

COUNCIL
17 December 2013 at 7.00 pm

Further to the despatch of agenda and papers for the above meeting, please find the following background document(s):

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CLIMATE LOCAL KENT

Our commitment
to taking action in
a changing climate

We know that Kent Forum and partners have an important role to play in making sure that residents and businesses understand the risks and opportunities that will come with climate change. For many this will be guidance on how to save money on your energy bills, generating income from renewable energy or how to take advantage of the emerging low carbon economy to create new jobs. We also need to continue to find ways to manage flood risk and water scarcity and understand better how to protect our natural environment. All of these issues offer businesses and individuals opportunities. In signing the Climate Local commitment we undertake to share our knowledge, set targets that will support the quality of life for those living and working in Kent, keep you up-to-date with progress and make sure we review this regularly.

So what will we be doing?

WE WILL:

- Help residents, businesses and the public sector save money and cut carbon emissions through being more resource efficient at home and work.
- Help residents, businesses and the public sector to become more 'waterwise': using less, wasting less and recycling more.
- Work with local companies to help grow the low carbon economy in Kent.
- Continue to value Kent's natural and historic assets and encouraging enjoyment from their use by all.
- Build resilience in Kent to the impacts of climate change including planning for and managing the effects of increased severe weather on schools, services, businesses and residents.

What is Climate Local?

Climate Local is a Local Government Association initiative to drive, inspire and support council action on a changing climate. The initiative supports councils' efforts both to reduce carbon emissions and also to improve their resilience to the affects of our changing climate and extreme weather: Climate Local will help councils across the country to capture the opportunities and benefits of action on climate change.

'Climate Local is a great opportunity for us to show leadership and practical action to cut energy bills for hard-pressed local families and businesses. We'll set local targets to address real priorities'

Cllr Paul Carter,
Leader of Kent
County Council,
Chairman of the
Kent Forum



Climate Local is supported and will be delivered by Kent Forum and partners who include:

Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Dartford Borough Council, Dover District Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Kent Fire and Rescue, Kent Police, Maidstone Borough Council, NHS Kent and Medway, Sevenoaks District Council, Shepway District Council, Swale Borough Council, Thanet District Council, Tonbridge and Malling District Council, Tonbridge Wells District Council.

What we are doing now...

Kent partners have already achieved much towards improving the environmental performance of the county and are working collectively on a joint Kent Environment Strategy.

A few of these projects are detailed here, however for a fuller list of activities across Kent, visit www.kent.gov.uk/climatelocalkent.

CUTTING BILLS IN KENT HOMES

Kent has many poorly-insulated older houses so improving energy efficiency is vital to help residents cut their energy consumption, reduce bills and improve health. Between 2002 and 2012, 38,484 homes in Kent installed loft insulation and 42,485 had cavity wall insulation, a potential annual saving of £9.6m for all these households.

Since 2010, the Kent Retrofitting Programme has provided advice to 603 homes, and installed over 2,500 water and energy saving measures, equating to savings of around £47,600 on residents' energy bills, 223 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and 2,500m³ water.

Today in Queenborough and Rushenden, 270 homes are having a full retrofit. Energy and water efficiency measures are being implemented, such as insulation, draft proofing, boiler replacement and solar thermal panels.

This work will give estimated annual savings to residents of £350 each and will deliver carbon savings of 40-50 per cent. This approach is not only improving the standard of the homes but is generating community involvement.

The programme is being delivered by Swale Borough Council and Amicus Horizon.

The Kent and Medway Green Deal Partnership has been developed to maximise opportunities for Kent residents and businesses arising through the Green Deal.

*Between 2002 and 2010
38,484 homes in Kent installed
loft insulation and 42,485 had
cavity wall insulation.*

*Despite all this work, 57 per
cent of our homes still have
inadequate insulation.*



Before and after photos of a residence in Queenborough that has benefitted from external wall insulation

RECYCLING FOOD WASTE

In January 2011 weekly food waste collections were introduced to more than 55,000 households in Maidstone borough. In the past 18 months, the initiative has been an overwhelming success, with more than 80% of residents using the service, and more than 100 tonnes of food waste sent for local composting every week.

The service continues to increase recycling in the borough, with over 45 per cent of Maidstone's rubbish now being recycled. The initiative won a National LARAC, The Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee Celebration Award, in 2011.

BEING 'WATERWISE'

On 26 June 2012, 90 delegates from water companies, public sector organisations, NGOs, businesses, community and local interest groups came together for the Kent Water Summit in recognition of the pressures in the county as one of the driest parts of England and Wales.

Delegates developed an understanding of local water resources, drought issues and long-term local water risks, and started to build consensus on key steps that need to be taken. Priorities included action to improve communication on local water issues, and lobbying for faster rates of domestic water metering. Activity is also underway in the development of a Water Resilience Framework for Kent.

DEVELOPING SKILLS IN KENT

Investment in new facilities and development of specialist courses have made the Swale Centre the leader in renewable-energy engineering-related training in Kent. This has been recognised by the offshore wind industry, and DONG Energy have started eight flagship apprenticeships. Vattenfall intend to follow suit shortly. In summer 2011, the centre held a sustainable technologies master class with 17 Kent schools, involving 92 young people, to develop their skills and promote interest in engineering for sustainable technologies.

Thanet College hopes to open the Centre for Environmental Technologies at its Broadstairs campus in 2013, having secured £2m towards the cost of the project from the government's Skills Funding Agency.

SusCon in Dartford, is a sustainable construction training and research centre that offers accredited courses for people already working in the construction industry. The building design scored an Outstanding BREEAM rating (88.85%) and the building now has an A-rated Energy Performance Certificate.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RISK

This year Kent Partners (including Kent County Council, district and borough councils, Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue, and the Environment Agency) worked together in the development of a new online tool to monitor the social, financial and environmental impacts of severe weather on Kent: the Severe Weather Impacts Monitoring System (SWIMS). The system allows public sector services to record the impacts of severe weather, as well as how we currently respond to these events. Since SWIMS started in January 2012, events in Kent have cost the county over £786,000, with multiple services affected across the county. The information captured will help to inform our on-going planning for long-term resilience to severe weather and climate change.

ENJOY BEING IN KENT

Naturally Active (provided by Kent's Countryside Management Partnerships) provides and promotes a variety of free outdoor activities for people of all ages and abilities in North-West Kent. Making use of local urban green spaces and the adjacent countryside, the project aims to help improve people's physical fitness and mental well-being. Activities range from health walks, sports activities, environmental groups, tai chi and residential work. Naturally Active Phase I reached 795 people over the course of the project, phase II is working to empower and help people to access activities and establish groups.

Visit www.kentcountryside.org.uk for more information.

KENT'S BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

KCC and its partners are working hard to make sure that they actively manage the varied natural habitats we have in Kent. Through the Kent Biodiversity Action Plan, 16 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas have been identified where work will be focussed to maximise biodiversity benefits. These areas have been selected as offering the best opportunities for establishing large natural areas and/or networks or wildlife habitats.

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Investment in new facilities and development of specialist courses have made the Swale Centre the leader in renewable-energy engineering-related training in Kent.



Top: Swale Skills Centre in Sittingbourne

Above: Reedbeds alongside industry in Holborough
(Courtesy: William Moreno)

Agenda Item 5c **SUPPORTING KENT BUSINESSES**

Nearly 1,000 small and medium sized businesses have registered with the South East Business Carbon Hub, a free online service co-ordinated by Kent County Council to save companies money and improve their environmental performance. Of these, nearly 600 have been provided with initial environmental reports identifying potential average annual savings of £2,000. In addition, KCC has developed Steps to Environmental Management (STEM), a scheme which rewards companies as they progressively introduce measures to reduce their environmental impact. These green credentials can be used to promote the business in an increasingly environmentally-aware marketplace. Already, more than 400 businesses have gained the first level, STEM Blue.

This year, Kent County Council was the proud sponsor of the Business Commitment to the Environment category in the Kent Excellent in Business Awards (KEIBA), won by Ardo UK Ltd, which created a £150,000 water treatment facility that's reduced their carbon footprint by 45 per cent and cut 65,000 miles from lorry use on Kent roads.

NEW RENEWABLE ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS

Kent County Council have recently completed a study: Delivering Opportunities: A renewable energy action plan for Kent which highlights opportunities for further local development based on the resources available in the county. For example, we know that Kent has significant opportunities for wind energy and through the Kent Wind Energy Network companies are able to access information on the development of the offshore wind sector and are able to meet developers and key supply chain contacts. For more information go to www.kentwindenergy.co.uk

KCC have invested £1,787,909 in their estate since 2005, across 122 projects including 28 renewable projects in KCC. This work will ensure lifetime savings of £4,038,778 and has been supported by £900,000 of grants.

Wire Belt Co. Ltd. has recently installed 420 (98.76 kWp) solar PV panels on its premises in Sittingbourne. Covering a surface area of 690m², the scheme is one of the largest solar PV installations in Kent. The project cost £277,500 and is projected to return £570,500, saving 48 tonnes of CO₂ a year and meeting around 50 per cent of the company's electricity demand. Reduction in energy costs will allow finances to be directed to growing employment.

*There are currently
7,201 renewable energy
installations in Kent,
including two major
offshore windfarms, 24
onshore wind sites, 15
Biomass installations
and 1 Hydro unit.*



What does this mean in practical terms?

We will work towards a cut in emissions of 2.6% annually in Kent by 2020 which will see an overall reduction of 34% in our emissions.

We will encourage renewable energy installations and we want to see Kent increase its energy from renewable sources by 10% by 2020.

We will work towards the retrofitting of homes across Kent, beginning with 1,000 households in 2013, through the work of the Kent and Medway Green Deal Partnership.

We will work with at least 500 local companies by 2015 to help them cut their energy, waste and water bills. We will give them guidance on how climate change could affect their company and they can plan for it.

A 10% cut in wasted water would fill 9½ Olympic size swimming pools every day.

We will support activity to reduce water consumption in Kent from 160 litres to 140 litres per person per day by 2016.

We will work to support an increase in jobs within the Low Carbon sector by 10% by 2020.

There are already nearly 25,000 people working in the Low Carbon sector in Kent and growing fast.

Visits by tourists to Kent is worth over £1.4bn to our local businesses.

We will ensure that 60% of our local wildlife sites are being positively managed.

We will work to ensure that 95% of Kent's Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) are in 'favourable' state or 'recovering'.

We will encourage an increase in volunteering, with a target of a 20% increase in hours spent, AND a 20% increase in Kent residents taking part in organised outdoor activities.

We will increase flooding resilience in 4,500 Kent homes and bring in £5.6m in partnership funding for flood measures.

We will assess all our services for risks and opportunities and build resilience to climate change into our work.

We will support local communities in preparing for climate change through the development of 15 community plans for those most at risk or with greatest opportunities.

Improved resilience can reduce costs associated with severe weather in Kent (currently over £4 million per year), whilst protecting our more vulnerable residents.

What can you do?

Cut your
Energy Bills



Generate
your own
energy



Be
'Waterwise'



Reduce
Waste



Cut travel
emissions



Adapt to
climate change



■ **Turn down your thermostat** A one degree cut will take 10% off your heating bills and typically save £55 per year (average UK).

■ Homeowners wanting more information can contact the **Energy Saving Trust** by phoning 0800 512 012 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm), or visit their website www.energysavingtrust.org.uk to find out what grants and discounts are available.

■ Businesses can contact the **South East Business Carbon Hub** at carbon.hub@kent.gov.uk or call 01622 696950.

■ **Feed-in Tariffs:** The Government will pay you for the electricity you produce, even if you are using it yourself. The rate may have been halved in March, but the cost of installation has come down. Go to www.ofgem.gov.uk for information on rates.

■ **Renewable heat premium payment** (running until 31st March 2013) - a government scheme to help make renewable technologies more affordable. You can apply to receive a voucher, with a value of between £300 - £1250, depending on the technology installed.

■ To find local suppliers of low carbon technologies and services try **Green Chain**. Go to www.greenchain.org.uk

■ **Install a water meter** to help save on your water and energy bills.

■ **Use a Hippo in your toilet** We flush about a quarter of all the water we use in our homes down a toilet. Pop a 'Hippo' into your cistern to use less water. Check out your water company, they will often provide them FREE.

■ **Create less waste** To cut paper waste sign up to the **Mailing preference service** at www.mpsonline.org.uk to make sure you don't receive any unwanted mail.

■ **Throw away less food** To find out how visit the **Love Food, Hate Waste** website at www.england.lovefoodhatewaste.co.uk

■ **Recycle more** To find your nearest **recycling banks**, please visit www.recyclenow.com

■ Find out how to **change your travel patterns** and behaviour and keep Kent moving sustainably by visiting www.newways2work.org.uk

■ **Drive smarter** such as changing up a gear between 2,000rpm and 2,500rpm to reduce engine friction. Smarter driving could save around 20p a litre on every litre of fuel you buy.

■ **Sign up to flood warnings from the Environment Agency** at www.environment-agency.gov.uk and searching **Floodline Warnings Direct**.

For more information on what you can do to save energy, water and waste in your home visit www.kent.gov.uk/environment