

Draft Canterbury City Council Net Zero
Action Plan 2025-2030

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Executive summary

This document sets out Canterbury City Council's Net Zero Action Plan from 2025 onwards. It replaces the previous Climate Change Action Plan which was adopted in 2021.

This plan explains the importance of decarbonisation action as part of the council's work to provide services and infrastructure for the district as described in the new Corporate Plan.

This document outlines why action is required and what measures are needed to 2030, through and beyond the Local Government Reorganisation programme.

The plan shows the scale of activity that will be necessary to achieve carbon reduction goals and explains that the council will seek significant external funding sources and opportunities to be able to deliver it.

The headlines

Through this plan, the council commits to:

- achieve net zero emissions by 2030 for the council's core carbon footprint (within operational control)
- achieve net zero emissions by 2045 across the full range of assets and activities needed to support the council's work
- support the whole district to achieve net zero emissions by 2050
- implement climate resilience in the services, public buildings and infrastructure that support the district

Across the district, the council will:

- work with all stakeholder groups to accelerate the transition to net zero
- support residents, businesses, institutions and communities to reach net zero
- invest in making the district more resilient to extreme weather and flooding

Canterbury City Council will do this through enabling major investment in:

- improving energy efficiency at its council buildings and properties
- enhancing Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure
- driving net zero through its supply chain
- integrating climate considerations into all its decisions
- developing partnerships with other organisations and institutions within the district
- protecting its shared natural resources

1. Who we are

Canterbury City Council is a local authority serving the city of Canterbury, the coastal towns of Whitstable and Herne Bay, and the surrounding villages and communities.

The council provides a wide range of services including planning, housing, refuse collection, street cleaning, maintenance of parks and open spaces, and support for local businesses.

The council works closely with Kent County Council which also provides key services for the district including education, adult and social care and highways infrastructure.

Canterbury City Council's work to deliver services and shape the development of the district through the Local Plan gives the council a high-profile responsibility to demonstrate and lead work for the common good throughout the district.

2. Our purpose

Canterbury City Council's core purpose is to promote the long-term interests of the district and its social, environmental and economic wellbeing.

The council has a strong history of working to protect and enhance the district with many plans, policies and projects to conserve our natural resources of air¹, land² and water³.

Scientific evidence shows us that the climate is already changing and that the work that we have all been doing to date falls short of the pace and scale of change needed if we are to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.

Climate action will enable economic activity and provide jobs. The council does not need to compromise the local economy to act for the environment.

In developing this plan, the council has focused on achieving tangible action. The plan is underpinned with in-depth analysis of the council's carbon footprint.

Our Net Zero Action Plan has been written with a pragmatic approach, ensuring the council is taking the necessary steps to make net zero a reality by 2030.

It aims to ensure that Canterbury City Council and the district make a positive contribution to the global effort by taking the necessary steps to drive local action.

The council will help reduce the causes of climate change, work on resilience to the risks posed by climate change and take up the opportunities presented by the transition to a net zero economy.

¹ [Air Quality Action Plan \(canterbury.gov.uk\)](https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/air-quality-action-plan)

² [Open spaces strategy.indd \(canterbury.gov.uk\)](https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/open-spaces-strategy)

³ [Canterbury Riverside strategy 2023 to 2028](https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/canterbury-riverside-strategy-2023-to-2028)

The council cannot do this alone. Therefore, this strategy sets out how it will work in partnership with other authorities, institutions and businesses in our district to develop the solutions required to tackle climate change.

The council invites you to work with it as it adapts so that our district and the wider world can do what is needed now for the benefit of all.

3. Our climate vision, aims and goals

3.1 Net zero vision

Canterbury City Council to become a leading organisation in emissions reduction, building resilience into its services and assets and enabling the district in all aspects of effective net zero action.

3.2 Net zero aims

- Become a net zero organisation by 2030
- Support and drive the achievement of net zero emissions across the district by 2050
- Build climate resilience
- Champion a sustainable district

3.3 Net zero goals

For the council

- Canterbury City Council operational emissions are net zero by 2030
- Canterbury City Council services and assets are resilient to climate change risks

For the district

- Canterbury district is well on the path to emissions reduction in line with Kent County Council's high ambition pathway by 2030
- Canterbury district society, environment and economy becomes progressively and proportionately resilient to the impacts of climate change

4. Adapting to climate change

Even with all the global, national, regional and local efforts to reduce the emissions that cause climate change, the scientific evidence shows climate change will continue to impact our world.

The Canterbury district is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

It boasts 18 km of coast, various areas within Flood Zones, and is home to numerous sites of Special Scientific Interest, the Kent Down National Landscape and national and local nature reserves and protected wildlife areas. It also includes a stretch of almost 10 km of the Great Stour from Chartham to Sturry.

The city centre also has vulnerabilities in relation to our changing climate, as urban areas can be more prone to flash flooding and overheating.

The important work to adapt to the changing climate by improving systemic resilience to climate impacts needs to happen alongside projects to reduce emissions.

Canterbury City Council is working with Kent County Council to translate the identified climate risks and impacts into tangible adaptation measures for incorporation into Corporate Plans and Local Plans and plans and policies for council services.

5. Funding climate action

While there are many actions that the council can take, paying for climate action is arguably the biggest challenge of all.

The costliest aspects of decarbonisation include making refuse collection services and older persons accommodation reach net zero emissions.

Effective implementation of the plan will require significant new external funding sources in addition to internal match funding commitments.

There is an opportunity in the generation of renewable energy to unlock funding for further climate action by reducing overhead costs from electricity bills. The council will explore opportunities for innovative methods of funding.

6. Our baseline emissions

6.1 Carbon footprint methodology

The council has updated the methodology for calculating the carbon footprint for a local authority to align more closely with other districts in Kent, using scoping parameters and conversion factors from the Local Government Association (LGA) toolkit where possible.

The LGA provides annual updates for carbon conversion factors, which have been applied to the corresponding years in our analysis.

In line with LGA guidance, the council has included the emissions for anything considered within our *operational* control i.e. the council is able to influence the way it operates.

Our analysis is undertaken by looking at the different sources of emissions, which is also known as the “scope”. This enables us to distinguish between emissions from different types of sources.

Scope 1 – includes the emissions from our **direct use**, so these are mostly from **fossil fuels** that are combusted through our own activities such as through our gas boilers in our buildings or the use of petrol and diesel for our vehicles.

Scope 2 - includes emissions from our **indirect use**, so these are mostly from the **electricity** we purchase to operate our buildings and street lighting where the emissions themselves are generated off-site.

Scope 3 - includes the emissions from **products and services that the council buys and uses**, such as CanenCo (outsourced waste collection and grounds maintenance), Stagecoach (the outsourced Park and Ride service) and emissions derived from water.

6.2 Greenhouse gas emissions analysis

The council has undertaken a review of its emissions for the calendar year 2023. This has been published alongside this plan.

The data has been categorised according to the operational service areas across the council to make this tangible and inform specific, targeted actions.

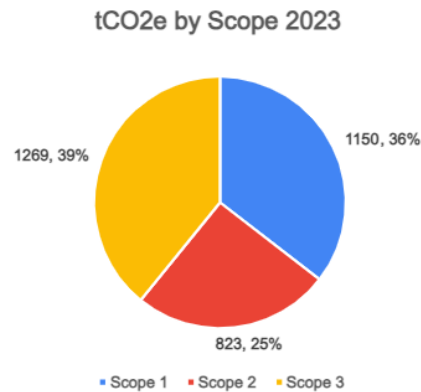
The key findings from the emissions report have heavily influenced the direction of this new Net Zero Action Plan.

The Net Zero Officer Working Group has ensured all areas of service delivery across the council have been considered.

The emissions data will be reviewed periodically over the period of the plan to measure and report progress.

6.3 Canterbury City Council’s carbon footprint

The chart below shows the total carbon emissions within the council’s operational control in tonnes of carbon (tCO2e), broken down by scope, for 2023.



This shows that Scope 3 emissions amount to almost 40% of the council's emissions, while Scope 2 accounts for a quarter.

The total emissions calculated for 2023 was 3,242 tCO2e.

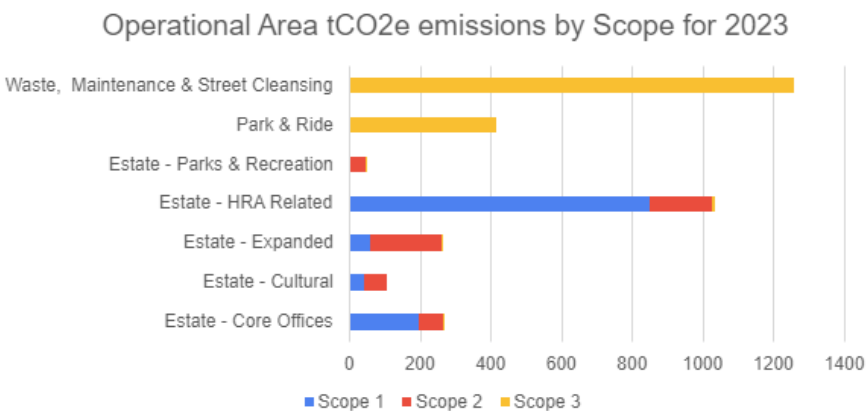
The next chart shows how emissions are broken down across the council’s operational areas.



The analysis shows that emissions from Waste, Maintenance & Street Cleansing, and the Estate – HRA Related make up most of our footprint at 68% of total emissions for 2023.

Our other operational areas have more evenly distributed emissions, with Park and Ride being our third highest accounting for a further 12%.

The following graph shows the total emissions in tCO2e across these operational areas and breaks this down by scope.



Waste, Maintenance & Street Cleansing services from CanenCo represent the highest operational area emissions output for 2023. This includes fuel consumption and building consumption for water, electricity, and gas.

Our next biggest emissions contributor is our HRA related estate emissions. This is a collection of services which include hostels and older people's accommodation where gas heating is currently the biggest contributor.

7. The council's approach

A pragmatic and prioritised approach is essential if Canterbury City Council is to achieve net zero emissions by 2030.

Resources are limited in terms of budget and staff capacity, and we will give careful consideration to how these are prioritised.

Where possible, the council wants to prioritise tackling buildings with larger footprints first.

But there are many aspects to consider, such as the cost vs carbon impact, deliverability, and the ongoing running costs of buildings.

Funding applications will need to be submitted each year to leverage the finance to deliver decarbonisation, and to apply for funding, a comprehensive set of data is required, which makes planning ahead crucial.

In the context of buildings, we must take an approach that considers any equipment reaching the end of its life (such as boilers) as well as the carbon footprint of each building.

Where the decarbonisation of the council's heavy fleet is concerned, this will require long-term planning to ensure decisions are made at the appropriate time.

Decarbonising assets can be an extremely expensive process, and programming our spend will be an important consideration, along with the infrastructure changes needed to facilitate the transition from gas to electricity.

Actions within the plan have been grouped by the operational service areas across the council to enable focused, targeted interventions to drive down emissions towards net zero.

Partnership working

Net zero is a huge endeavor and not one the council can make alone. The council will need to collaborate with all relevant stakeholders to ensure success.

Where possible, the council will generate opportunities to collaborate with its peers in other Kent districts, particularly in the east Kent region.

The council will utilise its membership within the Climate Change Network to take up any opportunities for upcoming projects and funding pots.

As well as collaborating with fellow councils, Canterbury City Council will nurture and grow existing relationships with other organisations in our district via the Canterbury Climate Change Partnership Board. This will include charities, community groups and businesses from across the district.

Net Zero Officer Working Group

To ensure effective delivery of this plan, the council has created a Net Zero Officer Working Group.

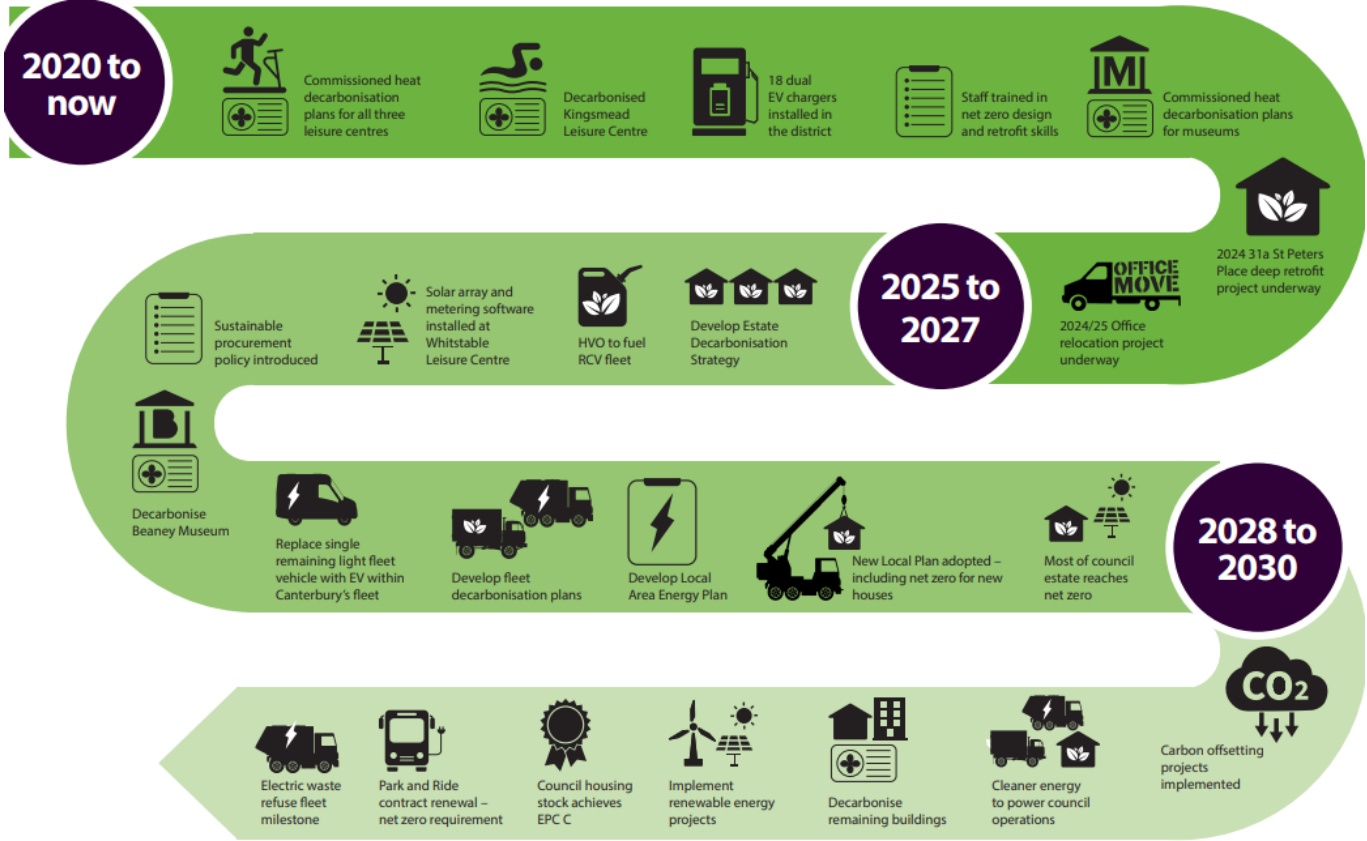
The working group helped to inform the development of this plan to ensure that our holistic approach is applied from the outset.

The working group meets quarterly to review and monitor progress against the actions within this plan.

The meetings also present the opportunity to work collaboratively on solutions to any issues or barriers presented.

A progress review of the Net Zero Action Plan will be produced by the group and submitted annually to Scrutiny Committee.

Roadmap to 2030



The council's net zero actions

Our detailed action plan focuses on the work that must take place up until 2030 to achieve net zero.

The plan will require regular review and update as new funding, technology options and best practice emerges.

Action Number	Category	Action	GHG Data set	Detail	Service Area Leads	Delivery Deadline
01	Communications	District engagement for net zero	N/A	Communicate climate change action, broadcast of opportunities for residents and businesses, as well as engagement and consultation on council plans	Policy and Communications	Ongoing
02	Environment	Undertake feasibility study for carbon offsetting and sequestration	N/A	Procure a feasibility study to assess CCC's land and understand Canterbury's best options for carbon offsetting and sequestration, and the cost of implementing this	Policy with Property and Environment	2025
03	Environment	Implement carbon offsetting and sequestration projects	N/A	Following on from the feasibility study, implement carbon offsetting and sequestration projects across the district to improve the carbon capture of our land	Policy with Property and Environment	2030
04	Energy	Renewable energy generation and capacity improvements	SCOPE 1 & 2 Estate - Core Offices, Estate - Expanded, Estate - Cultural	Assess CCC's assets and land for renewable energy generation opportunity and implement projects for feasible sites. Explore collaboration with private companies on energy capacity innovation such as battery storage	Policy and Property	2030

05	Energy	Source cleaner energy	SCOPE 1 & 2 Estate - Core Offices, Estate - Expanded, Estate - Cultural, Estate – HRA Related, Estate – Parks and Recreation	Work with the energy provider and other authorities to source cleaner energy to power the council's operations	Facilities Management	2028
06	Energy	Develop a Local Area Energy Plan	SCOPE 1 & 2 Estate - Core Offices, Estate - Expanded, Estate - Cultural, Estate – HRA Related, Estate – Parks and Recreation	Develop and produce a Local Area Energy Plan for the district. This should be used to inform the DNO of infrastructure changes required to enable our transition to net zero. We will consider collaborating with fellow districts in Kent	Policy with Property & Facilities Management	First version by 2026/27 - Ongoing
07	Estate	Energy efficiency review of non-gas buildings	SCOPE 2 Estate - Core Offices, Estate - Expanded, Estate - Cultural, Estate – HRA Related, Estate – Parks and Recreation	Some buildings and assets within the estate are electric-only. The highest consumers should be reviewed in terms of energy efficiency. The council will explore easy wins such as upgrading lighting to LED	Property	2027

08	Estate	Develop and deliver an estate decarbonisation strategy	SCOPE 1, 2 & 3 Estate - Core Offices, Estate - Expanded, Estate - Cultural, Estate – HRA Related, Estate – Parks and Recreation	Work with all relevant stakeholders in the council to develop and deliver an estate decarbonisation strategy to 2030. It should be based around a matrix that enables us to prioritise buildings in the appropriate order. This should factor in: equipment approaching end-of-life, carbon footprint of building, cost to decarbonise.	Policy with Property and Contracts	Delivery by 2030
09	Estate	Water Efficiency Review of Buildings	SCOPE 3 Estate - Core Offices, Estate - Expanded, Estate - Cultural, Estate – HRA Related, Estate – Parks and Recreation	Undertake a review of the water consumption of our buildings and propose solutions to reduce within the highest consuming buildings	Property	2026
10	Fleet	Procure a fleet decarbonisation feasibility study	SCOPE 3 Waste, maintenance & street cleansing, Park & Ride	Work with a research organisation to undertake a feasibility study on decarbonising the following services, assessing the infrastructure required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> waste, maintenance & street cleansing park & ride 	Policy with Contracts and Transport	2026

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11	Fleet	All electric light fleet	SCOPE 1	Replace 1 remaining diesel van with EV for CCC's own fleet	Enforcement	2026
12	Fleet	Encourage uptake of EVs for staff owned vehicles used for work	N/A	Explore how the council can support and encourage the uptake of EVs for staff-owned vehicles used for work. For example, promotion of grant funding, salary sacrifice schemes	HR and Communications	2030
13	Fleet - Waste, Maintenance & Street Cleansing	Develop and implement Canenco Fleet Decarbonisation Strategy	SCOPE 3 Waste, maintenance & street cleansing	Work with Canenco and Transport to develop a decarbonisation delivery strategy. Explore possibility to collaborate with other authorities in east Kent	Policy with Contracts and Transport	Strategy by 2026 Delivery by 2030
14	Fleet - Park and Ride	Include requirement for decarbonised fleet for Park and Ride contract renewal	SCOPE 3 Park & Ride	Our current Park and Ride contract comes to an end in 2028. At the point of new contract, there will be a requirement for the fleet to be low carbon.	Transport	2028
15	Housing	Housing Stock to EPC C	N/A	Based on UK government targets, the council has a responsibility to achieve an EPC rating of C or above for its' own social housing stock by 2030 for fuel poor households (see glossary below for definition) and 2035 for the remainder	Property	2030

16	Local Plan	Make climate action a priority in the revised Local Plan	N/A	Put in place a new plan that prioritises measures to reduce district emissions and create climate resilience	Policy	2026
17	Organisation	Net Zero Risk Assessment	N/A	Develop and apply Net Zero risk assessment to key decisions and cabinet reports with accompanying advice for directors and managers on how to consider potential net zero implications of all decisions.	Policy	2025
18	Organisation	Carbon Literacy Training	N/A	Train all councillors, directors, managers and relevant staff with Carbon Literacy training materials	Policy	2025
19	Organisation	Funding Applications	SCOPE 1, 2 & 3 All areas.	Apply for and implement emissions reduction projects from SALIX and other green funding sources. Develop 'shovel ready' projects in preparation for ad-hoc funding announcements.	Policy	Ongoing
20	Procurement	Introduce sustainable procurement policy and scoring criteria	SCOPE 3 All areas consumption for scope 3	Develop and introduce a sustainable procurement policy and accompanying scoring criteria that aims to reduce the council's scope 3 emissions	Procurement	2026

How the council reviews progress

This Net Zero Action Plan will be reviewed annually at Scrutiny Committee. A progress update will be provided for each of the actions.

The officer working group will monitor progress against the actions within this plan on a quarterly basis.

Wider commitments

For the next six years, the council must focus resources on its commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030 for its core carbon footprint.

However, it's important to not lose sight of the wider obligations that relate to its commitment to net zero emissions by 2045 across the full range of assets and activities needed to support the council's work.

The council is also committed to support the Canterbury district to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

The council's ambitions beyond 2030 will include a wider range of work, which we have already started to make progress on.

This includes the following:

The decarbonisation of our leisure centres

The council will work with our partners at Active Life to develop delivery plans to decarbonise the district's leisure centres.

Kingsmead retrofit is complete, and funding was acquired to install solar PV and new monitoring software at Whitstable Swimming pool.

The council has funded and provided heat decarbonisation plans, so the next stage is the implementation of these.

Active Life are the responsible partner for the maintenance of the leisure centres, so their contribution is key.

The decarbonisation of our social housing stock

The council took over management of its social housing stock from East Kent Housing in 2020.

The council will endeavour to submit applications to the Warm Homes Fund as appropriate. The decarbonisation of our housing stock is arguably our most intensive task and the delivery of this goes beyond our 2030 target.

The development of an adaptation plan for the district

Climate resilience is becoming more and more important.

While we're doing what we can to mitigate our own emissions, the climate is inevitably changing and we need to adapt to ensure our district is resilient.

We will work with Kent County Council and other partners to develop a district adaptation plan that builds upon the Kent Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment.

Improving access to active travel in the district

As part of our new draft local plan and transport plan, the council is pushing the promotion and improvement of active travel infrastructure across our district.

The delivery of implementing this will go beyond our 2030 target but we are continuously working to deliver this goal.

The development of an EV strategy including delivering the continuous improvement of EV charging infrastructure

While we will be focusing on our own heavy fleet in the context of this plan, the council is implementing improvements across the district to facilitate a transition to electric vehicles. This is set out in the council's [EV strategy](#)

Since 2018 the council has installed 49 EV chargers across the district. Most of these are in our car parks with eight on-street chargers: four in Canterbury, three in Whitstable and one in Herne Bay.

Kent County Council will be continuing the programme of installation of on-street chargers, and the city council will extend the coverage in our car parks.

Assessing and improving energy capacity in the district

The council recognises huge change is required to accommodate the transition away from fossil fuels.

We will be working with our distribution network operator to ensure that major projects are considered and accounted for and working collaboratively on our long-term plans for the district.

Working towards a circular economy model in our district

The council will work closely with Kent County Council's circular economy team to work towards a more circular Canterbury. This is a huge task and will require change on a large scale.

The council will also collaborate with external organisations such as circular cities and take on learnings from other authorities across the country and globally.

Continuously working on stakeholder engagement

We will continue to provide direction to stakeholders across Canterbury, helping to facilitate the delivery of projects that work to decarbonise our district and reach net zero by 2050.

Wider Community Projects

The council will continue to seek opportunities for net zero projects that involve the wider community in our district. We are keen to support our residents by helping to facilitate potential projects and funding applications, and working with the community to raise awareness of initiatives.

Glossary

Climate change

Climate change is the term used for the long term change of weather patterns. The overall effect is the increase in average global temperature from the historic records. The change is known to be caused by human activities, mostly from the burning of fossil fuels - gas, petrol, diesel and coal - and also from changes in the way that the land is used - particularly large scale deforestation. These activities affect the balance of gases in the atmosphere that control the climate.

Greenhouse gas emissions

The main greenhouse gas from human-made activity by volume is carbon dioxide which comprises about 0.04% of air. Other gases from human-made activity also contribute to the greenhouse effect, including methane, nitrogen oxides and refrigerants. In calculating greenhouse gas emissions, the gases are all expressed together in terms of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (tCO₂e). The vast majority of the emissions that are causing the climate to change are from burning fossil fuels.

Net Zero Action Plan

The basis for deciding on how to act to reduce the causes of climate change is through understanding the different sources of greenhouse gas emissions. By regularly calculating the emissions from fuel bills, meter readings and orders for materials and services, an organisation can measure its emissions and design activities to reduce them. It is important to define the

boundaries - what is included and what is not included - for calculating the emissions because there are some things that are easier to control and change than others.

Operational boundary

This is a way of defining the emissions that an organisation can control itself through its management of staff, services and contracts.

Financial boundary

This extends the boundary of an organisation to include assets like buildings and land that an organisation owns but leases or loans to others to manage. The control is less direct, but the organisation has influence over the building - its fabric and heating and how the building is maintained or modified.

Emissions scopes

Where the emissions are generated is called the scope. Some emissions, like the carbon dioxide from burning fuels to power vehicles and heating buildings are generated on site, which is called scope 1. Emissions from electricity are generated at the power station and these are called scope 2. Other emissions like those for manufacturing goods are generated in multiple places and include getting the raw materials, making the product and transporting before it is used - these are called scope 3 emissions.

Scopes 1, 2 and 3 for an organisation: (Defra Environmental Reporting Guidelines and the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, revised edition)
Scope 1 (direct) means emissions from activities owned or controlled by your organisation that release emissions into the atmosphere. They are direct emissions. Examples of scope 1 emissions include emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers, furnaces, vehicles, emissions from chemical production in owned or controlled process equipment.

Scope 2 (energy indirect) means emissions released into the atmosphere associated with your consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling. These are indirect emissions that are a consequence of your organisation's activities, but which occur at sources you do not own or control.

Scope 3 (other indirect) means emissions that are a consequence of your actions, which occur at sources which you do not own or control and which are not classed as scope 2 emissions. Examples of scope 3 emissions are business travel by means not owned or controlled by your organisation, waste disposal which is not owned or controlled, or purchased materials.

Net zero

Net zero emissions refers to the point at which the balance of greenhouse gas emissions being generated is equal to the amount being absorbed. The details of how to achieve net zero are not yet fully understood. However, net zero is an internationally recognised requirement for long term climate stability.

Resilience and adaptation

Resilience refers to making society and infrastructure prepared for the impacts of climate change like increased summer temperatures. Adaptation means adjusting how society and infrastructure operates to lessen the effects of climate change. Both are required in order to safeguard people and society as the climate changes.

Climate Change Network

The collective working cohort of climate change officers across all districts in Kent and Medway, hosted by Kent County Council.

Fuel Poor Households

A household is considered 'fuel poor' if they are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below; and when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line.