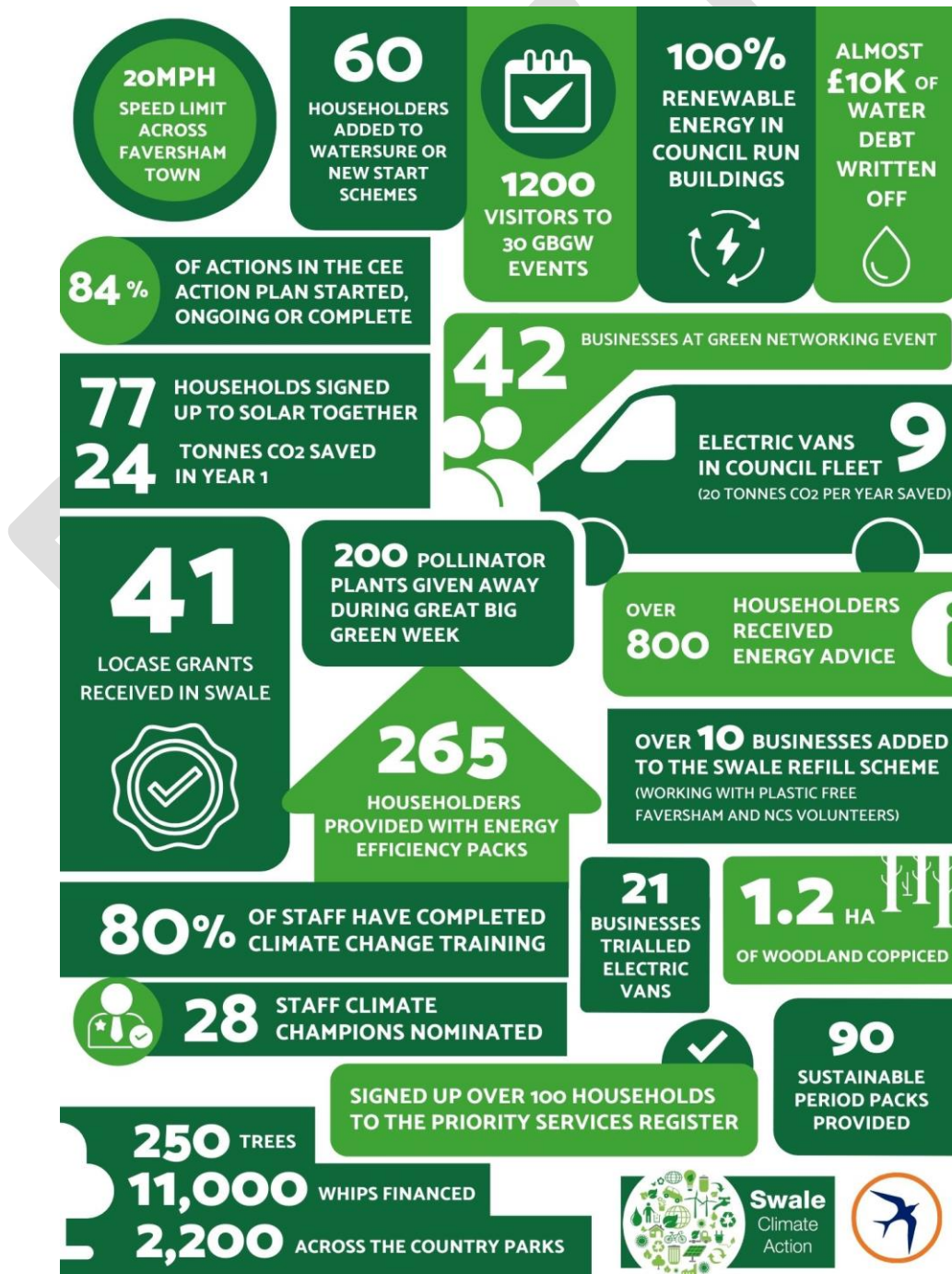




Annual Climate and Ecological Emergency Progress Report January 2023

Infographic to be updated



Swale Borough Council

Annual Climate and Ecological Emergency Progress Report January 2023

Background

In June 2019 Swale Borough Council, in common with many other local authorities, passed a motion to declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency.

Swale has some of the most ambitious targets in Kent and the UK, seeking to achieve net zero carbon for our own estate by 2025 and across the borough by 2030. Other Kent local authorities' target dates range from 2030 to 2050.

The motion included the provision of an annual report in January of each year.

This is the fourth annual report covering 2022's activities to address the emergency.

A steering group of councillors and officers meets regularly to progress actions and includes coverage of all service areas across the Council.

The refurbishment of Swale House is currently underway. A successful bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Grant Fund facilitated carbon reduction work in the Master's House in Sheerness.

Most of our fleet vehicles have been replaced with EVs, this has reduced the carbon footprint of our services. Work on the new waste and street cleansing contract is looking at alternative vehicles to the current contract and the new grounds maintenance contract which started on 15 January has seen new electric vehicles and power tools used for the first time on this service.

The Improvement and Resilience Fund is funding projects which help to tackle the emergency including lighting, tree planting, the car club, EV charging points and air quality measures.

We are working in partnership with KCC to explore and develop in more detail a package of measures to reduce traffic, improve flow and improve the vehicle fleet along the A2 to establish a clean air zone. We are working with schools close to AQMAs to promote sustainable travel and a schools education programme has been rolled out this year. Further air quality monitoring has been implemented. We have developed an air quality planning technical guide and trained planning officers. An Anti-idling campaign has been rolled out with signage, staff training and the ability to issue fixed penalty notices for non-adherence.

This year our Climate and Ecological Action Plan was scored by Climate Emergency UK and placed in the top 20 local authorities in the UK. We continue to work with the Race to Zero and to date we are one of only two Kent authorities to have joined UK100 – a coalition of local authorities with ambitious climate emergency plans.

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The Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration stated that we would “eliminate single-use plastic from council operations wherever possible” by 2021. A cross department audit of the council’s plastic use was undertaken and elimination or replacement of single use products is underway both in Swale House and across our estate/services. The drinks and vending machine contracts were not renewed. The number of items that can be recycled has increased to include yogurt pots, newspapers, tinfoil containers, cardboard, blister packs, nylon packing straps, metal book spines, suspension files empty aerosol cans, plastic bottles and coffee cups. Biodegradable tree guards are being used when trees are planted.

A fuel and water advice service was developed as a way of reaching our more vulnerable residents to help them reduce bills and carbon emissions. The adviser was appointed in late 2020 for two years and started to deliver the service in January 2021, albeit in a way different to first planned. Funding for a third year has been agreed and an assistant has been funded from an external source. Since Jan 2022 the service has advised over 940 households across the Borough on energy and water use. Late in 2021 with the backing of several members the service has also taken on tackling period poverty since January 366 packs have been issued. **Update in Dec**

Via the Off-Road Charging Scheme (ORCS) funding was secured for additional EV charging points across the borough. 10 twin chargers have been installed in three car parks and a further bid will be made in 2023.

A car club was set up in Faversham in May 2022. Three hybrid cars are available in car parks across the town. To date the club has reached a utilisation rate of up to 50%. **A fourth all electric vehicle will be added soon.** We are working with developers to include car clubs in new developments and considering the establishment of a club in Sittingbourne.

The Planning Committee has successfully requested more renewable energy and energy-efficiency measures to be included in new developments. All new developments are encouraged to achieve a 50% saving in carbon emissions over current Building Regulations. The Local Plan will bring this down to net zero emissions by 2030. A guide for developers including examples of how the 50% reduction in carbon emissions can be achieved is available on the council’s website.

To date this year we have planted 35 standard trees and 4007 whips and during the next planting season we will plant 241 standard trees and 11048 whips. **Update in December**

COVID19 has accelerated the move to virtual and hybrid meetings and new ways of working, resulting in business and commuting miles falling dramatically. However other challenges have arisen, such as the initial increase in household waste which is starting to fall again.

Kent Wildlife Trust approached Swale to be their only local authority partner in Kent in their Wilder Carbon project. We are working with them and local landowners to explore offsetting opportunities both for ourselves and other local organisations.

Establishing a Baseline

To achieve our targets, we need to monitor the existing situation in both the Council and the borough as a whole. Latest figures on CO₂ emissions are released annually by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The latest figures give us the data until the end of 2020. Waste collection figures are similarly only updated to the end of the 2020/2021 financial year. Until the most up to date statistics are provided, we will not be able to fully understand the impact of the Climate and Ecological Emergency declaration in 2019.

As set out by the Tyndall Centre, Swale should aim for an annual emissions reduction of at least 13% per year and up to 25% in order to achieve our targets.

Energy Consumption and Emissions

Due to the nature of the types of businesses, Swale has always had higher energy consumption and carbon emissions from the commercial and industrial sector in comparison to other Kent districts (as seen in figure 1). The commercial and industrial sector are responsible for most of the carbon emissions in Swale. Emissions from this sector have reduced since a peak in 2010, which has contributed substantially to a reduction in the overall carbon emissions in the borough.

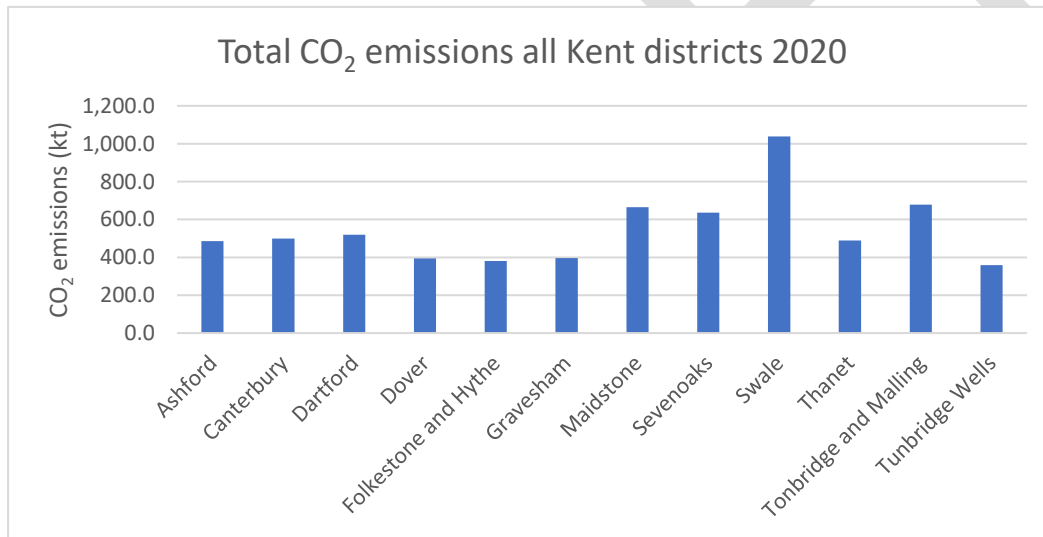


Figure 1 - Source BEIS

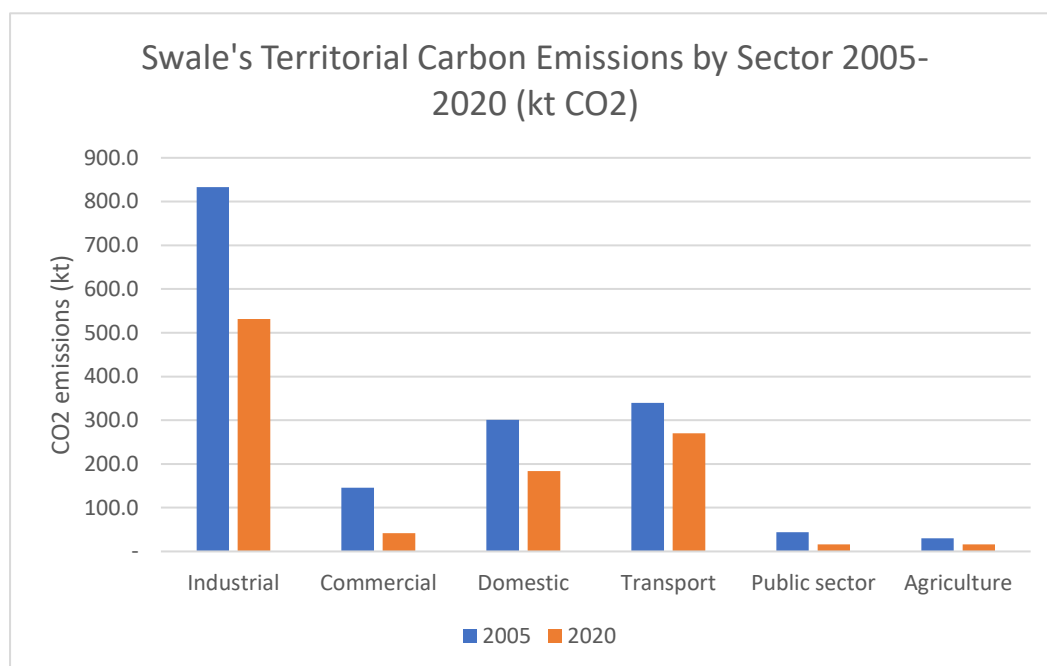


Figure 2 - Source BEIS

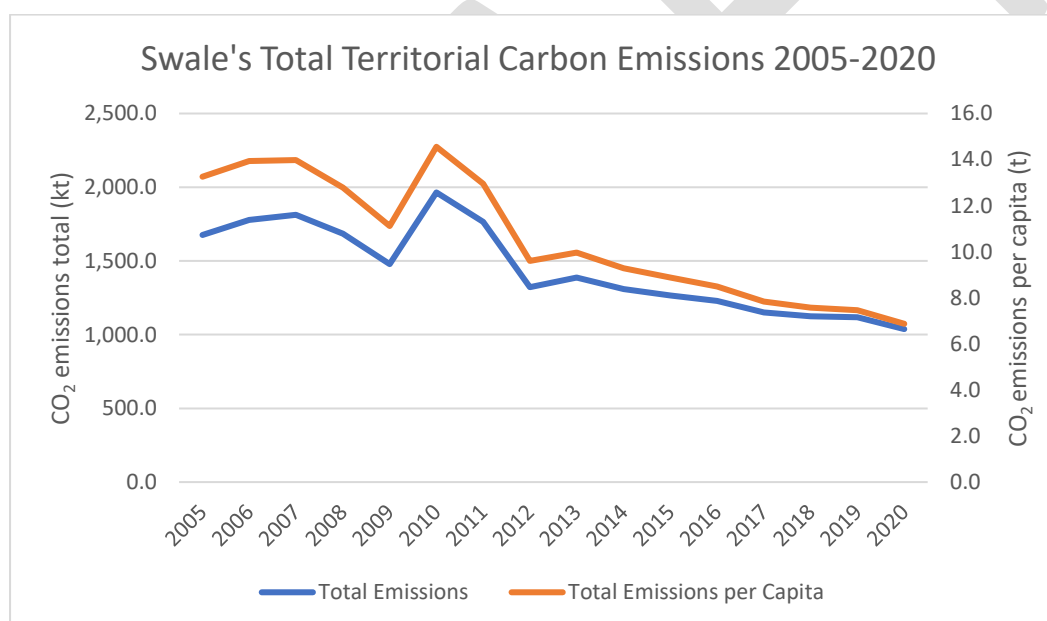


Figure 3 - Source BEIS

For the 2020 data provided by BEIS, Local Authority territorial carbon emissions have been broken down into a higher number of subsections for the first time. In Swale in 2020, 17.7% of emissions came from domestic properties, 26% from transport, and 55% are industrial and commercial emissions (see figure 2). In addition to this, 1.5% from the public sector and 1.6% from agriculture, with -22.1 kt CO2 net emissions from Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry changes, attributed to carbon sequestration from forest land and grass land in Swale. The total carbon emissions from the borough have generally decreased over time, with this trend continuing in

2020, and per capita emissions dropping from 7.5 to 6.9 tCO₂ between 2019 and 2020 (figure 3).

In figures 4, 5 and 6 below the legend of the y-axis on the left refers to emissions from Swale, the legend on the right refers to Kent.

Industrial and Commercial Sector

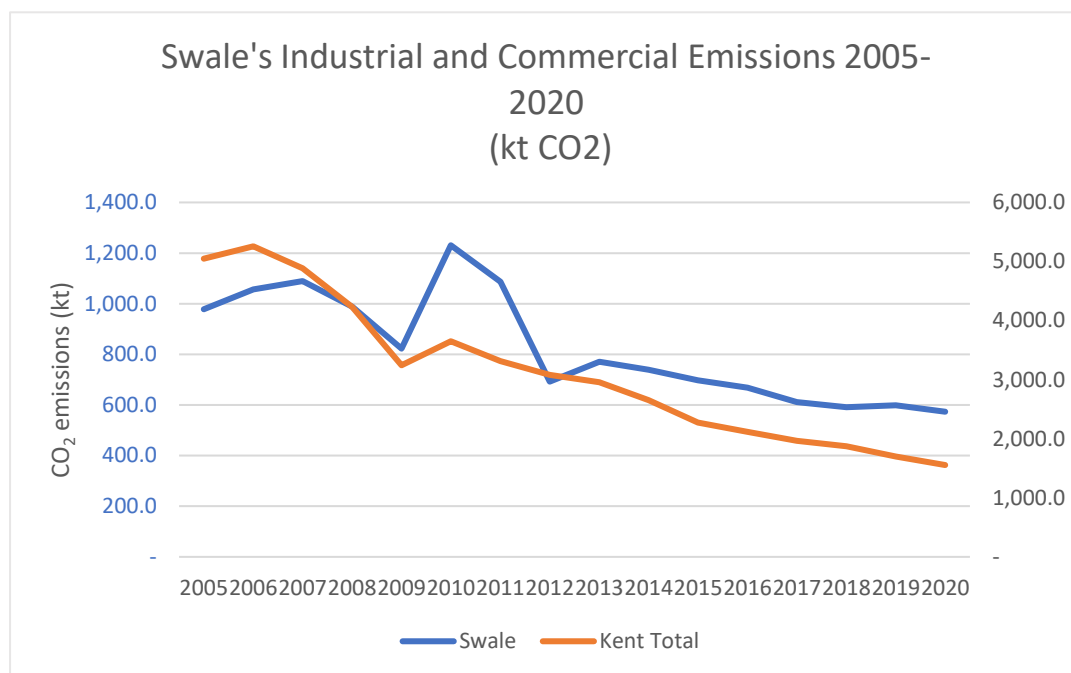


Figure 4 - Source BEIS

At both borough and county level there has been a decrease in emissions from industry. Within Swale’s industrial and commercial sector (figure 4) there has been a 41.4% decrease in CO₂ emissions between 2005-2020.

Transport

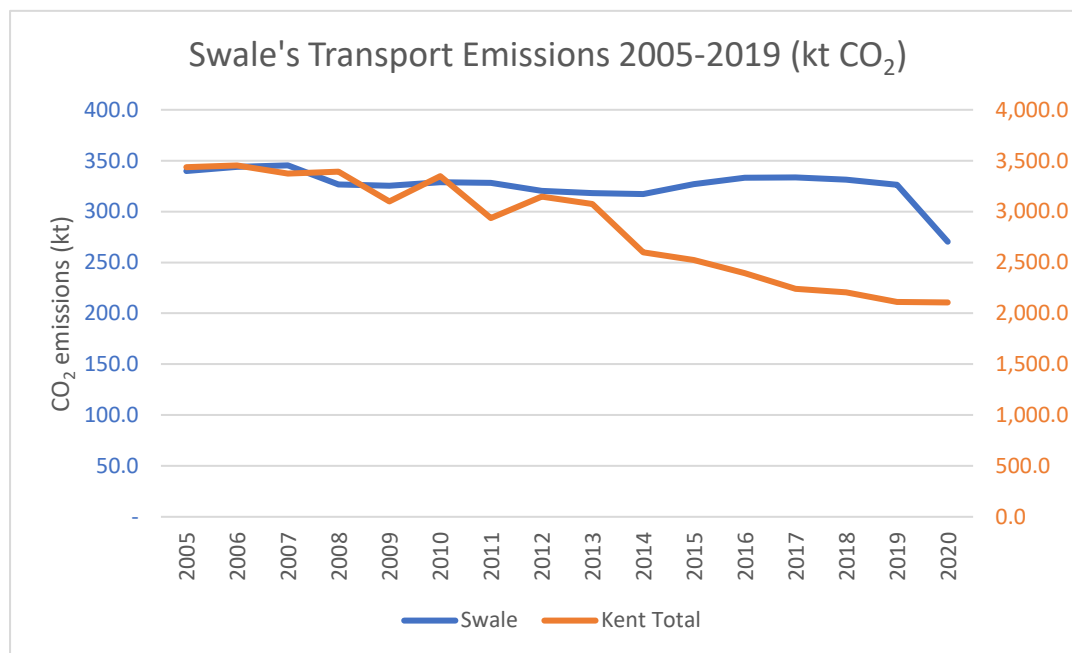


Figure 5 - Source BEIS

In Swale, transport emissions had fallen by 7% between 2005-2014, but rose again by 6% between 2014 and 2017. Unsurprisingly, transport emissions dropped to the lowest level since 2005 in 2020, due to restrictions and reduced movement as a result of Covid-19.

Domestic

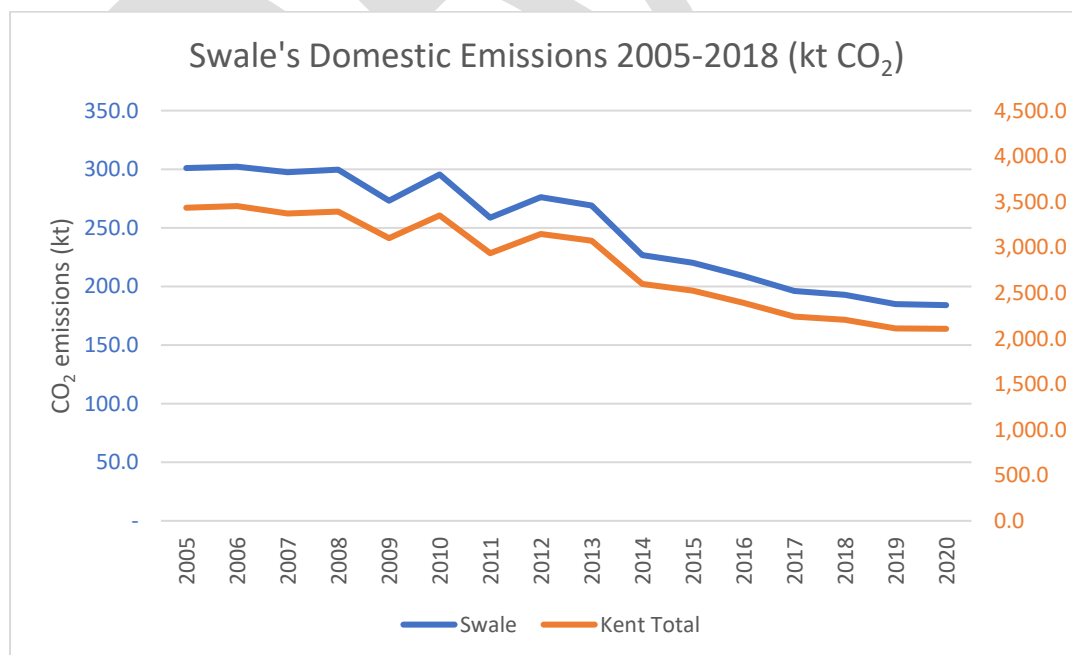


Figure 6 - Source BEIS

Swale’s domestic emissions (2019 figures) are the 4th highest in the County, with 67% resulting from domestic gas emissions, for which Swale also ranks 4th. Overall domestic emissions have decreased at a faster rate since 2013.

Overall, emissions across all sectors have been decreasing per capita – in 2005 per capita emissions were at 13.8 tonnes and have decreased to 6.9 tonnes in 2020.

Public Sector Emissions

Since 2021, BEIS has included public sector emissions in its emissions data publications. Figure 7 shows Swale to have had some of the highest public sector emissions in Kent when compared to other districts. However, this has decreased significantly in recent years.

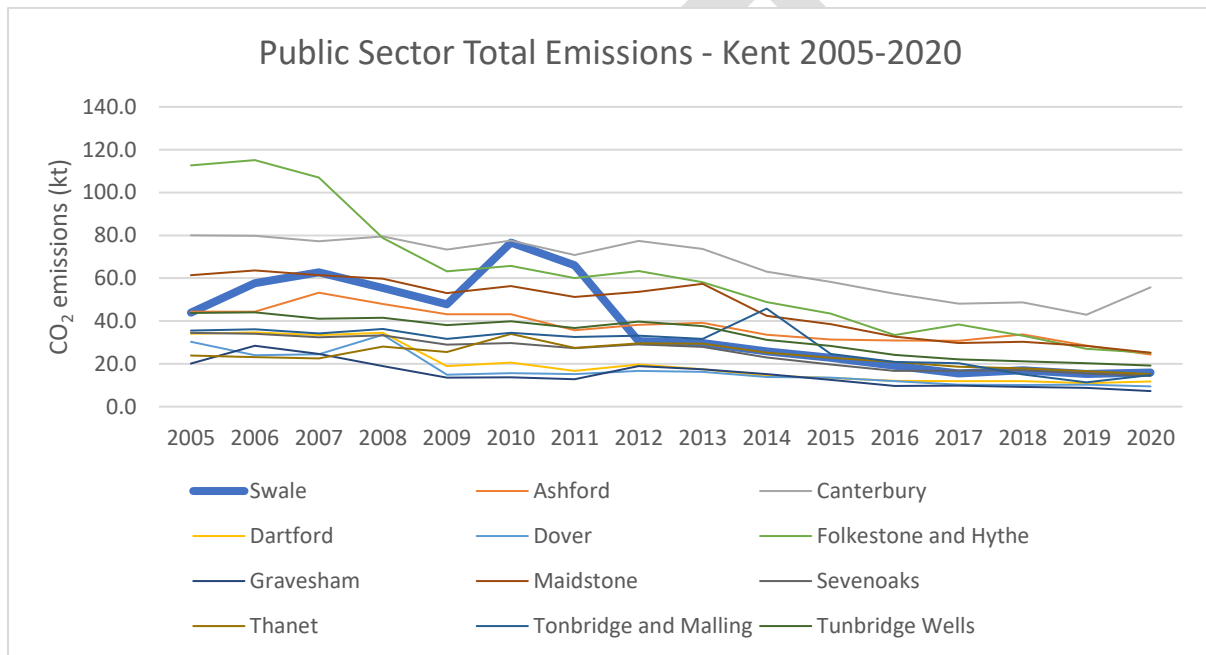


Figure 7 – Source BEIS

Other Green House Gas Emissions

In 2022, BEIS included a breakdown of other greenhouse gas emissions to the territorial emissions data for local authority areas. Below shows the methane, nitrous oxide and CO₂ as a proportion of all greenhouse gas emissions since 2018.

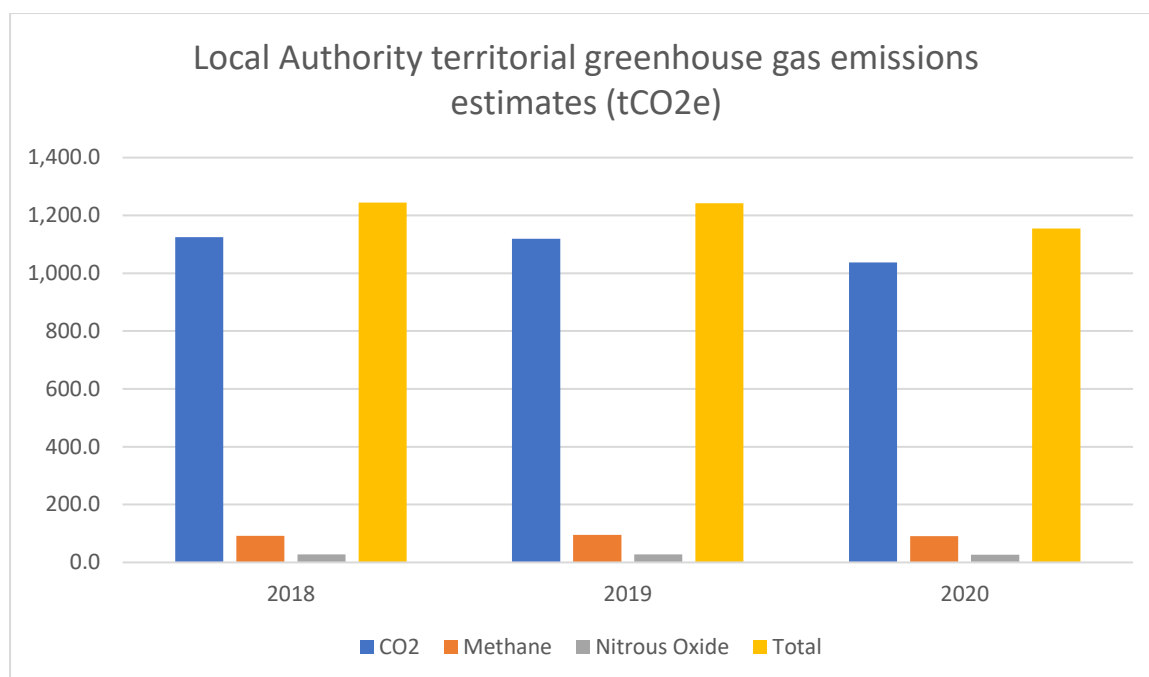


Figure 8 – Source BEIS

Renewable Energy

At the end of 2021 there were 2,206 installation sites producing renewable electricity in Swale, an increase of 8% from 2020. 99.3% of these were photovoltaic, the majority of these being domestic roof top installations. In addition there are seven commercial solar PV sites, 10 onshore wind installations, three sites generating renewable energy from sewerage gas, or land fill gas, or municipal solid waste and one site generating energy from biomass. Swale also has two domestic wind installations.

These sites, plus offshore wind, provide a total capacity of 802MW of electricity 79% of this comes from offshore wind, and the rest comes from solar photovoltaics (8%), municipal solid waste (6%) onshore wind (4%), sewerage gas (<1%), landfill gas (<1%) and plant biomass (3%).

The Smart Export Guarantee came into force in January 2020, enabling domestic and small-scale renewable energy generators to be paid for energy fed into the grid.

The Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is a government scheme that aims to encourage the uptake of renewable heat technologies amongst householders, communities, and businesses, through financial incentives for fitting technologies such as heat pumps, solar thermal water heating and biomass boilers.

Between April 2014 and July 2020, 140 domestic installations had been accredited for the RHI in Swale. The scheme closed in March 2022.

Household Waste

As the waste collection authority, we have targets to reduce the amount of residue waste collected, and increase the proportion sent to recycling and composting. Household waste collection has increased (figure 9) and recycling rates have continued to plateau (figure 8), remaining lower than our partners in the waste partnership.

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We know that waste levels have increased during 2020-2021 due to the Covid19 pandemic, including food and garden waste; paper, cardboard, and glass; and other recyclables and this has not reduced to 2019 levels in the last year.

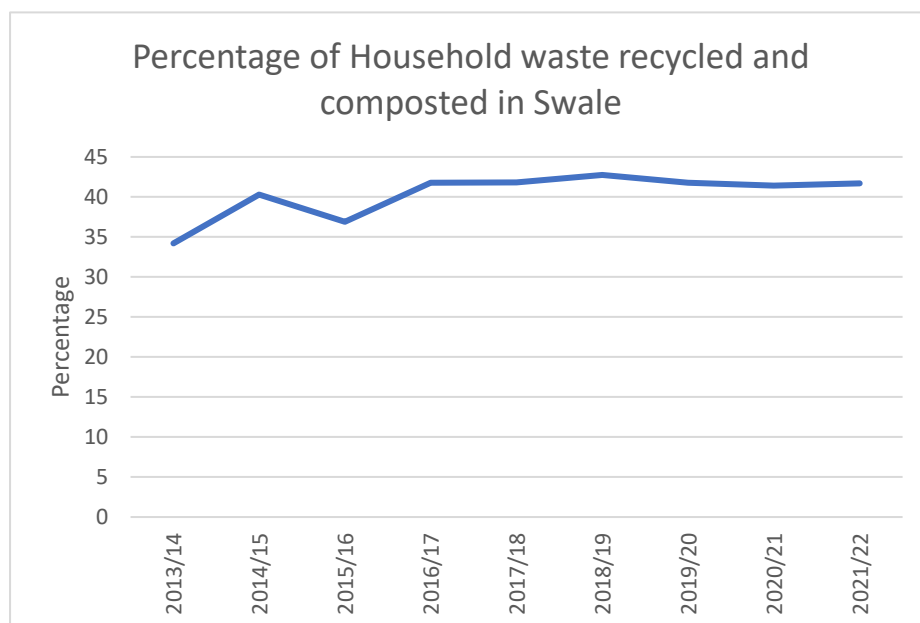


Figure 9 - Source Environmental Contracts Manager

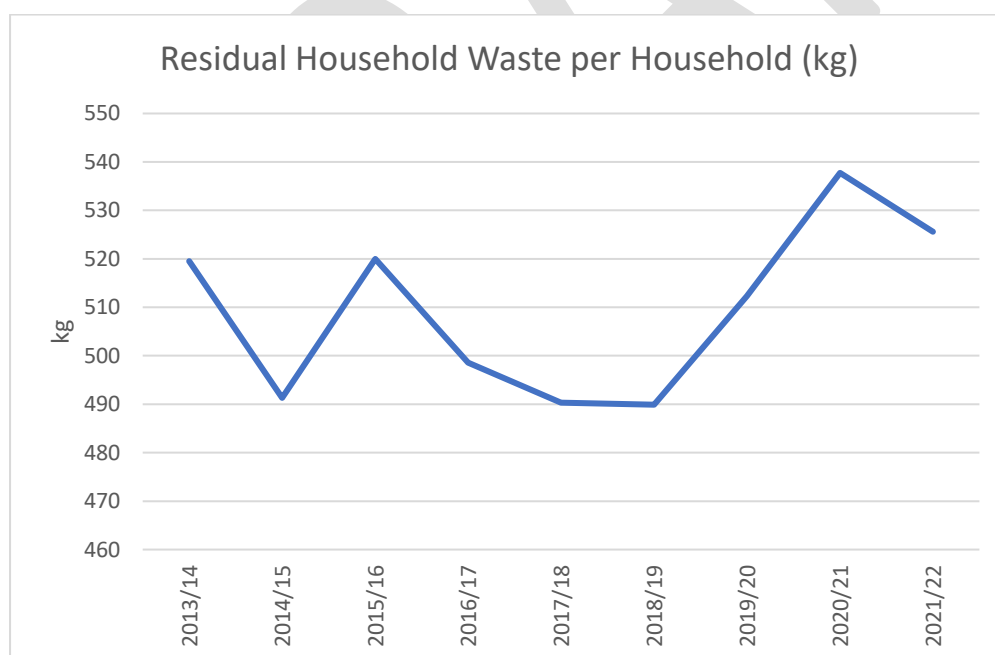


Figure 10 - Source Environmental Contracts Manager

With a new street cleansing and waste collection contract due in **October 2023**, the draft specification highlights the aspirations of the Mid-Kent Waste Partnership to make improvements in reduced carbon emissions and a collection service that maximises recycling.

Swale Borough Council's response to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

The Climate and Ecological Emergency was declared on 26 June 2019, shortly after the new coalition administration took office following the May 2019 local elections.

Our Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan was adopted by Cabinet on Earth Day - 22 April 2020. It was approved by Council in October 2020.

The full action plan can be found [here](#)¹. The Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan sets out the Council's strategy and identifies some enabling tools that are essential to progress across a wide range of areas. The plan then identifies a set of specific actions in the following areas: Council operations; Buildings and energy efficiency; Transport and air quality; Resource consumption and waste; Ecology and biodiversity; Resilience, adaptation and offsetting. This report reviews progress under each of these headings.

Enabling Tools – Cross Cutting Themes and Actions

Swale Borough Council recognises that there are cross-cutting actions needed to underpin the specific actions targeted at the particular causes of carbon emissions. The strategy set out in the Action Plan is based on an approach to Lead, Show, Support.

LEAD: We will lead by taking actions to reduce carbon emissions from the Council's own operations and to enhance biodiversity in the management of the Council's own estate.

SHOW: Use the council's improved operations and estate as beacon of good practice on the road to net zero.

SUPPORT: Assist businesses, organisations and residents to take their own actions and to build the capacity to move towards a low carbon economy in Swale.

This plan requires that actions which address the carbon footprint of the Council's own operations will be an early focus.

Table 1, below, sets out progress on the enabling actions identified in the Action Plan.

¹ <https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Climate-Change-and-Ecological-Emergency/SBC%20CEE%20Action%20Plan%20Final%20with%20illustrations.pdf>

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Department	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Progress Dec 2021	Progress Dec 2022	Status
CEE	Rolling out a climate change learning and development programme for staff to improve understanding of carbon and the wider environmental context. The skills programme will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Base level training for all employees 	Short	-	e-learning module developed and completed by 80% of staff. Carbon literacy training delivered to 25 SBC staff.	60 members of staff trained and certified. Member training being developed.	On Track
CEE	•Encouraging personal responsibility and roll out of a Green Champions Network.	Short	-	28 'CEE Champions' recruited and activities started	30 'CEE Champions' recruited and activities started	On Track
CEE	•More targeted/ intensive training for organisational decision-makers to enable them to adequately assess carbon impacts in their decisions	Short	-	Carbon literacy training delivered - future programme targeted at managers/decision makers to be discussed.	CL training for environment committee members agreed at Member Training Working Group. The Head of Environment and Leisure attended LGA CLT for senior managers with this we can apply to be a 'Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation'	On Track

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CEE	Sharing our knowledge – we will provide capacity to share our learning and approaches with others, such as town and parish councils and community groups.	Short	-	Talks given to Sittingbourne Rotary Club and Faversham Town Council 30 events co-ordinated during Great Big Green Week in September in collaboration with 15 community organisations, October with over 1200 people attending	Increased numbers of parish councils signed up to the Green Grid mailing list - sharing regular updates about projects, funding and events.	On Track
CEE	Promotion of low carbon food through council facilities and communication. Promotion of vegan and vegetarian diets using seasonal, local sources to support local food networks.	Short	-	Largely on hold due to COVID; Business Event had vegan catering Christmas tips given.	Limited work during 2022. Promoted internally to staff.	Started
CEE	Identify and align to national days of action to reinforce the message of collective action.	Short	-	Timetable drawn up and activities delivered in 2021. New timetable for 2022	Highlighted where possible across SBC external comms eg social media, Inside Swale. 25 events run through Great Big Green Week	On Track

Ten High Priority Key Actions

In addition to the enabling tools, we selected ten actions to be classed as 'high priority' for 2022. They are shown in table 2 below and discussed under the theme headings which follow.

	Action	Action Owner	Target date	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)
1	Retro-fit Swale House and the Master's House to cut carbon emissions	Property	2025	186
2	Develop, adopt and implement an EV strategy	Environment and Leisure	2022	medium

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3	Tree planting on council land (target; 148,100 trees or 60 acres of woodland) to offset 20% of council emissions.	Environment and Leisure	2025	1,481t offset of woodland
4	Improve facilities and incentives for walking and cycling.	ECS ,Planning Air Quality	2030	Large
5	Increase engagement with staff to roll out learning about the climate & ecological emergency. Review of staff business travel	HR, Environment and Leisure	Short	
6	Support businesses to reduce carbon emissions and improve ecology and biodiversity.	ECS	Medium	Medium
7	Set up an offset fund to enable off-site offsetting within the borough.	Planning/CEE	Short	Large
8	Establish and promote a car club in Faversham.	Environment and Leisure	2022	small
9	Ensure LED lighting is fitted across the council parks and open spaces.	Environment and Leisure	2023	19
10	Improve air quality, focusing on AQMAs along the A2 and the establishment of a Clean Air Zone	Air Quality	Short	Small

Table 2

Progress against all actions can be found here https://swale.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/408594/All-Action-Progress-for-Annual-Report-22-public-A.pdf

The graph below gives an indication of overall progress. With the targets for Council operations by 2025 and Borough by 2030 this shows a good level of progress. The following pages summarise the key achievements over the year in each of the areas of the action plan.

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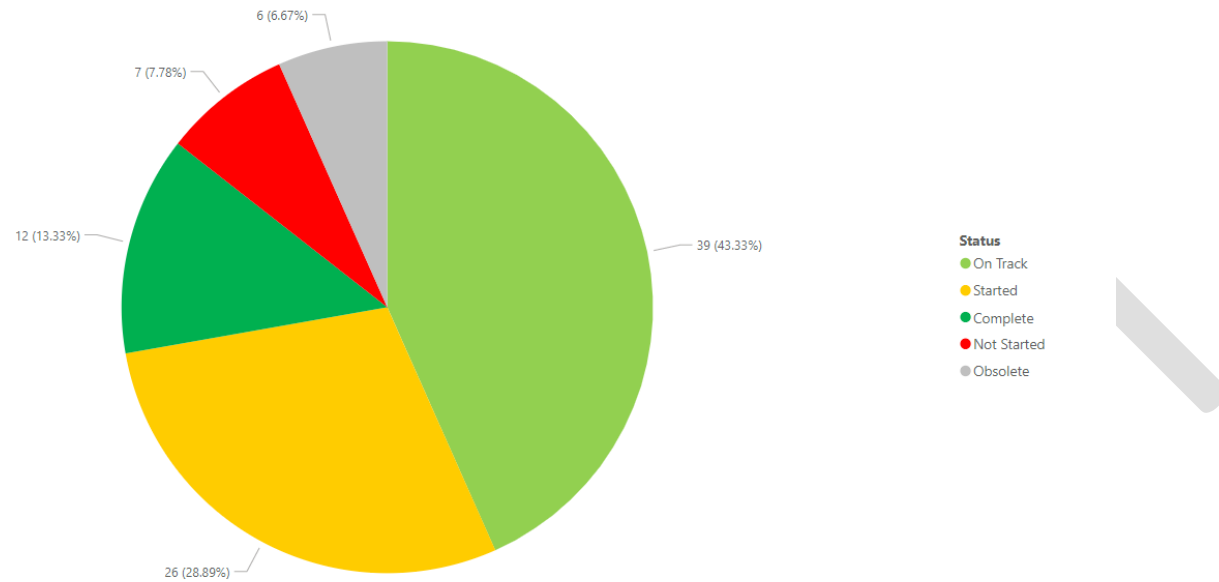


Figure 11 – Progress at December 2022

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Council Operations

Department	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Progress Dec 2021	Progress Dec 2022	Status
Property	Retro-fit Swale House to cut carbon emissions (e.g. extra insulation, triple glazing, heat pump, solar PV).	2025	186	The tenders have been evaluated. Report going to March Cabinet with recommendations – so we may have a further update at the actual meeting. Recommendations to carry out window replacement, roof works and undercroft insulation.	Swale House – phase 1 roof works complete. Windows and undercroft insulating underway. Masters House complete	On Track
Environment & Leisure	Replace SBC fleet vehicles with electric vehicles.	2025	26	Electrification of fleet complete - 9 electric vehicles are now in use, saving almost 20 tonnes of CO2 each year. The Mayor's car is now an EV, as is the Staying Put Handyman's van and an EV pool car is available to staff. The parking wardens' two vehicles are electric vehicles	As Dec 21	Complete

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Commissioning	Revise procurement strategy to embed the climate and ecological emergency into all procurement decisions.	2023	780	The new policy was adopted by Cabinet on 27th October. This new policy provides more emphasis on this topic and crucially require contractors to report back throughout contract terms on their achievement of targets. The Procurement officer has joined the procurement sub-group of the Kent Climate Change Network	As Dec 21	Complete
Property / CEE	Eliminate single-use plastic from council operations wherever possible	2021		Tea & coffee facilities amended to remove single-use sachets and included milk in glass bottles. Central recycling centre working well and more to be trialled. A team to volunteer to trial not having black bins in their office – evidence shows it improves recycling rates at central recycling points. Climate Champions working to remove plastics in their teams with good progress so far e.g. black sacks and challenging suppliers. More messaging to be shared with staff to encourage best practice.	As Dec 21	On Track
CEE / Economy & Regeneration	Carry out regular staff commuting survey and encourage commuting by	2025	20	First survey complete. COVID delayed subsequent surveys	Completed 18th July.	Complete

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	walking, cycling or public transport.					
HR	Encourage use of IT to reduce business travel to meetings.	2025	15	Use of IT for virtual meetings established and maintained through flexible working arrangements. All councillors provided with dedicated laptop	As Dec 21	Complete
HR	Review HR strategy to remove incentives to use a car for business travel.	2025	15	Delayed due to Covid priorities.	There should also be a wider action on staff travel that looks at car parking, council vehicles, electric cars and other ways of travel to be taken forward by a project team that should involve other HOS and managers currently responsible for these areas.	Not Started
HR	Introduce a cycle to work scheme that includes e-bikes.	2021	2	Cycle scheme includes ebikes	Cycle scheme includes ebikes	Complete
Property	New waste contract for Swale House to reduce waste & increase recycling.	2020	6	New waste contract now in place (Reduced the number of collections per year, recycling services are more straight forward. Option to introduce food waste collection.) Contract included company working with us to help reduce waste and promote recycling. Grace working with Deb & NWOW group with new ideas as	New waste contract now in place (Reduced the number of collections per year, recycling services are more straight forward. Option to introduce food waste collection.) Contract included company working with us to help reduce waste and	On Track

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				we begin to come back to office and redesign Swale House. Central recycling point installed and food waste bins in kitchens.	promote recycling. NWOW group working on new ideas as we begin to come back to office and redesign Swale House. Central recycling point installed and food waste bins in kitchens.	
Property	Provide facilities to encourage cycling to work (e.g. secure cycle storage, shower)	2020	1	Shower refurbishment complete. 6 extra secure spaces for bike storage	Shower refurbishment complete. 6 extra secure spaces for bike storage	Complete
IT	Develop working practices to use IT to reduce use of paper.	2025	5	Paper used considerably reduced.	Paper used considerably reduced.	Complete
Property / Environment & Leisure Services	Ensure LED lighting is fitted across the council estate, including parks and open spaces.	2023	19	Most of Swale House has LEDs. LED surveys have been carried out in all Council owned buildings where we have responsibility. Budget to be found. Swale House to be done with retrofit and any redesign. Open Spaces LED upgrades to be funded via CEE Improvement and Resilience Fund allocation.	Have met with KCC's contractor to go through number of queries regarding current lighting specification and locations. The previous estimated cost of this work was around £286k, well over our available budget. The contractors are now working through the latest information following our meeting to come up with a revised estimate, and the works have been split into "phases" to allow us to undertake the work in	Started

Climate and Ecological Emergency Annual Report 2023

					different sections, depending on funding availability.	
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The Carbon Trust was appointed to undertake carbon foot-printing and baselining of our own estate and to propose steps to achieve carbon net zero across council operations by 2025.

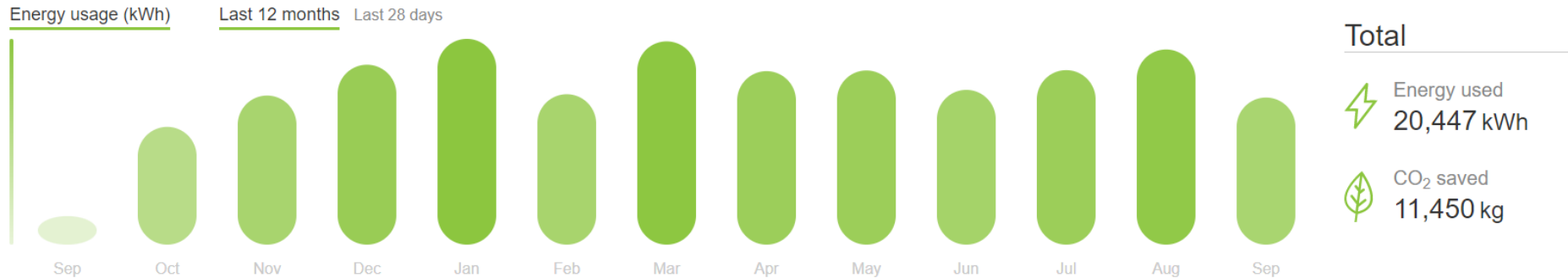
The report was completed in early 2020 - the full version of which can be found [here²](#). To reach the target of carbon neutrality by 2025, it was identified that the Council must reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions by approximately 68 tCO₂e per year, and scope 3 emissions by 994 tCO₂e per year.

Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy. Scope 3 emissions are all indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the Council, including both upstream and downstream emissions. This equates to a 14% reduction in emissions year on year to achieve the target.

The Carbon Trust made several recommendations for our buildings and contracts which we have already fulfilled, such as the electrification of our fleet - 9 electric vehicles are now in use, saving almost 20 tonnes of CO₂ each year. The Mayor's car is now an EV, as is the Staying Put Handyman's van and an EV pool car is available to staff. The parking wardens' two vehicles are electric vehicles. Energy used and CO₂ saved at the Swale House charging points is shown below

² <https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Climate-Change-and-Ecological-Emergency/Carbon-Trust-Report-on-Swales-Carbon-Footprint.pdf>

Dashboard



A working group has been set up to examine options for the new waste contract which will start in 2023. The Carbon Trust report showed that about half of the council's carbon footprint arises from the waste contract. Ways in which the impact of the waste collections on carbon emissions and air quality may be reduced is under consideration by the working group. The specification for the new waste contract has highlighted the desire for reducing carbon emissions and as the process progresses, industry will be invited to advise how this may be achievable.

The Council retendered in 2021 for its ground's maintenance service. The new contract started on 15 January 2022. The winning tender bid included a number of improvements with electric vehicles for supervisor and litter collection vehicles, electric handheld power tools, a commitment to the steady reduction and then complete elimination of the use of pesticides over the five-year contract and consideration of increased biodiversity and varied maintenance regimes including more wildlife areas. Recycling of litter collected during grounds maintenance has been included for the first time. Since January 2.664 tonnes of dry mixed recycling and 2900 litres of mixed glass, bottles and jars have been diverted from landfill and 10.9 tonnes of green waste has been composted. [Up date Dec for year-end figures](#)

The contract for the refurbishment of Swale House was awarded and work commenced in the late summer of 2022. [Anticipated savings – waiting on Property Services](#)

Climate and Ecological Emergency Annual Report 2023

The bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Grant Fund was successful and this was used in the Master's House refurbishment. Phase One was completed in 2022. **Anticipated savings – waiting on Property Services**

Swale House now has LED lighting throughout. A full survey of all of our lighting assets in Swale, both within our open spaces and within our off-street car parks has been undertaken. Plans are being drawn up to upgrade to LED any lighting units that have not already been converted. LEDs consume up to 70% less energy.

Swale House and other buildings under our control now have both 100% renewable electricity supplies and bio-methane gas supplies.

Buildings and Energy Efficiency

Department	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Progress Dec 2021	Progress Dec 2022	Status
Planning Policy	Prior to the adoption of the new Local Plan, use a planning condition based on a 50% improvement over current building regulations, ratcheting to 75% and 100% improvement by 2025 and 2028 respectively, as the basis for negotiation with developers through pre-application and planning application negotiations.	2020-2030	400 - 1,000+	This is being used currently, with varied success	This is being encouraged currently, with varied success – generally larger house builders are pushing back more than smaller developers. This, however, demonstrates that this condition is viable in Swale and the importance of adopting Local Plan policy to require it.	On Track

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CEE	Bulk buying scheme for solar PV installations paid-for by residents (in partnership with KCC).	2020-21	100	A scheme to encourage householders to fit solar PV, Solar Together, has run throughout 2021 with 77 households signing up, 146 of these have also chosen to install battery storage and 3 three households with existing solar have signed up for retrofitted battery storage. Installations so far result in an estimated 23.86 tonnes CO2 reduction in year 1. Another round will be run in 2022.	Issue with supplier from previous round. Fortnightly catch up with all LAs KCC and iChoosr to resolve this. Current round is proving popular. 103 households initially requested a survey. Comms Team have been promoting. Battery storage and EV charging being offered as an add on.	On Track
CEE	Fuel and water poverty outreach service to reduce fuel and water bills for vulnerable residents.	2020-23	to be monitored	This year 265 householders have been provided with energy efficiency packs. Over 800 householders received energy advice or fuel and water saving items.	£5125 from KCC Helping Hands for energy efficient electric blankets and thermal imaging camera. Cross-departmental steering group on energy crisis F&W adviser to	On Track

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				Almost £10,000 of water debt was written off vulnerable householders' water accounts. Sixty householders were added to WaterSure or New start schemes and over 100 households were signed up to the Priority Services Register.	providing advice to staff via bulletin etc Household Support Fund remaining inhouse but moved to ECS team. referral route for Fuel Bank Foundation vouchers Worked with over 900 households Jan - Oct Swale Sisters – 366 packs Fuel vouchers – over 900 issued Funding (not SBC) for part-time assistant – Funding from SBC confirmed for third year of project	
Planning Policy	Use the local plan review to investigate the potential to introduce minimum requirements for on-site renewables on new developments.	Short	Large	Included in Local Plan Review	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review.	On Track
Planning Policy	Review Local Plan and incorporate recommended actions on spatial land use strategy and integrated transport strategy, including focusing development in Swale's conurbations to utilise existing vacant sites and under-utilised sites within the settlement confines.	2025	Large	Included in Local Plan Review	The success of this objective is related to the timescale for adoption of the Local Plan Review, which is currently delayed from its published programme (LDS). A new programme/LDS will be confirmed in	On Track

Climate and Ecological Emergency Annual Report 2023

					late spring/summer, with an anticipated revised Regulation 19 Plan going to consultation in the autumn of 2022 and anticipated submission in Spring 2023.	
Planning Policy	Encourage high-quality, medium-high density dwellings near to transport nodes. Development could be supplemented by restricted parking, and EV pool-cars.	Short	Large	Included, where appropriate in Local Plan Review for town centres as well as specifically through Sittingbourne Town Centre SPD and by Faversham Town Council in Faversham N'hood Plan	As above. The next iteration of Local Plan will be looking at reinforcing a land use strategy that focuses development in existing conurbations near transport nodes. The Transport Strategy will be updated to accompany to next iteration of the Local Plan.	On Track
CEE	Signpost householders and businesses to grant schemes for insulation and energy improvements, such as the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), Warm Homes and advice services such as the Energy Saving Trust.	Short	Medium	Some progress made through comms and engagement plan and via FWHA service. New CEE webpages developed and information included but yet to be published.	Achieved via FWHA, as well as press release and corresponding social media posts encouraging Warm Homes Grant. Regular advice provided via Inside Swale, often referencing Energy Saving Trust.	On Track

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CEE	Encourage Town and Parish Councils to fit LED lighting and other low energy technology by providing information on cost savings and carbon reduction.	Short	Small	Have written to town/parish councils with further engagement required.		Started
Planning Policy	Consider development of a financial viability toolkit to ensure that the cost of low and zero-carbon methods is accurately assessed (e.g. building materials, design and orientation, natural ventilation, landscaping, renewable generation and off-setting). Toolkit to be used by development management for pre-application advice.	Short	Large	Not progressed to date due to lack of officer time and financial cost	A financial viability toolkit it not likely to be developed at this stage. The Local Plan will be viability tested again, including the detail included within policies DM 3 and 4. Examples of the 50% condition being used in Swale currently demonstrates that policy is viable when considered from Earl stages. If agreed, this item could be removed from the Action Plan.	Obsolete
Planning Policy	Develop, initially through a Supplementary Planning Document and subsequently the Local Plan Review Policy, the potential to move rapidly towards zero-carbon development in Swale including using tools such as the Home Quality Mark and BREEAM.	Short	Large	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review, DM 3. An SPD however, is not a priority at this stage, due to resource commitment and detail provided within DM3 itself. Other tools, eg	Obsolete

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					Net Zero Carbon Toolkit could be adopted as a resource for developers to refer to.	
Planning Development	Provide pre-application advice on energy efficiency and carbon standards and statements for future developments	Short	Large	Being implemented by DM team	Being implemented by DM team and Climate Change Officer	On Track
Planning Policy / CEE	Investigate the potential to set up an offset fund (106 Agreements) or allowable mechanism for developers to pay into if a certain energy efficiency of buildings is not able to be met in the development and use this money for carbon saving projects	Short	Large	Working with Kent Wildlife Trust under their Wilder Carbon project to explore offsetting possibilities with local landowners	Outputs from KWT/SELEP project delayed and possibility that the amount of offsetting from this scheme will be limited. Other options (e.g. retrofitting existing stock) to be investigated, but this is complex.	Started
Planning Policy	Investigate options for monitoring and testing conditions compliance on significant major planning applications (250 dwellings +), including those related to climate change (e.g. the performance gap between buildings designed energy use and actual energy use), with a view to securing S.106 obligations from developers to contribute towards the cost of such compliance monitoring	Short	Large	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review – policy DM3	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review – policy DM3	On Track

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Housing	Enforce private rented and non-domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards regulations	Medium	Medium	Financial penalties for non-compliance in development - no update since 2020 round up.	We are utilising existing legislation under the Housing act to enforce standards in the private rented sector not met at present. We do not have any capacity to deal with additional legislation due to high workloads We continue to contact landlords who we believe may have properties with Low EPC. We are signed up to Sustainable warmth project which will run to 2023	Started
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The next Local Plan is being prepared and incorporates actions for buildings and energy efficiency set out in the Action Plan. Already, new housing developments are encouraged to reduce carbon emissions by 50% more than required in the current Building Regulations. Guidance has been published to illustrate how developers can achieve the reduction. Applicants are signposted towards this information when seeking pre-application advice.

We are working with the Kent Wildlife Trust to explore offsetting options for both our own estate and new developments. Where the carbon emissions of a development cannot be reduced, the developer would make a payment into the fund to enable the carbon emissions to be offset elsewhere in the Borough. The carbon price will be set to allow onsite carbon reduction to provide the lower cost option, to encourage carbon emissions to be avoided rather than offset.

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We pledged through the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration to take steps to avoid any adverse impacts on our most vulnerable residents. After a delay due to COVID19, Children and Families were able to roll out the Fuel and Water Adviser service from January 2021. The service is available to vulnerable residents across the borough, albeit in a different way to originally planned. Funding has been secured for a third year of delivery and Children and Families also secured external funding for a second member of staff to assist. This year 944 Fuel vouchers have been issued reaching 2758 people almost half of whom are children. 590 Energy packs have been provided containing LED bulbs (saving 3540 kg of CO₂), water hippos (saving 4670kg of CO₂ and 13020 litres of water) and various other energy saving products specifically for each households needs. £7,119 of water debt has been written off by Southern Water. 196 households have been signed up to the Priority Services Register. **Update figures in Dec.**

Towards the end of 2021 it became evident that period poverty was affecting many Swale households. The Fuel and Water Adviser, supported by members, has taken this on board and has developed 'Swale Sisters' - a project that not only supports those in period poverty but educates around reusable sanitary products, thus reducing waste and pollution. So far this year, over 360 packs have been given out saving up to 5kg of CO₂ per person per annum. Schools have been worked with and lessons developed. **Update in December**

Transport and Air Quality

Department	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO ₂ e)	Progress Dec 2021	Progress Dec 2022	Status
Environment & Leisure	Install EV charging points across the borough.	2025	to be monitored	Charge points installed in 4 SBC car parks winter 2020/21. Study completed by Energy Saving Trust and application to ORCS being developed.	ORCS funding application successful for 10 twin EVCP (20 charging bays) across 3 car parks. Work commenced in November 22.	On Track

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ECS	Improve facilities and incentives for walking and cycling.	2030	Large	Progress made on the Cycling and Walking Guidance Statement 2018-2022. Progress made on The Linking Coast to Downs project to confirm new walking and cycling routes in Sheppey and Faversham. New trails and maps being produced and advertised to residents.	<p>Faversham LCWIP consultation closed</p> <p>P2T Solar Way: meeting with Developer 16/9.</p> <p>Kent PROW commissioning</p> <p>Sustrans to undertake a Feasibility Study</p> <p>FTC Bike Hangar installed, and parking rates agreed.</p> <p>WAC Routes Consultation Event postponed</p> <p>Sheppey Community Cycling Group initial mechanics training complete.</p> <p>Swale LCWIP: Community/PC meetings complete</p> <p>Online survey closed 12/9</p> <p>£1,300 of S106 funds obtained for cycle parking for Halfway & Minster</p> <p>FTC successfully bid for Cycling UK funds for community rides</p> <p>£2,100 bid to Cycling UK being assessed</p> <p>Active Travel Fund 4, bid submitted.</p> <p>Bid to ATE Capability & Ambition Fund submitted</p> <p>Discussions started with Southeastern & Network Rail</p>	Started
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					on accessible northern access and improvement to cycle parking at Sittingbourne and new, larger lifts at Faversham Sheppey Light Railway Greenway Project Launched	
Planning Policy	Review Local Plan and incorporate recommended actions on spatial land use strategy and integrated transport strategy, including favouring public transport and active transport. Use Local Plan Review to reduce the need to travel (e.g. for work).	2025	Large	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	On Track
ECS	Promote work-place car chargers (Government funding available).	Medium	Medium	To be included in webpages content. Further work between ECS and CEE teams discussed. Promoted via clean growth grant scheme?	To be included in business support on new CEE webpages and supported by actions in new EV strategy. Climate advice for businesses, such as workplace charge points, provided for businesses e.g. The Council's business support advisor has also commenced a new programme of 2 hour seminars to help businesses manage change. The seminars encourage businesses to plan for issues including the climate and ecological emergency.	Started

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<p>Planning Policy</p>	<p>Through the Parking Standards SPD, require that 10% of parking spaces in new developments are provided with Electric Vehicle charge points (best technology available at the time of planning approval) which may be phased with 5% initial provision and the remainder at an agreed trigger level</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Incorporated in the adopted Parking Standards SPD</p>	<p>Parking Standards SPD Adopted 2020 - action complete.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Planning Policy</p>	<p>Use the Local Plan Review to require that where a development is for more than 50 residential units measures such as the following be provided-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel plan including mechanisms for discouraging high emission vehicle use and encouraging the uptake of low emission fuels and technologies • A welcome pack available to all new residents online and as a booklet, containing information and incentives to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes from new occupiers. • EV car club provision within development or support given to local car club/EV car clubs. • Designation of parking spaces for low emission vehicles • Improved cycle paths to link cycle 	<p>Short</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Being progressed through the Local Plan Review</p>	<p>Being progressed through the Local Plan Review</p> <p>Car club established in Faversham enabling developers to include additional vehicles in their developments – initial conversations underway</p>	<p>On Track</p>

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	<p>network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate provision of secure cycle storage. • Using green infrastructure to absorb pollutants. 					
Planning / Air Quality	Incorporate a policy on air quality in the local plan review	Short	Small	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	On Track
Planning / Air Quality	Work with KCC to develop the Swale Local Transport Strategy (to run in parallel to the Local Plan Review) and the promotion and facilitation of a major shift in priorities to public transport and active travel.	Short	Medium	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	A draft Local Transport Strategy went to consultation in Spring 2021 with the Regulation 19 Local Plan Review. This will be updated to accompany the next Regulation 19 Local Plan Review Consultation (currently due Autumn 2022) and together with the Local Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan will set out schemes to encourage walking and cycling and sustainable travel.	On Track
Air Quality	Establish an anti-idling campaign, initially around school sites from which it can be expanded.	Short	Small	Signs up, officers undergoing training. Campaign started and engagement with schools underway.	ERT and Environmental Protection have issued 3 press releases and has fed into Facebook and Twitter (4 Nov 21, 27 Jan 22, 30 Mar 22). Media sources picked up several stories, including Kent online (7-14 April 2022). Other engagement is through the new Green Schools Forum (joint working with Climate	On Track

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					Actions). Green School Forum was successful, 14 schools attended, as well as various stakeholders	
Environment & Leisure	Develop EV charging strategy including publicly accessible fast and rapid chargers, in council and private car parks (e.g. hotels, shopping centres), and working with KCC for on-street charging.	Short	Medium	EV charging strategy drafted, going to consultation Earl 2022.	EV Strategy adopted at Environment Committee on 30th June. Agreed to award ORCS project works to Pod Point Ltd. Procurement underway for delivery by end 2022.	Complete
ECS	Promote business fleet decarbonisation, including the potential cost and reputational benefits.	Medium	Small	To be included in webpages content. Further work between ECS and CEE teams discussed. Promoted via clean growth grant scheme?	Investigated continuation of Kent REVS scheme within Swale borough. Working on survey for local businesses ahead of Swale REVS scheme in progress with KCC. 'Go Electric' webinar provided during Great Big Green Week	On Track
Air Quality	Engage with public transport providers to improve the quality, quantity and affordability of public transport, so that more people commute by public transport, and reduce carbon emissions from buses.	Medium	Medium	Engagement with KCC via consultation process and additional meetings. Awaiting outcomes.	Uncertain to what funding will be available for Swale through the Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan. KCC a currently undergoing a review of the funding available.	Started
Planning Policy / Air Quality	Work with KCC to implement 20mph limit across built up areas of borough as a cost effective and swift way to improve air quality, reduce health inequalities, lower carbon footprint and encourage	Medium	Small	20mph limit introduced in Faversham. Plans for Sittingbourne and Sheerness proposed via Active Travel Fund application. To be	20mph is now active in Newington and Faversham. AQ data will be monitored at Newington air quality station over 2023 to assess if the	On Track

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	active travel (following the implementation of a comprehensive 20mph zone in Faversham).			progressed through Active Travel post and LCWIP plans for western area.	change in speed limit impacts (+/-) air quality	
Air Quality	Undertake a feasibility study on implementing a Clean Air Zone along the length of the A2 from Brenley Corner to the western boundary with Medway.	Short	Small	Feasibility study and options appraisal completed. Working with KCC to explore delivery.	SBC have had two high-level officer meetings to discuss support of KCC to advance the non-charging CAZ priority measures. The second meeting (28/04/22) identified significant reservations from KCC highways and at this point in time there is little support that can be offered for implementing the non-charging CAZ. However, KCC are keen to support active travel measures and review highway related schemes through other potential traffic orders. Relevant KCC officers will be attending the steering groups to review the AQAP update measures.	Complete
Air Quality / ECS	ECO Stars fleet recognition scheme - business case is for engaging and inviting new operators with key information on benefits to business, fuel savings and environment. At present Swale has 22 operators signed up.	Short	Small	ECO Stars no longer running - engagement with businesses through summer 21 survey	Not active – to be removed or replaced in action plan.	Obsolete

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<p>Air Quality</p>	<p>Apply to Defra's Air Quality Grant Scheme for an electric bus (joint bid with Arriva our main local bus company).</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>Small</p>	<p>Unsuccessful, but another bid submitted for HGV monitoring in St Pauls. Outcome expected Earl 2021</p>	<p>We have launched 'Pollution Patrol' which is a free interactive website for primary schools, children and their families developed to help raise awareness of air pollution, the damage it can cause and ways that individuals can help to reduce their impact by changing behaviours. All primary schools in Swale will have access to this important resource from Monday the 25th of April. The website includes games, an immersive 360O story mode, curriculum-linked teaching resources and a school assembly plan amongst other elements. Canterbury City Council and the MidKent Environmental Health Partnership have created the interactive website through Defra funding.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Air Quality / ECS</p>	<p>Encourage local school and business travel plans to reduce car journeys.</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>Small</p>	<p>Consultation with businesses to understand travel plans and inform future work. Engagement with schools limited due to Covid-19, however working with CEE team on</p>	<p>The Business Travel Plan Survey has been completed and circulated to relevant KCC and SBC departments. A review of how this has been useful for departments to provide additional support in</p>	<p>On Track</p>

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				collaborative AQ and climate change approach.	the form of incentives and improve sustainable travel will need to be completed. Engagement with schools via the Pollution Patrol project.	
Environment & Leisure	Establish a tree planting strategy for schools (links with biodiversity)	Short	Small	Individual work with schools undertaken to encourage applications to Woodland trust tree planting funds. Engagement with KCC tree officer to ensure joined up working. Tree planting strategy for schools yet to be completed.	Swale Green Schools' Forum established to meet regularly with primary and secondary schools to discuss issues and projects such as tree planting and other ecological initiatives.	On Track

The current Swale Borough Council Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) concludes at the end of 2022, and we are required to propose a new plan for the next five years (2023 to 2028). The AQAP outlines the strategic and local actions/measures we will take to improve air quality in Swale Borough Council between 2023 and 2028. This action plan takes a collaborative approach with the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan and evidence-based Transport Strategy. Officers have also worked closely with officers from Kent County Council's Highways, Public Health and Active Travel departments to ensure that the measures detailed within this updated action plan continue to provide a holistic approach to tackling the source of poor air quality in the borough. The AQAP report was presented to Committee on 3rd November prior to public consultation.

A Kent wide bid to Defra's Air Quality Grant Scheme for an education package is now live and is being promoted to all schools across the borough. Data on the success of the package can be reported in the next annual report. Green School Forum was set up by the council to engage with schools on range of schemes related to air quality and climate action.

The anti-idling campaign, around schools continue. Over the year the ERT team have experienced resource pressures and have been unable to visit hotspot sites. The campaign is being reviewed and Environmental Health are exploring options to use our external litter picking contractors for engine idling patrols with focus on the educative campaign instead of enforcement. Various new hotspots have been identified by members of the public. EH are undertaking an audit of new hotspot sites and plan to order signage for locations most suitable. Environmental Health, Development Management and Planning Policy have had a meeting

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with Medway to discuss appropriate mechanisms to deal with this issue as part of a long-term solution, for example, joint mitigation and agreement in policy. Environmental Health have commissioned an independent air quality assessment to provide the council with an evidence base to back up future decisions. Results from this can be shared in next annual report.

Apart from exceedances at St Paul's Street and Keycol Hill the general trend over the last four years is one of improving air quality in the AQMAs. This does need to be a cautious interpretation, giving the general pandemic impact of traffic movement in this period. St Paul's Street has not been compliant of the annual allowance for PM₁₀ daily limit for three years.

A source apportionment study was completed which identified an interesting anomaly in the air quality readings. The normal correlation between NO₂ and PM did not occur. The normal fluctuations in NO₂ peaks should be followed by PM₁₀, instead PM₁₀ showed high reading when NO₂ was low. Consultants undertaking additional real time monitoring to better understand the spatial extent of particulate emissions.

We established our first car club in Faversham in May contracting Hiya Car to run it for us. Three self-charging hybrids are available and are located in three car parks in the town centre. **A fourth car is to be added.** Use of the cars has been greater than anticipated with utility rates up to 50%. It is generally considered that one car club vehicle takes up to 18 cars off the road. In addition car club users are more likely to consider walking and cycling as alternative methods of travel.

Users have been very satisfied with the service *Having opted out of a company car scheme now I work from home, this is a great solution to hiring cars locally when you need one. We hired to go to Latitude and got free fuel included for the weekend.* - Victoria G. *Caught out with vehicle servicing - and needed transport quick. Convenient central location and really easy to use. The car was perfect, online instructions were clear for a newbie - I would definitely use Hiyacar again!* - Robert N *I have several times this summer used Hiyacar for days out at the seaside or to visit country house gardens. I once used it to drive to a vaccination centre that was inaccessible by train. Booking the cars (even at relatively short notice) is always straightforward, and the checking in and out process is easy. The Swale Car Club cars are modern, clean, and in excellent condition to drive. Overall the Hiyacar experience has been a lot of fun. I'm really grateful to have such a useful service so close by to my house. I'm really looking forward to my next booking on Monday - driving a modern hybrid car is a joy compared with driving my previous car.* - Thomas P

One user has given up his mobility scheme vehicle and uses a car club vehicle frequently. To date he has hired a car 34 times clocking up 1170 miles at a cost of £630.58. These journeys have saved approximately 85 grams of CO₂ per mile over using a comparable petrol car. A saving of 30%.

The Planning Policy team has incorporated an air quality policy into the emerging Local Plan.

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Faversham now has a town-wide 20 mph speed limit, which will help to improve air quality, reduce carbon emissions, improve road safety and encourage more journeys to be made by walking and cycling. Surrounding villages are considering similar schemes.

Staff cycle storage and showering facilities have been improved and the limit for the cycle to work scheme has been raised to £2000 to permit the purchase of e-bikes. In 2021 five employees took advantage of the scheme and one more joined in 2022.

Clean Growth Grants worth £392,118.02 were awarded to 50 businesses across Swale to assist with the purchase and installation of energy and emission saving technology. The average grant was £7,842.36. Installations included LED lighting upgrades and replacements, Solar PV, EV charging points, a bio-thermal hot water system, an electric forklift to replace an LPG forklift, an electric utility vehicle, roof insulation, double glazed doors and upgraded refrigeration. **Update from Matt Morris to follow.**

Resource Consumption and Waste

Department	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Progress Dec 2021	Progress Dec 2022	Status
Planning Policy	Provide guidance on waste minimisation and resource consumption via a Sustainable Design & Construction SPD.	Short	Medium	Not yet started Local Plan Review taking precedence. However, Draft Policy DM 3 does address waste.	As Dec 21	Not Started
Environment & Leisure	Decrease the amount of household waste collected by promoting each separate method of recycling	Short	Medium	Promoted via social media and Inside Swale.	ongoing	Started
Environment & Leisure	Increase amount of garden and food waste collected for compost.	Short	Medium	Increased sign ups to garden waste service this year	update	Started
Environment & Leisure	Encourage residents to recycle small electricals, textiles and batteries.	Short	Medium	Increase seen - to be continued when staff time and resource permits. To be included in campaigns and communications.	ongoing	Started

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Environment & Leisure	Signpost residents to recycling facilities for products that cannot be recycled in the kerbside collections.	Short	Small	To be included in webpages content. Pumpkin recycling programme example of SBC promotion of additional recycling.	ongoing	Started
Environment & Leisure	Reduce contamination of recycling that leads to rejected loads.	Short	Medium	Promoted via social media and Inside Swale.	ongoing	Started
Environment & Leisure	Encourage litter picks and measures to reduce the amount of plastic litter in the sea	Short	-	Promoted via social media and Inside Swale. Encouraged via Great Big Green Week events.	ongoing	On Track
Environment & Leisure	Work with KCC to stop export abroad of recyclables	Medium	-	Ongoing	ongoing	Started
Environment & Leisure	influence KCC to maintain or improve the low levels of waste that go to landfill.	Medium	Small	Ongoing	Ongoing	Started
Environment & Leisure	Promote reduced use of single-use plastic (e.g. in partnership with Plastic-Free Faversham and Plastic-Free Sheerness).	Short	Small	Ongoing - SBC provided thorough responses to the DEFRA consultations and work is underway with Democratic Services to agree briefing sessions for Members on Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Recycling Schemes and consistent collections. DEFRA are yet to advise when they may have feedback from the responses provided, but it is anticipated that encouraging	Update	On Track

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				packaging companies to design out waste and to legislate for them to pay for local authorities to collect their waste, this will have a positive impact on household waste figures in the coming years. Continued collaboration with Plastic Free Faversham, e.g. through Great Big Green Week		
Environment & Leisure	Work with Kent Resource Partnership on county-wide education/communication schemes	short	medium	Promoted via social media and Inside Swale.	Ongoing	Started
Environment & Leisure / ECS	Promote improved recycling of commercial waste with businesses across the Borough	Long	Large	To be included in webpages content.	Applying to WRAP business waste pilot project. Providing information about Produced in Kent's 'Food Loop' programme. Sharing Blueprint to a Circular Economy information.	Started

Wherever possible, use of single-use plastics has been eliminated in Swale House and across our estate. Cleaning product packing has been changed. Drinks machines using plastic sachets have been removed. Vending machine – both food and drink – contracts were not renewed. Biodegradable tree guards are being used for tree and hedge planting in the council's country parks.

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Following a cross departmental audit of plastic use 143 plastic items were found to be in use 88 of which could be classed as 'single-use'. The most prevalent were bottles, bags and pens. Teams have introduced recyclable and non-single-use items, running down existing stocks first.

Work is ongoing to decrease the amount of household waste collected by promoting each separate method of recycling and to increase the amount of garden and food waste collected for compost. We are also working to reduce contamination of recycling that leads to rejected loads, for example through working with the Kent Resource Partnership on a county-wide education/communication programme. Bin stickers with recycling messages have been rolled out across the Borough.

Via social media and press releases, we are signposting residents to recycling facilities for products that cannot be recycled in the kerbside collections.

Community litter picks have been supported. Measures have been taken to reduce the amount of plastic litter in the sea. We are working with KCC to reduce the export abroad of recyclables and maintain the low levels of Swale waste that goes to landfill.

We are promoting the reduced use of single-use plastic in partnership with Plastic-Free Faversham. **Events were held across the borough during Great Big Green Week with 30 events and over XX attendees,**

We are promoting improved recycling of commercial waste with businesses across the Borough via our business ebulletin. Collection of dry recycling and food waste has been introduced for Swale House where previously it was all dealt with as one waste stream. The number of items that can be recycled has increased to include yogurt pots, newspapers, tinfoil containers, cardboard, blister packs, nylon packing straps, metal book spines, suspension files empty aerosol cans, plastic bottles and coffee cups.

We supported the Faversham Community Wardrobe's Clothes Swap during Great Big Green Week and funded Circular Faversham to hold a repair/reuse fashion show in November.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Department	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Progress Dec 2021	Progress Dec 2022	Status

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Environment & Leisure	Establish a baseline of trees and woodland on council land and develop a funded action plan to increase tree cover in Swale and promote the benefits of sequestration.	Short	Medium	An open space survey has also been undertaken and potential tree planting have been identified. Tree cover/BNG being assessed via KWT/SELEP project.	Currently working on plans for standard tree planting and whipped tree planting at various sites identified across Swale using the LATF funding. Funding has also been provided via the Improvement & Resilience fund. We are discussing options on how best to use the funding.	On Track
Planning Development	Ensure the installation and maintenance of landscaping in new developments to contribute to biodiversity net gain via suitable conditions or Section 106 agreements.	Short	Medium	To be investigated.	Biodiversity Net Gain is required through the NPPF. Once the Environment Bill is enacted the requirement will be 10%. The emerging Swale Local Plan Policy is for 20% BNG.	On Track
Environment & Leisure	Minimise use of fertilizers, pesticides and weed killers.	Short	Small	Included in new grounds maintenance contract.	Use of pesticides is only undertaken as spot treatment on hard surfaces with contractors having converted to a chemical with a lower rate of active ingredient to further reduce pesticide use.	On Track
Environment & Leisure	Promote use of locally produced compost derived from garden and food waste collections	Short	Small	Locally produced compost promoted via public compost giveaway. To be repeated in 2022.	SBC resources would not allow this campaign to be repeated in spring 2022 and the compost supplier could not provide the compost. Now a campaigns officer is in post, we will try and repeat this	On Track

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					successful campaign in spring 2023. Material is derived from garden waste only now as food waste goes to an AD plant.	
Environment & Leisure	Encourage coppicing of council woodland to promote biodiversity and use of local woodland products in Swale's country parks.	Short	Small	This year 1.2 ha of coppicing occurred in Perry Wood. All the timber has been used for fencing locally. Coppicing enhances biodiversity, allowing wildflowers and insects to thrive as light reaches the woodland floor	Discussion with local coppice contractors to identify appropriate timber from the felling plan for this season's contracts are ongoing. 1.37 ha coppiced	Started
Environment & Leisure	Engage business and community groups to support tree planting and conservation work in Swale's efforts to achieve action 1	Short	Large	Community groups engaged via GBGW. Increased work with businesses planned for 2022.	Continuing work supporting community groups. Also encouraging tree planting via Swale Green Schools Forum.	Started
Environment & Leisure	Promote forest and beach schools	Short	Small	Completed via MSEP project? To continue to promote. Engagement with schools increased and Swale Green School Forum planned for 2022.	Positive outcomes from MSEP project. Regular interaction with 20+ primary and secondary schools via the Swale Green Schools Forum.	On Track

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Environment & Leisure	Support Swale in Bloom working with schools, community groups, voluntary groups and Town and Parish Councils to enhance local habitats and wildlife corridors improving biodiversity conditions across Swale	Short	Small	Close work between project officer and greenspaces engagement officer to work with groups, e.g. through GBGW.	Continuing work supporting community groups. Also encouraging tree planting via Swale Green Schools Forum. Grants and information provided via the monthly Green Grid newsletter. Excellent In Bloom judging results. Strong focus on biodiversity, bee roads and reuse/recycling. 'Get Swale Growing' plant giveaway during GBGW.	On Track
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To date this year we have planted 35 standard trees and 4007 whips and during the next planting season we will plant 241 standard trees and 11048 whips. **Update in Dec.** There were six opportunities for volunteers to plant trees with Trees for Farmers in November. **XX trees were planted in XX locations.** Swale Borough Council supported volunteers to plant 1050 whips during Tree Week in November.

We are promoting projects that encourage pollinators including KCC's Plan Bee and Get Swale Growing. Over 270 bee and pollinator friendly plants were given away during Great Big Green Week.

We are reducing our use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer and encouraging the use of compost from food waste recycling.

The renewed grounds maintenance contract also included increased provisions to reduce fertilisers, pesticides and weed killers, as well as a commitment to replace vehicles and tools with electric models from year 1.

The Environment Grant scheme for communities reopened for applications in November 2021 and we made grants totalling £10,000 for anti-littering activities and education. The scheme depends on the income from littering fines.

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Developers are being encouraged to leave gaps in garden walls and fences for hedgehogs. Warning stickers from the Hedgehog Preservation Society have been added to strimmers and other heavy machinery used by SBC contractors, Blenwood. Operatives have also been made more aware of the need to protect wildlife through training talks.

This year 1.37 ha of coppicing occurred in Perry Wood. This brings work in line with the management plan. All the timber has been used for fencing locally. Coppicing enhances biodiversity, allowing wildflowers and insects to thrive as light reaches the woodland floor.

Swale did extremely well in this year's South and South East in Bloom awards. Local gardens and sites won nine gold awards, seven Silver Gilt awards and one Silver award. Some of these were first time entries. In the Neighbourhoods category local sites won one Advancing, four Thriving and two Outstanding. Our Greenspaces Activities Co-ordinator won an Outstanding Achievement Award and our Greenspaces Apprentice was recognised with a Young Gardener Award. A former councillor's work was also recognised with an Outstanding Achievement Award.

In the Spring we relaunched our Green Grid network. The combination of a networking meeting and visit to a local green business has proved popular. We also publish a monthly newsletter with a mailing list of over 170 local businesses, parish councils, community groups and individuals.

The drafted Local Plan includes policies to improve development outcomes with support for access and recreation, green spaces, biodiversity and climate change adaptation and mitigation. There are policies to ensure the installation and maintenance of landscaping in new developments to contribute to biodiversity net gain via suitable conditions or Section 106 agreements. We have gone beyond the Government requirement of a 10% biodiversity net gain and are seeking a net gain of 20%.

We were approached in 2021 by the Kent Wildlife Trust to be their only Kent local authority partner in their Wilder Carbon Project which is investigating both offsetting and biodiversity net gain. We are working with them and a local landowner to explore offsetting opportunities for our own estate initially and then to broaden the offer to developers.

A local farmer is working with Marks and Spencer on a trial of wild flower strips in orchards to encourage pollinators. This is one of only two trials nationally.

Energy Generation and Storage

Department	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Progress Dec 2021	Progress Dec 2022	Status
Property	Perform a viability survey at all existing council owned sites to potentially accommodate solar PV.	Medium	Small	Swale House discussed with retrofit. No progress on other buildings yet.	Swale House and Master's House retrofit took priority. Property does not currently have the resource to review in detail.	Not Started
Environmental & Leisure / ECS	Signpost residents and businesses through communicating benefits, understanding financial and business cases for installing energy storage with grid balancing capability.	Long	Medium	Promoted via Solar Together. To be included in webpages. Further work needed in 2022.	General business engagement on energy and low carbon solutions continued, however no specific focus on energy storage due to lack of time, skills and resources.	Not Started
Planning Policy	Investigate the possibility of increasing thermal storage (e.g. hot water and ground inter-seasonal storage) for greater maximisation of local energy generation.'	Medium	Medium	Not yet started Local Plan Review taking precedence.	Suggest this is removed from the Action Plan at this stage as Local Plan Review unlikely to have resources to progress this level of detail. Could be mentioned in update to pre-amble to DM 4	Obsolete

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					Sustainable energy production, distribution and storage (Reg 19, 2021)	
	Investigate a pilot programme to use new technology such as virtual private wire technology to balance between energy generation, storage and use within the borough as part of achieving net zero carbon.	Medium	Medium	Early work with Wheelebrator, BEIS and KCC. Rejected by central gov	Early work with Wheelebrator, BEIS and KCC. Rejected by central gov	Obsolete
Property / ECS	Develop Swale as an innovation area promoting new low-carbon technology, linked to incubator units for low-carbon start-ups in a retrofitted Swale House.	Medium	Medium	To be investigated.	Swale House commercial use deemed to be a priority but not in the context of low carbon innovation – we would be constraining ourselves. We will presumably create space that allows them to operate in a more Carbon efficient way, focused on the need to reduce carbon from the commercial sector in the Borough generally, rather than an innovation/low carbon sector specific workstream. Property does not	Obsolete

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					currently have the resource to review in detail.	
Environment & Leisure	Encourage and support community energy projects. Consider community energy as a financial investment.	Medium	Small	Encouraged where appropriate. Principal of extension of permitted time from 25 to 40 years established for existing projects. Investment possibilities under review.	No Change	Started

We are signposting residents and businesses through communicating the benefits of installing energy storage with grid balancing capability.

Permission has been granted, by the Secretary of State, for the Cleve Hill Solar Park. This will consist of 800,000 solar panles over an area of approximately 360 hectares on the Graveney Marshes. It will have the capacity to generate 350MW of electricity and will have 700MW of battery storage.

The Local Plan draft includes policy on renewable technology at micro and macro levels.

Resilience, Adaptation and Offsetting

Department	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Progress Dec 2021	Progress Dec 2022	Status
Planning Policy	Incorporate a policy on climate change adaptation in the local plan review	Short	-	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	As Dec 21	Started

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Emergency Planning	Regularly update the Emergency Plan for the borough in partnership with the County Council	Short	-	Ongoing	Ongoing	On Track
Planning Policy	Ensure the Local Plan reflects the level of current and future flood risk, and development in flood risk areas is avoided.	Short	-	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	As Dec 21	Started
Planning Policy	Ensure the Local Plan provides for linking habitat restoration and creation to improve access, flood protection and water quality.	Short	-	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	As Dec 21	Started
Planning Policy	Ensure the installation and maintenance of green infrastructure via the Local Plan and suitable conditions or Section 106 agreements in subsequent developments.	Short	Medium	Being progressed through the Local Plan Review	As Dec 21	Started
Planning Policy	Work with the Environment Agency, KCC and the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board to manage flood risk and coastal erosion across Swale.	Medium	-	Ongoing	Ongoing	On Track
Planning Policy	Work to restore natural processes within river systems to enhance water storage capacity and improve water quality.	Medium	-	Green Grid responsibilities have been transferred from ECS to EL/CEE.		Not Started
Planning Policy	Develop and start to implement a Nature Recovery Network, linking habitat restoration and creation to improved access, flood protection and water quality	Medium	Small	Planning: Being progressed through the Local Plan Review (Early stages, working with KNP/KWT) ECS: Green Grid responsibilities (including this action) have been transferred from ECS to EL/CEE	As Dec 21	Started

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Planning Policy	Work with Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board to minimize the long-term risk of flooding	Short	-	Ongoing	Ongoing	Started
Emergency Planning	Make sure everyone is able to access the information they need to assess any risk to their lives, livelihoods, health and prosperity posed by flooding and coastal erosion;	Medium	-	Flood Awareness Week promoted via social media	As Dec 21	Started
Emergency Planning	Bring the public, private and third sectors together to work with communities and individuals to reduce the risk of harm – particularly those in vulnerable areas.	Medium	-	Promote third party events	As Dec 21	Started

The draft Local Plan includes policy on climate change adaptation.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessments have been undertaken and the Local Plan will reflect the level of current and future flood risk, and development in flood risk areas will be avoided.

The Local Plan will provide for linking habitat restoration and creation to improve access, flood protection and water quality, and the installation and maintenance of green infrastructure via suitable conditions or Section 106 agreements in subsequent developments.

We regularly update the Emergency Plan for the borough in partnership with the County Council and make sure everyone is able to access the information they need to assess any risk to their lives, livelihoods, health and prosperity posed by flooding and coastal erosion.

We bring the public, private and third sectors together to work with communities and individuals to reduce the risk of harm – particularly those in vulnerable areas. We have supported communities in the development of their localised emergency and flood plans. We advertise the Environment Agency run awareness weeks.

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We are working with the Environment Agency, KCC and the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board to manage flood risk and coastal erosion as appropriate across the Borough.

COVID19

At the start of 2020 we could not have anticipated the effect COVID19 would have on all our lives. Staff have embraced the new ways of working.

While COVID19 has delayed some actions, there have been some positive impacts. We have moved far more rapidly than expected into the use of virtual and hybrid meetings. All councillors now have dedicated SBC laptops and online council meetings have been a success.

Home working and hybrid working has largely proved to be effective, meaning that business and commuting miles have fallen dramatically. The challenge we now face is to be aware of actions that may need to be taken to prevent a return to 'pre-pandemic' working habits. The recovery from COVID19 does, however, provide a good opportunity to encourage behaviour change towards the goals set in the action plan.

Looking forward

We have revisited our Action Plan and identified the top 10 actions to prioritise for 2023.

In 2023 we are focussing our activities on finishing the retro-fit of Swale House and the Master's House phase 2 (subject to funding), planting 11,000 trees funded by the Local Authority Tree Fund, progressing the new waste contract to include carbon savings, further engagement with businesses to promote LoCase grants and the uptake of EVs, and developing the Clean Air Zone measures with KCC,

They are detailed in table 3 below.

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2023 Top 10 Priority Actions - change??

Action	Action Owner	Target date	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Measures of Success	
1	Retro-fit Swale House and the Master's House to cut carbon emissions	Property	2025	186	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tender completed and evaluated Major works completed on Swale House and carbon savings assessed Increased energy efficiency
2	Develop, adopt and implement an EV strategy	Environment and Leisure	2022	medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EV Strategy presented for public consultation and adopted Strategy shared with stakeholders Installation of additional charge points in car parks in areas with high on-street demand
3	Tree planting on council land (target; 148,100 trees or 60 acres of woodland) to offset 20% of council emissions.	Environment and Leisure	2025	1,481t offset of woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress made against tree planting targets Other planting opportunities investigated (e.g. hedgerows, saltmarsh etc) Work completed with stakeholders and other landowners to identify further sites to plant Engagement work conducted with residents, schools and groups to increase understanding of the importance of trees
4	Improve facilities and incentives for walking and cycling.	ECS ,Planning Air Quality	2030	Large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint active travel coordinator Develop LCWIPs in Sittingbourne & Sheerness – use LCWIPs across borough to apply for infrastructure funding Linking Coasts to Downs routes finalised and advertised Installation of cycle racks Bike Hire scheme investigated
5	Increase engagement with staff to roll out learning about the	HR, Environment and Leisure	Short		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Champions activities progressed, measured through behaviour change across teams Carbon Literacy training delivered, and Carbon Literacy Organisation certification investigated

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	climate & ecological emergency. Review of staff business travel				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff business travel review complete
6	Support businesses to reduce carbon emissions and improve ecology and biodiversity.	ECS	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased installation of work-place chargers measured across the borough • Increased number of businesses engaging with the council to receive support on decarbonisation measures • Continuation of high levels of Kent REVS participants from Swale, with case studies written up for those that made a permanent switch to EV • Measure success of Clean Growth Grant and share best practice/case study examples
7	Set up an offset fund to enable off-site offsetting within the borough.	Planning/CEE	Short	Large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete pilot offsetting project with KWT/SELEP • Set a price of carbon/write off-setting policy for developers • Continue relationship with landowners identified via KWT/SELEP project for potential offsetting of SBC estate emissions
8	Establish and promote a car club in Faversham.	Environment and Leisure	2022	small	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Club introduced and advertised in Spring 2022 • Advantages (carbon and cost savings) advertised to residents and encouraged to join • Further campaigns completed dependent on uptake levels • Usage monitored across car club lifetime
9	Ensure LED lighting is fitted across the council parks and open spaces.	Environment and Leisure	2023	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LED lighting installed across the estate, prioritising most in demand areas • Carbon and cost savings captured and promoted to parish councils and other stakeholders to encourage installation of LED lighting
10	Improve air quality, focusing on AQMAs along the A2 and the establishment of a Clean Air Zone	Air Quality	Short	Small	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue conversations with the Highways Authority around measures for a Clean Air Zone • Increase number of schools engaged with on anti-idling campaign and active travel • 20mph zones investigated in other areas

Table 3

Conclusion

The latest data available show that during 2022 carbon emissions in Swale fell by just 2%. The science-led target is for a minimum reduction of 13% year-on-year. This comparison shows just how significant the change that is required. In due course the government data may show a significant fall in carbon emissions in Swale during 2020 and 2021, due to the lockdown and other restrictions required to reduce the spread of COVID19. Hopefully, both 2020 and 2021 will be highly unusual years. The challenge will be to retain and build on the best adaptations that have contributed to a reduction in carbon emissions while facilitating and improving our everyday lives (e.g. video conferencing technology, good broadband, more journeys made by walking and cycling, supporting local businesses).

In the three and a half years since the Climate and Ecological Emergency was declared, Swale has made good progress in what have been, extremely unusual and challenging circumstances. We remain a leader in Kent in both our ambition and achievement. Highlights include electrification of the SBC vehicle fleet, improved infrastructure of electric vehicle charging across the borough, the establishment the car club, the energy efficiency improvements in both Swale House and the Master's House and the very successful Great Big Green Week.

It is always the case that the first reductions made to carbon emissions are the easiest to make. Substantial year-on-year cuts will become increasingly difficult. Our challenge is to ensure that the impetus continues in order to meet our targets.