – Promote and facilitate low carbon travel and sustainable movement	Continue to implement our Workplace Travel Plan	Human Resources	Improvement & Innovation	SDC	Lower	Within budget and officer time	100%	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reduction in staff private car use
MOV2 – Improve the electric vehicle charging network across the District	Identify suitable locations for new EV charging points	Strategic Planning Environmental Health	Development & Conservation Cleaner & Greener	SDC KCC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an EV Infrastructure Study and use the findings to inform future provision
MOV2 – Improve the electric vehicle charging network across the District	Expand publicly available EV charging infrastructure on Council owned land	Commercial & Property Direct Services	People & Places Cleaner & Greener	SDC KCC Infrastructure providers	Higher	Not within budget	Self financing project	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A year on year increase in the publicly available EV charging infrastructure on Council owned land
MOV3 – Work with young people, community groups and businesses to encourage low carbon travel	Engage with young people and community groups to promote sustainable travel	Health & Communities Commercial & Property	People & Places	SDC KCC Community Rail Partnerships Town & Parish Councils Leisure centres Local schools	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver sustainable travel specific engagement with young people and community groups
MOV3 – Work with young people, community groups and businesses to encourage low carbon travel	Work with KCC's Climate Change and Active Travel teams and transport providers to encourage behaviour change	Strategic Planning	Cleaner & Greener	SDC KCC Infrastructure providers	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver at least three active travel projects across the District
MOV3 – Work with young people, community groups and businesses to encourage low carbon travel	Engage with local businesses to encourage sustainable travel choices	Commercial & Property	People & Places	SDC KCC Infrastructure providers Community Rail Partnerships Town & Parish Councils Local businesses	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver sustainable travel specific engagement with local businesses at one of the Council's business events and at the West Kent Expo

ENERGY AND BUILDINGS

Action	Delivery project	Responsible service area(s)	Responsible portfolio(s)	Delivery partner(s)	Carbon saving potential	Project cost	Level of funding in place	Timescale for delivery	Key indicator of success
SUS1 – Support and promote sustainable building practices and sustainable development	Incorporate measures for sustainable building practices and low carbon development into the Local Plan	Strategic Planning	Development & Conservation	SDC Infrastructure providers	Higher	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust Local Plan policy that maximises the energy efficiency of new homes and businesses, reduces water consumption and embraces new low carbon technology
SUS2 – Promote and facilitate energy efficiency retrofitting projects for our residents and businesses	Participate in Solar Together Kent	Private Sector Housing	People & Places	SDC KCC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to be one of the top Kent authorities for Solar Together registrations and installations
SUS2 – Promote and facilitate energy efficiency retrofitting projects for our residents and businesses	Participate in the government's Home Upgrade Grant or future equivalent	Private Sector Housing	People & Places	SDC Department for Energy Security & Net Zero	Medium	Government funding to cover expenses and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete home energy improvements at a minimum of 20 properties
SUS3 – Investigate and support opportunities for carbon capture and renewable energy generation	Incorporate measures for carbon capture/sequestration and renewable energy generation into the Local Plan	Strategic Planning	Development & Conservation	SDC Infrastructure providers	Higher	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust Local Plan policy supporting opportunities for carbon capture/sequestration and renewable energy generation
SUS3 – Investigate and support opportunities for carbon capture and renewable energy generation	Explore opportunities for carbon capture and renewable energy generation on Council owned land	Commercial & Property	Improvement & Innovation	SDC Infrastructure providers	Higher	Not within budget	Self financing project	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a carbon capture or renewable energy generation project

THE COUNCIL'S BUILT ASSETS AND FLEET

Action	Delivery project	Responsible service area(s)	Responsible portfolio(s)	Delivery partner(s)	Carbon saving potential	Project cost	Level of funding in place	Timescale for delivery	Key indicator of success
SDC1 – Reduce carbon emissions resulting from energy use in the Council's buildings that we deliver services from	Review the current sustainability of our assets and where appropriate, implement heat decarbonisation plans for our buildings	Commercial & Property	Improvement & Innovation	SDC Infrastructure providers	Higher	Not within budget – estimated cost £900,000	0%	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete EPC surveys and implement associated improvements
SDC1 – Reduce carbon emissions resulting from energy use in the Council's buildings that we deliver services from	Implement initiatives to reduce energy use in our buildings at source	Commercial & Property	Improvement & Innovation	SDC Infrastructure providers	Higher	Budget yet to be defined	Expected 100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move to a renewable electricity supplier and install solar PV at White Oak Leisure Centre
SDC1 – Reduce carbon emissions resulting from energy use in the Council's buildings that we deliver services from	Continue to use digital solutions to reduce carbon emissions	Customer Solutions	Improvement & Innovation	SDC IT providers	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement self-serve online services
SDC1 – Reduce carbon emissions resulting from energy use in the Council's buildings that we deliver services from	Monitor our levels of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions via an annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report	Policy & Performance	Cleaner & Greener	SDC Department for Energy Security & Net Zero	Lower	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a continual reduction in the Council's carbon emissions
SDC2 – Work with partners, tenants and leaseholders to reduce carbon emissions in other Council owned buildings resulting from energy use	Ensure that new tenants and leaseholders have climate change requirements in their agreements	Commercial & Property	Improvement & Innovation	SDC Tenants Leaseholders	Lower	Within budget and officer time	100%	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement standard 'green' clauses to be included in new and renewed leases
SDC3 – Continue our transition to a zero carbon emissions vehicle fleet wherever practicable	Continue to deliver the Fleet Replacement Programme to replace older vehicles with low carbon alternatives	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC Infrastructure providers	Higher	Within budget (£1.5 million) and officer time	100%	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A year on year increase in the number of EVs within our fleet
SDC4 – Ensure the Council's commitment to tackling the challenge of climate change is reflected in all Council plans, strategies and decisions	Incorporate our climate change commitment into all new and revised plans, strategies and procurement where appropriate	Health & Communities Environmental Health Commercial & Property Strategic Planning	People & Places Cleaner & Greener Improvement & Innovation Development & Conservation	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the Council's climate change commitment into the Community Plan, Air Quality Action Plan, Economic Development Strategy, Movement Strategy and Local Plan
SDC4 – Ensure the Council's commitment to tackling the challenge of climate change is reflected in all Council plans, strategies and decisions	Review and update processes that ensure climate change impacts are considered in decision making	Democratic Services	Improvement & Innovation	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the 'climate change implications' and 'climate change impact assessment' for committee reports
SDC4 – Ensure the Council's commitment to tackling the challenge of climate change is reflected in all Council plans, strategies and decisions	Ensure the Council's commitment to tackling the challenge of climate change is prioritised in all Council owned development and regeneration projects	Commercial & Property	Improvement & Innovation	SDC	Higher	Not within budget	Self financing project	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council owned development and regeneration projects to be compliant with Local Plan policies on climate change wherever possible and subject to viability

RESOURCES, CONSUMPTION AND WASTE

Action	Delivery project	Responsible service area(s)	Responsible portfolio(s)	Delivery partner(s)	Carbon saving potential	Project cost	Level of funding in place	Timescale for delivery	Key indicator of success
RES1 – Work with our communities and businesses to increase recycling across the District and reduce non-recyclable waste	Roll out new reusable recycling sacks to the vast majority of households in the District	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC	Higher	Within budget (£200,000) and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve an increase in recycling rates and reduction in non-recyclable waste
RES1 – Work with our communities and businesses to increase recycling across the District and reduce non-recyclable waste	Undertake a review of the current waste and recycling service	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement service improvements to boost recycling rates
RES1 – Work with our communities and businesses to increase recycling across the District and reduce non-recyclable waste	Undertake a waste and recycling residents' survey	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a good response rate to the survey representative of all areas of the District
RES1 – Work with our communities and businesses to increase recycling across the District and reduce non-recyclable waste	Develop fair waste rules to reduce excessive and consistent black residual waste	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC	Higher	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reduction in excessive and consistent black residual waste
RES2 – Work with partners to encourage positive behaviour change to enable our communities and businesses to make more climate-friendly choices	Deliver regular waste and recycling themed communications with partners and in line with the Council's Climate Change Communications Strategy	Communications Direct Services Climate Change Working Group	Improvement & Innovation Cleaner & Greener	SDC KCC Chartered Institute of Waste Management (CIWM) The Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE) WRAP DEFRA	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a minimum of 6 social media posts about the Council's work on improving recycling rates and reducing non-recyclable waste
RES3 – Set a clear direction and journey for waste collection services across the District	Develop a Waste and Recycling Strategy for the District	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC	Higher	Within budget and officer time	100%	1-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a year on year improvement in recycling rates and reduction in residual waste

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Action	Delivery project	Responsible service area(s)	Responsible portfolio(s)	Delivery partner(s)	Carbon saving potential	Project cost	Level of funding in place	Timescale for delivery	Key indicator of success
NAT1 – Offset carbon emissions through tree planting and coppicing works	Continue to deliver our sustainable woodland management programme at the Council's countryside sites	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC Forestry Commission	Lower	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve good quality increased regeneration of coppiced stools and regrowth of individual specimens
NAT1 – Offset carbon emissions through tree planting and coppicing works	Work with KCC to deliver the Kent Tree Establishment Strategy	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC KCC Forestry Commission Town & Parish Councils	Lower	Not within budget	Reliant on partner funding	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support at least one Town/Parish with a tree planting project
NAT1 – Offset carbon emissions through tree planting and coppicing works	Continue to use conditions on planning and TPO permissions to ensure any loss is adequately mitigated through new planting	Development Management	Development & Conservation	SDC KCC Planning applicants	Lower	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement soft landscaping and/or new tree planting conditions on all applicable permissions
NAT2 – Improve and expand the biodiversity of the District	Incorporate requirements for biodiversity net gain into the Local Plan	Strategic Planning	Development & Conservation	SDC KCC Landowners Developers	Lower	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust Local Plan policy that supports the statutory 10% biodiversity net gain requirement on qualifying new development
NAT2 – Improve and expand the biodiversity of the District	Improve areas for biodiversity and create new habitats through sustainable management practices	Direct Services	Cleaner & Greener	SDC Kent Downs National Landscape Unit High Weald National Landscape Unit	Lower	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve an increase/expansion in biodiversity across our countryside sites
NAT3 – Investigate and support opportunities for nature-based solutions including carbon capture and storage and flood management	Incorporate measures for natural flood management into the Local Plan	Strategic Planning	Development & Conservation	SDC Infrastructure providers	Lower	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust Local Plan policy to address flooding and sustainable drainage
NAT3 – Investigate and support opportunities for nature-based solutions including carbon capture and storage and flood management	Support and promote schemes to conserve and enhance biodiversity and wildlife at a local and landscape scale	Strategic Planning Commercial & Property	Development & Conservation People & Places	SDC KCC DEFRA Kent Wildlife Trust Northwest Kent Countryside Partnership Darent Valley Landscape Recovery Project Landowners	Lower	Not within budget	Self financing project	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to explore and implement a natural capital and biodiversity net gain project

AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT

Action	Delivery project	Responsible service area(s)	Responsible portfolio(s)	Delivery partner(s)	Carbon saving potential	Project cost	Level of funding in place	Timescale for delivery	Key indicator of success
COM1 – Maintain dedicated climate change webpages as a local source of information	Keep our climate change webpages up to date, including hosting information to raise climate awareness and help communities, businesses and visitors access resources to reduce their emissions	Communications Climate Change Working Group	Improvement & Innovation	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete quarterly updates of the climate change webpages
COM2 – Utilise the Council's social media platforms to promote climate change events and initiatives to our communities and businesses	Regularly promote District-specific events that engage, educate and encourage communities and businesses to reduce their emissions and support the natural environment	Communications Climate Change Working Group	Improvement & Innovation	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a minimum of 12 social media posts about the Council's work on tackling climate change and links to national and local days/events
COM2 – Utilise the Council's social media platforms to promote climate change events and initiatives to our communities and businesses	Share local case studies and best practice to inspire community action	Communications Climate Change Working Group	Improvement & Innovation	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include at least one climate change story in every issue of In Shape
COM3 – Implement the Council's Climate Change Communications Strategy	Deliver the objectives of the Climate Change Communications Strategy including making climate change a regular feature, alerting residents of the work the Council is doing, encouraging and supporting residents, staff and members to make more sustainable choices, and encouraging staff to share more climate change stories and successes that can be shared with our communities	Communications Climate Change Working Group	Improvement & Innovation	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve at least 1,000 impressions from the Council's social media platforms in relation to climate change content
COM3 – Implement the Council's Climate Change Communications Strategy	Each member of the Climate Change Working Group to share examples of what they are doing in their roles to tackle climate change	Communications Climate Change Working Group	Improvement & Innovation	SDC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples shared at every Climate Change Working Group meeting
COM4 – Encourage and support our communities and businesses to develop and implement their own projects to tackle the challenge of climate change	Promote our Better Together online community hub to enable communities to deliver local green projects	Health & Communities Communications	People & Places Improvement & Innovation	SDC KCC Voluntary sector	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate a green project via the Better Together online community hub
COM4 – Encourage and support our communities and businesses to develop and implement their own projects to tackle the challenge of climate change	Promote the Community Carbon Calculator	Health & Communities Communications	People & Places Improvement & Innovation	SDC KCC	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Community Carbon Calculator at family fun days

Action	Delivery project	Responsible service area(s)	Responsible portfolio(s)	Delivery partner(s)	Carbon saving potential	Project cost	Level of funding in place	Timescale for delivery	Key indicator of success
COM4 – Encourage and support our communities and businesses to develop and implement their own projects to tackle the challenge of climate change	Support Town and Parish Councils in developing climate change policies in their Neighbourhood Plans where appropriate	Strategic Planning	Development & Conservation	SDC Town & Parish Councils	Higher	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend Neighbourhood Plan meetings, provide policy advice on climate change, and engage in Neighbourhood Plan consultations
COM4 – Encourage and support our communities and businesses to develop and implement their own projects to tackle the challenge of climate change	Continue to deliver our Economic Development Strategy and in particular, engage and work with local businesses to reduce their carbon emissions resulting from commercial operations	Commercial & Property	People & Places	SDC KCC Local businesses	Medium	Within budget and officer time	100%	1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver carbon reduction specific engagement with local businesses at one of the Council's business events and at the West Kent Expo