

# Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy: Key Points

## KENT AND MEDWAY ENERGY AND LOW EMISSIONS STRATEGY



**SUPPORTING DELIVERY OF THE KENT ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY**

CONSULTATION DRAFT

### 1. We want you to get involved!

Kent County Council wants to hear what young people think about our plans to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and improve air quality in Kent and Medway. We have prepared a short version of our strategy to explain what we think needs to happen and what we will do to protect our environment, but still make sure that Kent and Medway can continue to grow and develop.

We know that the decisions and actions we take today will affect the future of everyone, particularly young people. This is why we would like you to **tell us what you think about the strategy by filling in a survey online at:**

[www.kent.gov.uk/energyandlowemissionsconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/energyandlowemissionsconsultation). You can do this until 23 September 2019.

This shortened version of the strategy will help you fill in the online survey. You can also read the full version of the strategy and the full evidence document at [www.kent.gov.uk/energyandlowemissionsconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/energyandlowemissionsconsultation).

## 2. Our vision for the future *(question 5 in the survey)*

Our goal (or vision), for 2050, is that Kent will:

- **have lowered emissions to net-zero** – this means we will remove as many greenhouse gases from the atmosphere as we put in.
- **be benefiting from a low carbon economy** – this means our day-to-day lives, such as going to school or work, visiting the shops or watching TV, will produce very few greenhouse gas emissions.
- **have no deaths linked to poor air quality** – this means no one will die from pollution in the air.

## 3. Introduction

Kent and Medway are growing: By 2031, there are expected to be 180,000 more houses and nearly 400,000 new people in the county. Growth can be good as it creates jobs and more homes for people to live in, but it can also damage the environment if it's not done sustainably. This is because the growing population will need more energy to heat, cool and power their homes and businesses, which could increase greenhouse gas emissions. There will also be more cars and lorries on the roads, which could increase air pollution.

Councils in Kent and Medway want to make sure that this planned growth is CLEAN. This means lowering greenhouse gas emissions and protecting the environment at the same time as creating new homes, businesses and jobs.

## 4. Some facts and figures

Carbon dioxide emissions in Kent and Medway decreased by 36% between 2005 and 2016.



The amount of renewable energy produced in Kent and Medway has increased by 726% in five years (2012-17) – this includes energy produced from wind, solar and rubbish.

By December 2018, there were 3,850 plug-in electric vehicles in Kent – these are cars which don't use any petrol or diesel.



23% of homes have an energy efficiency grade of E, F or G – this means these homes require a lot of energy to keep warm, which can be expensive and produces more carbon emissions.

The number of cars and lorries on major roads in Kent increased 14% between 2006 and 2016.

## 5. Our challenges *(question 7-8 in the survey)*

To achieve our goals by 2050 we think we will need to work on the following problems:

- **Embracing clean growth** – we need to build new homes and businesses and create new jobs, but also ensure we continue to lower carbon emissions at the same time.
- **Tackling hot-spots of poor air quality** – some areas in Kent have high levels of air pollution, such as along busy roads. This can be bad for people’s health.
- **Protecting the vulnerable** – some people are at higher risk from air pollution including young children, older people, those with asthma and those living, studying or working near busy roads.
- **Achieving a step-change in the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions** – carbon dioxide emissions in Kent and Medway have already fallen by 36% since 2005, but getting to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 will be difficult without big changes to the way we travel and produce energy.
- **Enabling integrated and connected mobility** - ensuring people can travel safely and reliably around Kent by reducing traffic jams and congestion on roads; encouraging people to use buses and trains, car share, walk or cycle; and supporting new technology such as electric cars, car clubs and automated vehicles.
- **Ensuring a sustainable, secure and affordable energy supply** – we need to stop using energy from coal, oil, petrol and diesel and switch to renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and waste. We also need to reduce the amount of energy that is wasted by industry and in homes.
- **Overcoming energy grid constraints** – To meet our zero-carbon targets we will need to use much more electricity than we use today. Instead of getting our electricity from a few big oil or gas power stations, we will need to use lots of small, renewable energy sites, such as wind farms or solar panels on roofs. This change in the way we generate electricity will also require changes to how we store and move electricity around the county – this will be expensive and will require careful planning.

## 6. Priorities of the Kent and Medway energy and low emissions strategy – what we are going to do

These are the things that we think Kent and Medway councils and their partners will need to do to meet our challenges and achieve our 2050 goals. We’ve separated them into three themes or sections.

## Theme 1 – Building the foundations for delivery *(question 9 in the survey)*

These priorities are all about making sure everyone has the right information to make good decisions about energy, air quality and sustainability.

Increase the amount of data and evidence we have and use it to make better decisions	Write new planning policies that ensure new buildings are sustainable	Help change people's behaviour by communicating effectively with them	Find new ways to fund environmental projects and improvements
Collect data so we know where new charging points for electric cars need to be built.	Work with organisations outside of Kent and Medway, including government, to help influence their plans and activities	Work with universities and other groups to increase our data and evidence, and test new ideas	Check how we are doing by regularly evaluating our progress.

## Theme 2 – Making best use of existing resources, avoiding or minimising negative impacts *(question 10 in the survey)*

These priorities are about ensuring existing buildings and services don't waste energy or water and encouraging more sustainable travel.

Make a public commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions	Help people make their homes and businesses more energy and water efficient.	Use technology to help people travel less for their work, for example working from home.	Encourage people to walk and cycle to school and work
Help councils, NHS and other public sector organisations make their offices and services more energy and water efficient	Increase the number of traffic-free walking and cycling paths on routes people use to get to school, shops and work	Help public transport companies to use lower emission vehicles	Encourage people to make the switch to electric cars and help increase electric vehicle charging points

### **Theme 3 – Towards a sustainable future** *(question 11 in the survey)*

These priorities are about ensuring the decisions we make today that have a long-term impact, are the right decisions, which will help us achieve our 2050 goals.

Help implement low-carbon heat and renewable energy projects.	Update planning guidance so that homes and buildings are still suitable for use in 2050	Test new electric charging technologies, as they become available	Support test projects that look at new ways of heating homes and powering vehicles
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### **7. How we will measure if we have been successful** *(question 12 in the survey)*

These are the things we will measure regularly in Kent and Medway to check how we are doing:

- Carbon dioxide emissions released each year
- Number of councils making a commitment to reduce emissions
- The concentrations of different types of air pollutants
- The number and size of areas assessed as having poor air quality
- The amount of gas and electricity used each year
- The amount of renewable energy produced each year
- How people are travelling to school and work
- The number of people cycling on specific cycle paths
- The average traffic-jam delay on A-roads
- The number of electric vehicles being registered
- How many households are considered fuel poor (people who find it hard to pay their energy bills)
- How many people die because of cold weather (this is called excess winter deaths)
- The energy efficiency rating of people's homes
- The number of energy efficiency measures being installed in homes (eg. loft and wall insulation and more efficient boilers)

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