CLIMATE CHANGE

Strategy 2025-2030

Together - Proud to be Gravesham

Gravesham Borough Council

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FOREWORD

In 2019, this council declared a climate emergency and set an ambitious target of becoming a net zero borough by 2030 and since then, we made a remarkable improvement in Council Assets, fleet vehicles, housing stock, recycling rates and much more.

The challenges to achieving that ambition are many and varied but working with partners, we have already made great strides, while understanding there is still much work to be done.

The most recent data from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) indicate that the council's own carbon emissions, i.e. 1951.56 tCO2e for the last financial year (2023-24) only account for around 0.54% of those across the Borough as a whole which is 361 KtCO2e. 96% of the Borough's total emissions come from Transport (42%), Domestic properties (32%), Industry(12%) and Commercial(10%).

This revised Climate Change Strategy clearly sets out the science that has identified changing climate patterns both globally and locally, the need for action, and how we will focus our own work and influence that of others to continue to reduce the impact on Gravesham.

No one authority, body, or community can drive change alone.

Our strategy identifies the need for this council to act as an example, be a community leader, and influence the everyday actions of residents, businesses and visitors to help shape a low-carbon home for future generations.

Together, we are already making a difference.

Carbon emissions in Gravesham have dropped by 17.76% since we focussed our minds on the challenge back in 2019.

That should act as an inspiration to all that despite the challenges, despite the debates, and despite the obstacles, by working together as one community, we can drive change.

Councillor John Burden
Leader
Gravesham Borough Council

WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature and weather.

While natural events like volcanic eruptions can cause these changes, human activities, especially burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas, have been the main cause since the 1800s. When these fuels are burned, greenhouse gases are released into the atmosphere, trapping heat and warming the planet.

The main greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide and methane. These come from activities like driving cars, heating buildings, cutting down forests, farming, and oil and gas operations. WMO's State of the Global Climate report confirmed that 2024 was likely the first calendar year to be more than 1.5°C above the pre-industrial era, with a global mean near-surface temperature of 1.55 ± 0.13 °C above the 1850-1900 average. This is the warmest year in the 175-year observational record with the global average annual concentration of CO_2 in the atmosphere reaching a record high of 424.61ppm (parts per million).

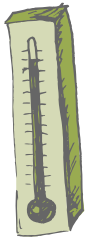
Data for 2024 show that our oceans continued to warm, and sea levels continued to rise. The frozen parts of Earth's surface, known as the cryosphere, are melting at an alarming rate: glaciers continue to retreat, and Antarctic Sea ice reached its second-lowest extent ever recorded.

As the world warms, the UK is likely to have hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters, and more frequent and intense weather extremes according to the Met Office.

Extreme weather events such as heatwaves and heavy downpours could become more frequent and more intense. Many scientists are concerned.
"I think it's really frightening," says Dr Lizzie Kendon, a senior Met Office scientist. "It's just a wake-up call really as to what we're talking about here."

Temperatures above 30C for two or more days can trigger a public health warning. In the 1990s, this happened about once every four years for locations in the South. By the 2070s, projections suggest it could be as frequently as four times per year - 16 times more often if we do not curb our emissions.

Specifically for Gravesham,



Hottest Day

From 1991 to 2019, the hottest summer day was **36.1C** and the warmest winter day was **18.3C**. If global average temperatures rise by 2C above pre-industrial levels, the hottest summer day could be **37.9C** and the warmest winter day could be **19C**. If global temperatures rise by 4C, it could be about **42C** and **20.7C** respectively.

Summer days

From 1991 to 2019, there were **5 days** above 25C per month on average. If global temperatures rise by 2C, there could be **10 days**. With a 4C rise, there could be **19 days**.

Rainy Days

From 1991 to 2019, the average monthly rainy days were **8** in summer and **10** in winter. If global average temperatures rise by 2C, this could increase to **7 days** per month, while at a 4C rise, it could be around **5 days** during summer. Similarly, at both 2C and 4C increases, the number of rainy days per month could remain consistent during winter.

Wettest Day

From 1991 to 2019, Gravesham experienced **43mm** of rain on the wettest summer day, which could increase to **44mm** at a 2C rise, and **51mm** at a 4C rise, **18%** more than now. On the wettest winter day, **31mm** of rain fell, which could increase to **33mm** at a 2C rise, and **40mm** at a 4C rise, **29%** more than now.

Source: [What will climate change look like in your area? - BBC News]

GLOBAL AGREEMENTS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The UNFCCC process

The UNFCCC is the UN process for negotiating a global approach to address climate change. 197 countries plus the European Union are currently party to this process. Negotiations take place through the annual Conference of the Parties (COP). COP21 in 2015 negotiated the Paris Agreement, which is the latest global agreement on climate change mitigation.

The Paris Agreement

This set several goals and objectives extending across mitigation, adaptation, and finance, and including:

- **A long-term temperature goal of limiting global warming to 'well below 2°C above preindustrial levels' and to 'pursue efforts to' limit warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.**
- **On mitigation, setting three high-level milestones for global GHG emissions: global peaking as soon as possible, rapid reductions thereafter, and achieving a balance between emissions sources and sinks in the second half of this century (Net Zero GHGs).**
- **On adaptation, establishing a 'global goal for adaptation', with a view to enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing vulnerability to climate change. This was further developed through the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience into a set of sectoral and process targets that were agreed upon at COP28.**
- **On finance, setting out the need to make finance flows consistent with these mitigation and adaptation objectives.**

COP26

In 2021, COP26 took place in Glasgow with the UK as host and president of the negotiations. Participating nations agreed on the Glasgow Climate Pact, which built on the Paris Agreement by calling on signatories to strengthen commitments to keep 1.5°C in reach, finalising many of the rules underpinning the Agreement's operation and promoting an unprecedented mobilisation of non-state actors (which has continued and grown in the years since).

Nationally Determined Contributions

Under the Paris Agreement, countries are required to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). NDCs should set out ambitious targets and plans to reduce emissions in line with the aims of the Agreement.

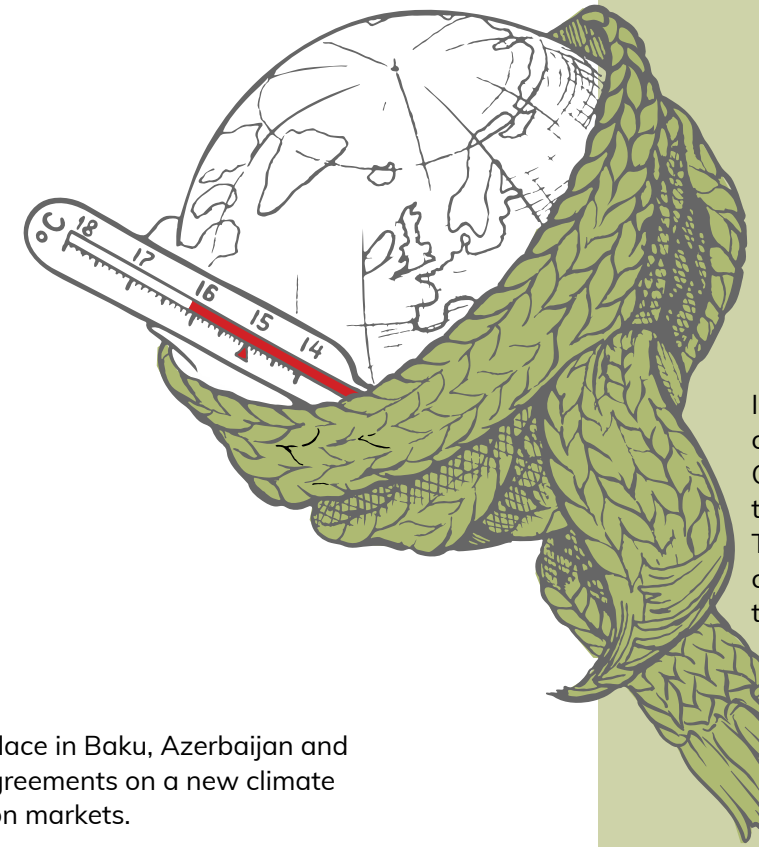
- **The UK set its first NDC to require a reduction in GHG emissions (excluding emissions from international aviation and shipping) of at least 68% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.**
- **In November 2024, the Prime Minister announced that the UK's second NDC would require an at least 81% reduction in GHG emissions by 2035, compared to 1990 levels. Both NDCs have been set in line with the Committee's advice.**

The Global Stocktake

The Paris Agreement established a five-yearly Global Stocktake to assess progress towards achieving its objectives. The first Global Stocktake concluded at COP28 in 2023 and highlighted significant gaps between current action and what is needed to achieve the Agreement's goals, notably on mitigation.

- **Reacting to the latest scientific evidence and political momentum built at COP26 and since, the Global Stocktake placed particular emphasis on the importance of 1.5°C, underscoring that climate impacts would be much less severe than at 2°C, and noting the gap between existing commitments and a 1.5°C consistent trajectory.**
- **The Global Stocktake set out several global objectives, including:**
  - **A tripling of global renewable energy capacity and a doubling of the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030.**
  - **Accelerating the phase-down of unabated coal power and transitioning away from fossil fuels, with particular focus on accelerated action this decade.**
  - **Accelerating reductions in non-CO2 GHG emissions, including in particular methane by 2030.**
  - **Accelerating deployment of low and zero-emission technologies including zero-emission vehicles, renewables, nuclear, removals, and carbon capture technologies.**
  - **Phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.**

BACKGROUND



In support of the Paris Agreement, the United Kingdom became the first country to declare a climate emergency. In 2019, Gravesham Borough Council declared a climate emergency based on the evidence set out by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC informs governments about the state of knowledge of climate change. It does this by examining all the relevant scientific literature on the subject. This includes the natural, economic and social impacts and risks. It also covers possible response options. Thousands of scientists and other experts volunteer to review the publications. They compile key findings into "Assessment Reports" for policymakers and the general public.

In December 2021, the council set out an ambitious Climate Change Strategy, which sets out the council's approach to not only taking action against its own emissions but also supporting communities in the borough to reduce their emissions and carbon footprint.

The strategy is supported by a detailed Management Delivery Plan, which sets out specific actions that will be taken in order to take specific action where possible and influence behaviours in order to reduce carbon emissions across the borough. The council then established a Climate Change Advisory Board to maintain oversight of the Management Delivery Plan. They ensure that the council remains abreast of wider climate change issues, and that appropriate information is made aware to the Cabinet.

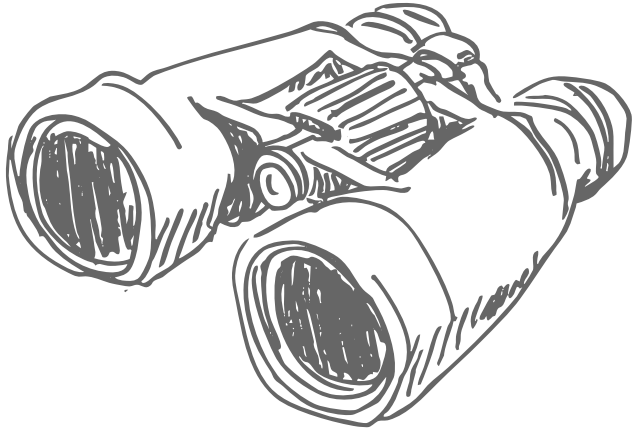
COP29

In 2024, COP29 took place in Baku, Azerbaijan and produced important agreements on a new climate finance goal and carbon markets.

- **A new climate finance goal was agreed, with developed countries committing to take the lead in providing $300 billion per year to developing countries by 2035 as part of wider efforts to mobilise $1.3 trillion per year by 2035 from all public and private sources.**
- **Rules were agreed to operationalise carbon market provisions under the Paris Agreement, paving the way for trading to begin in the coming years.**

Source:
www.theccc.org.uk/publication/the-seventh-carbon-budget/

OUR VISION AND PURPOSE



Our Climate Change Strategy re-sets the Council's approach prioritising community leadership and involvement. In addition to our ongoing efforts to reduce our own emissions, we must consider how we can support and encourage local climate action and behaviour change among residents, businesses, visitors, and community groups.

The Council recognises its crucial role as a community leader to shape its borough through leadership, partnership work, community engagement and unlocking funding where feasible, and sharing ideas and information. It has been estimated through the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) report, that the Council's emissions make up to 0.5% of the Borough's overall emissions and tackling the challenges to achieve the net-zero target cannot be done alone, it requires collective action from all members of our community as everyone has a role to play.

By combining important data, information, and policies, this strategy offers a broad vision for building a low-carbon, sustainable borough and outlines ambitious but doable initiatives. To make sure that every voice in our borough is heard, the new strategy has used an evidence-based approach combined with public consultation and participation.

Being a listening council, we wanted to know what the community at large thought, so we conducted a number of consultation activities. These included meeting with residents at "The Big Conversation event hosted at Wombwell Park," creating online surveys for businesses and residents, and meeting with members of the parish council and the "Gravesham Youth Council" to gather their opinions and give our communities an opportunity to influence and shape the strategy.

Below are the key areas that emerged based on the feedback and responses during the consultation activity

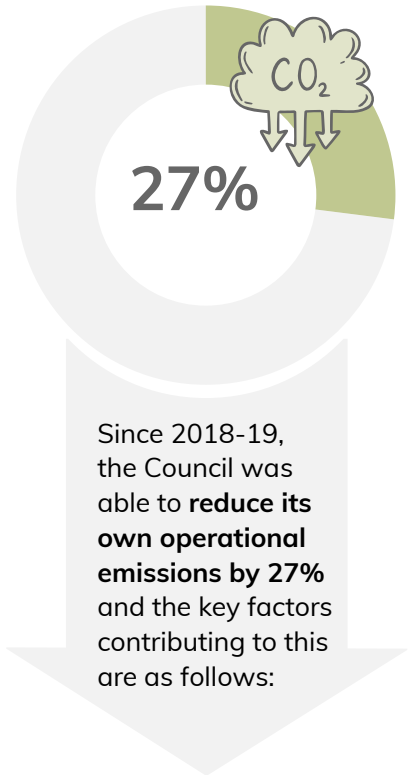
- **Transport & Movement - improving public transport & cycling infrastructure, reducing car use, walking & cycling more**
- **Reduce waste and recycle more**
- **Reducing energy consumption**
- **Businesses to create net zero plans**
- **Sustainable diet & growing produce locally**
- **Circular economy**
- **Awareness of carbon footprint**
- **Facilitate grants and incentives**
- **Repair cafes**
- **Planting more trees**

This robust and inclusive approach ensures that climate change is consistently at the forefront of all Council decisions, across all service areas, innovating and working together to instil positive behaviour change.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

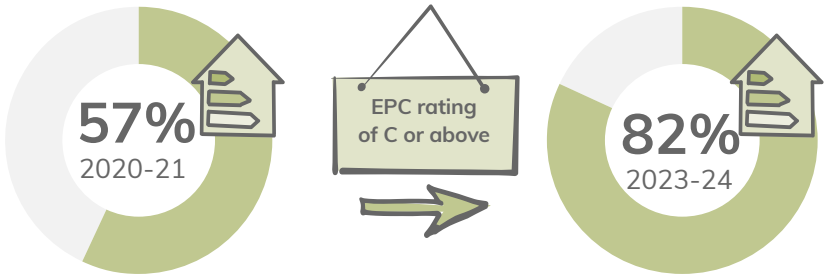
Climate change has been a key priority for the Council since 2019, and over the last five years, the Council has developed and delivered a wide range of projects which have contributed to and supported residents, businesses, communities and schools to undertake their own actions and initiatives to deliver reductions in the borough's carbon emission levels.

Our previous strategy aimed to lower the Council's operational emissions, raise the EPC ratings of its housing stock, and encourage borough partners, residents, and community groups to reduce their carbon footprint.



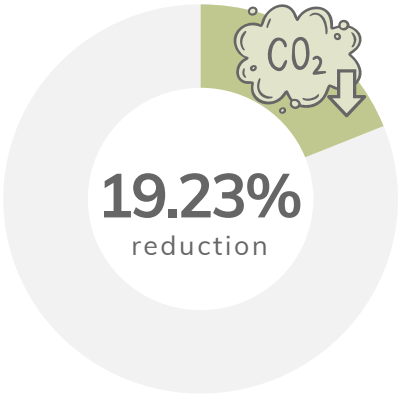
Since 2018-19, the Council was able to **reduce its own operational emissions by 27%** and the key factors contributing to this are as follows:

- **Introducing energy efficiency measures at the Civic Centre resulted in a decrease in usage by 10.62% (electricity) and 27.41% (gas).**
- **Converted 15% of the Council's fleet to electric vehicles and installed 18 Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) at the Brookvale depot.**
- **Converting its fleet's diesel vans and HGVs to 25% HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) and 75% white diesel blend and since April, utilising 100% HVO which is expected to reduce emissions from 22% to 2%.**
- **Providing alternative travel options for staff including the Cycle to Work scheme and Electric Vehicle Salary Sacrifice Scheme.**



The Council has increased the proportion of its social housing stock with an EPC rating of C or above from **57%** in **2020-21** to **82%** in **2023-24** through various works such as:

- **Installation of LED lights, loft and cavity wall insulation, ground source heat pumps, solar panels and more, resulting in annual carbon savings of approximately 171 tonnes, reduction in fuel bills, improved heating, hot water and thermal comfort.**
- **Bringing forward new housing developments at St. Columbas and Worcester Close which incorporate low-carbon renewable heating such as ground source heat pumps, Air Source Heat Pumps and EV charging infrastructure.**

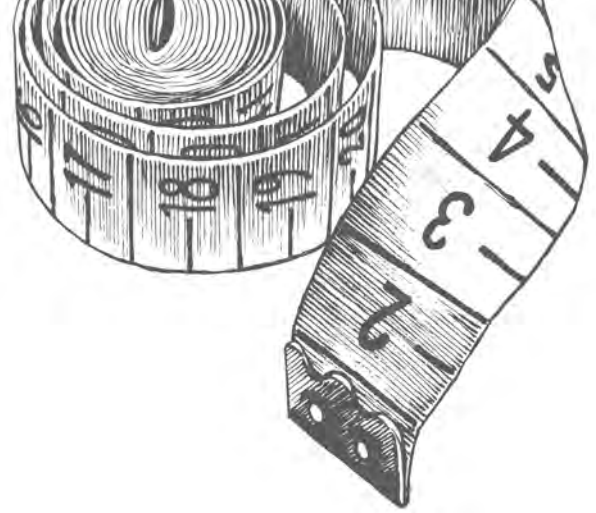


Borough emissions have been reduced from **447 ktCo2** (2018) to **361 ktCo2** (2022), i.e. a reduction of **19.23%** with the Council contributing to this through:

- **The installation of 50 EV charging points in council car parks and an ultrafast taxi EV charging facility in Parrock Street to encourage the adoption of electric vehicles among residents and taxi drivers.**
- **The introduction of recycling in flats increasing recycling rates (62.8%) and food waste collection (16.9%), with 18 new small recycling points in the borough yielding 33,200 items, weighing 30.3 tonnes, within a year, alongside projects with Ellenor, street champion projects, and bin sensor trials.**
- **Planting 3,542 trees, building a sensory garden, improving open spaces with wildflowers and grass pathways, and installing bird boxes to reduce emissions and promote biodiversity, positively impacting the environment, air quality, and resident health.**
- **Implementing initiatives to support residents in reducing their emissions through Solar Together Scheme, the Warm Homes Grant, Sustainability events, Gravesham Business awards, Youth Climate Conference, information packs and advice through newsletters, social media platforms and website, resulting in positive participation and increased carbon footprint reduction.**

Ensuring climate considerations are understood by senior officers and Members and helping them make informed decisions around climate change, 70 Officers and Members completed Carbon Literacy training, 46 of which are certified, and achieved Bronze level status as an organisation.

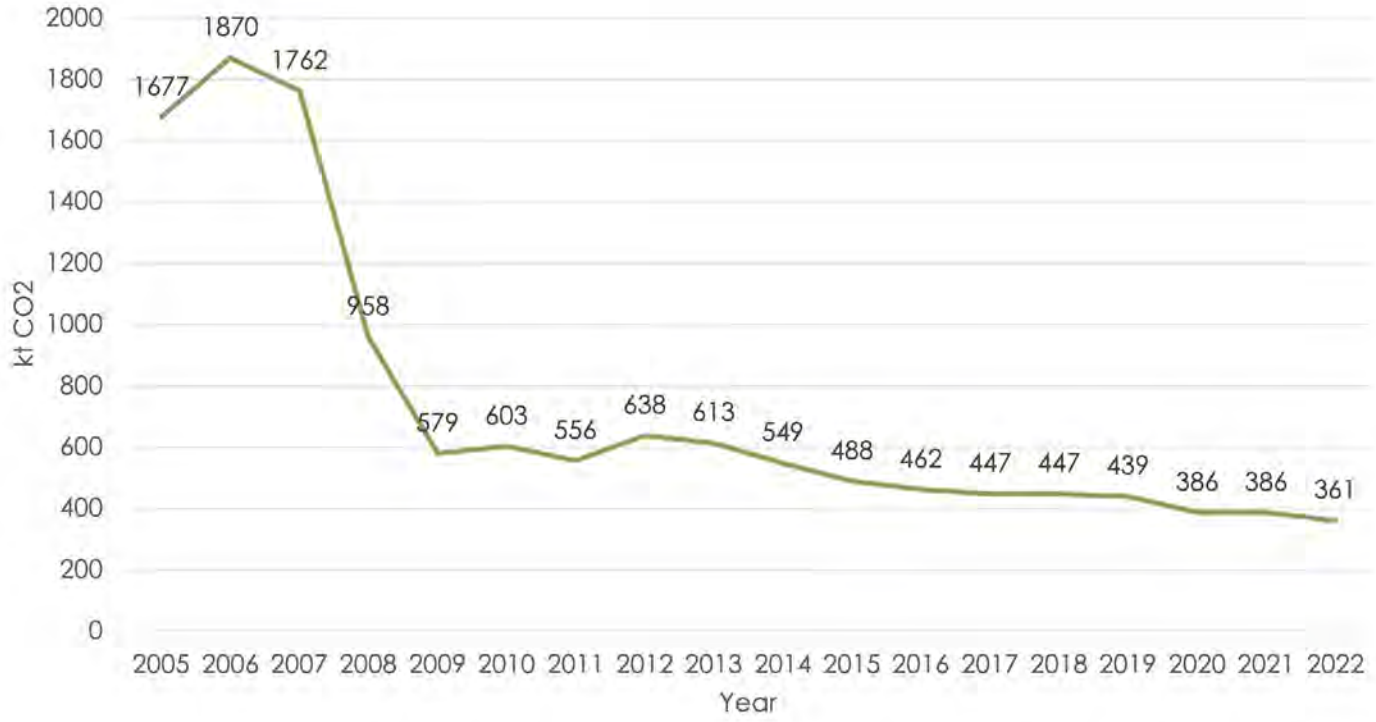
COUNCIL AND BOROUGH EMISSIONS



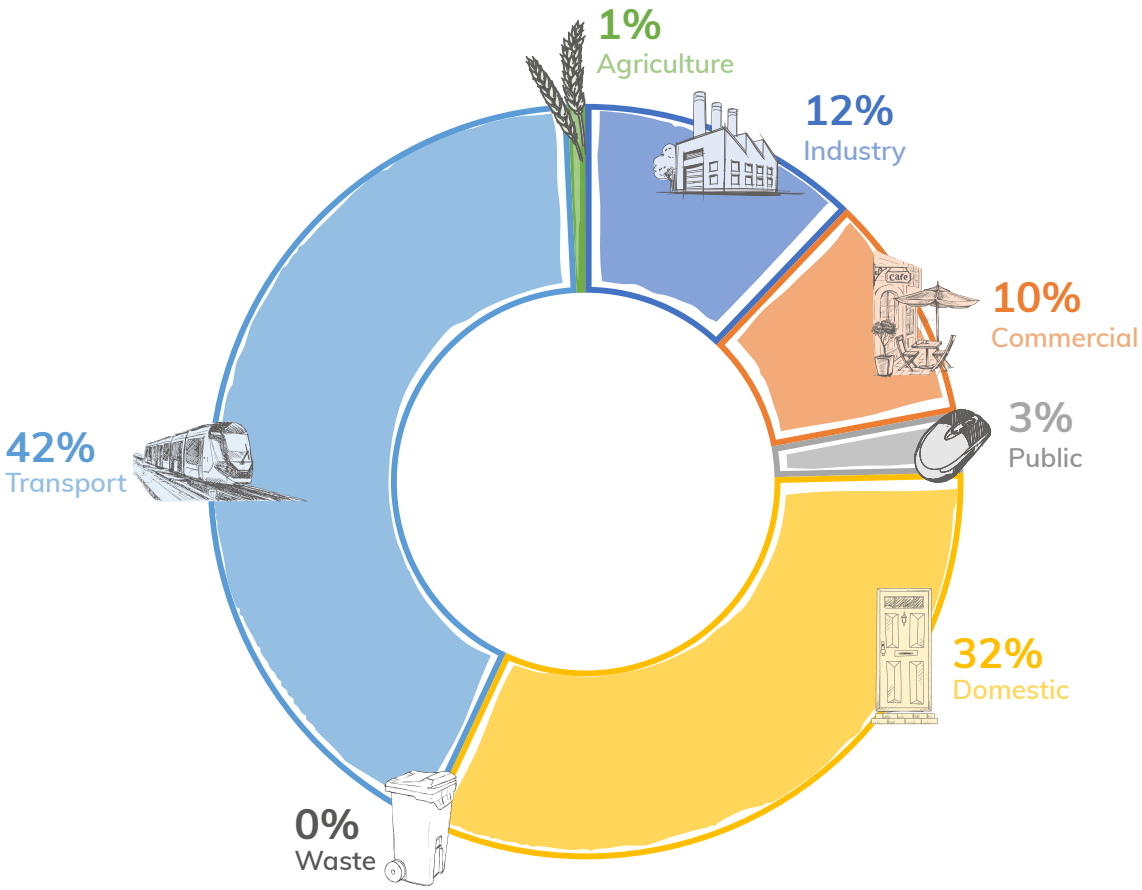
Borough Emissions

Data on local and regional end-user carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions is collated annually by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), formerly the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, to provide a nationally consistent evidence base for greenhouse gas emissions which lags by two years due to the amount of data used to compile the statistics. Looking at 2022 data, it shows a continuing decrease in CO2 emissions within Gravesham. The Council emitted 361 kilo tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (ktCO2e) in the year 2022, of this, 42% came from transport, 32% came from domestic properties, 12% from industry and 10% from commercial. Together, these sources account for 96% of the Borough's total emissions.

Gravesham Carbon Dioxide Emissions 2005-2022

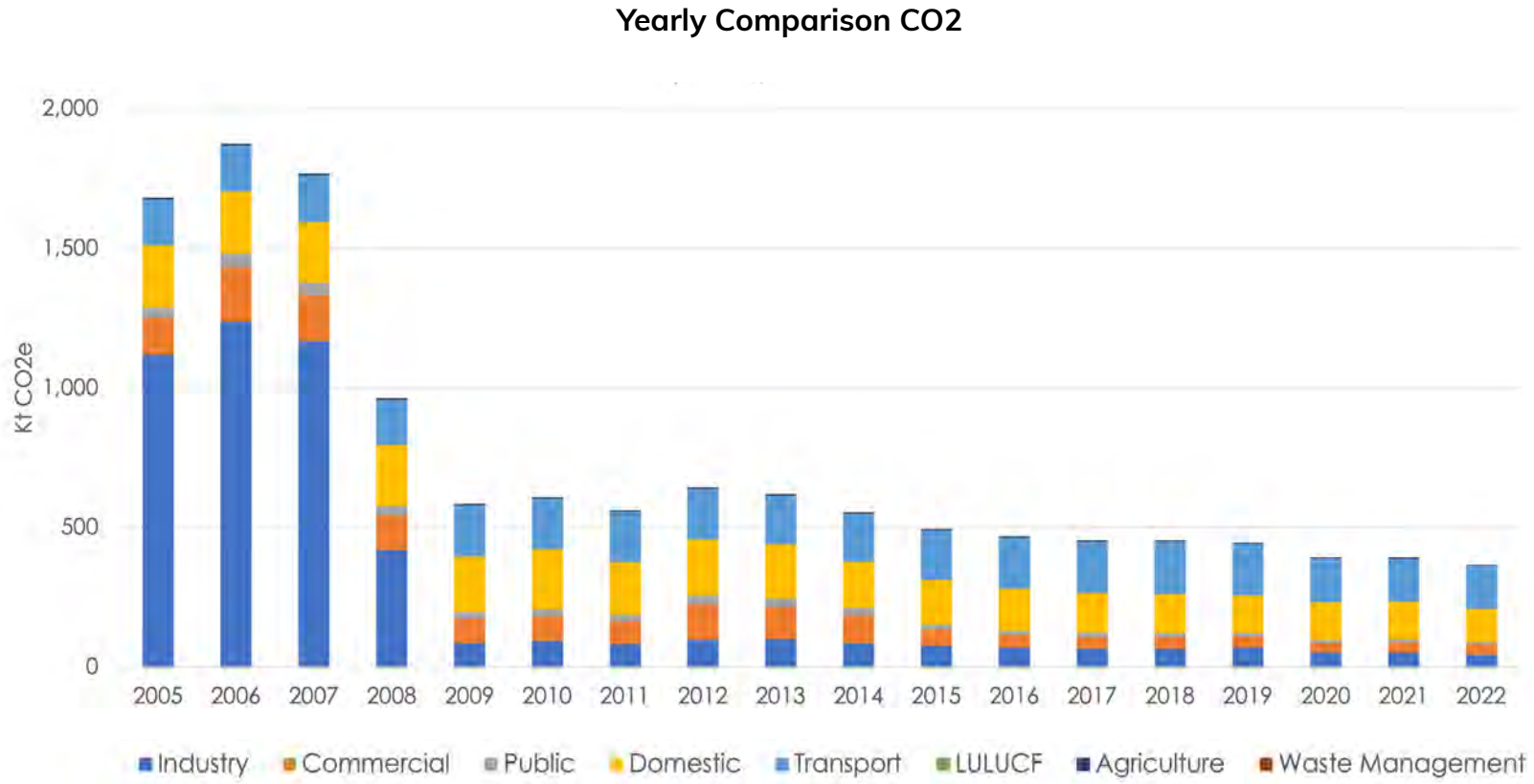


The below pie chart breaks down the Borough's emissions profile into the seven emitting sectors:



Council emissions, which account for 0.54% of total borough emissions, are included in the Public segment of the above chart, which accounts for 3% of the total emissions.

A yearly comparison of all sectors from 2005 to 2022 is provided below.

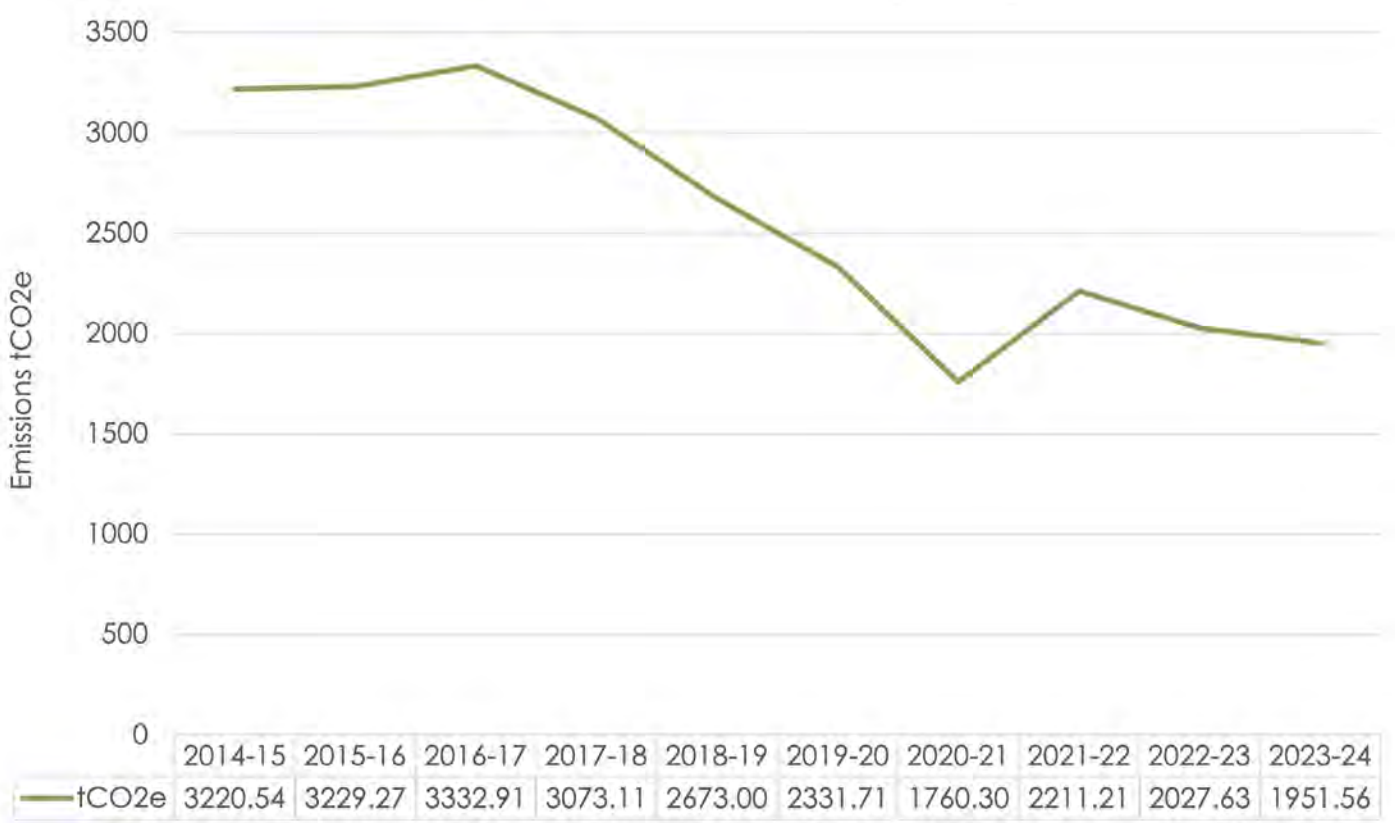


Source: [The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero]

Council Operational Emissions

The council has measured incremental change in the level of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from its own operations since 2014-15

GBC Greenhouse Gas Emissions (tCO2e)



	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
tCO2e	3220.54	3229.27	3332.91	3073.11	2673.00	2331.71	1760.30	2211.21	2027.63	1951.56

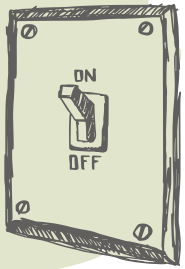
The Council's total greenhouse gas emissions continue to be recorded against the three specific 'scopes' for categorising the emissions:

SCOPE 1

All Direct Emissions from the activities of an organisation or under their control. Including fuel combustion on sites such as gas boilers, fleet vehicles and air conditioning leaks.

SCOPE 2

Indirect Emissions from electricity purchased and used by the organisation. Emissions are created during the production of the energy and eventually used by the organisation.



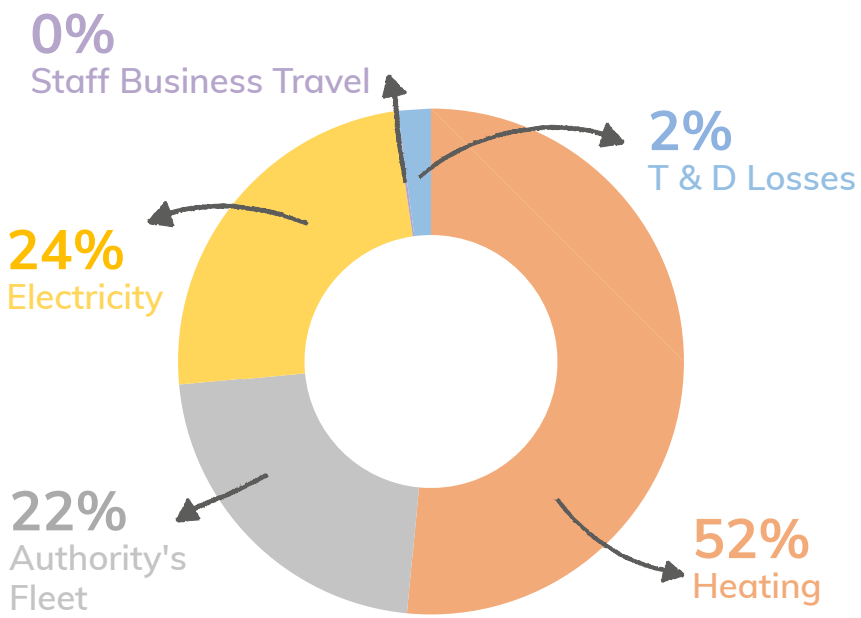
SCOPE 3

All Other Indirect Emissions from activities of the organisation, occurring from sources that they do not own or control.

Total gross greenhouse gas emissions for Scope 1, 2 and 3 for the last financial year (2023-24) was 1,951.55 tCO2e. The major contribution to Council emissions comes from Scope 1 and 2, i.e. Heating (51.5%), Authority's fleet (22%) and Electricity (24.2%).

Emissions Type	Emissions (tCO2e)	Total Emissions %
SCOPE 1 Heating	1,005.39	51.5%
Authority's Fleet	429.97	22.0%
SCOPE 2 Electricity	471.41	24.2%
Staff Business Travel	4.00	0.2%
SCOPE 3 T & D Losses	40.78	2.1%
Total Emissions	**1,951.55**	**100%**

Emissions (tCO2e)

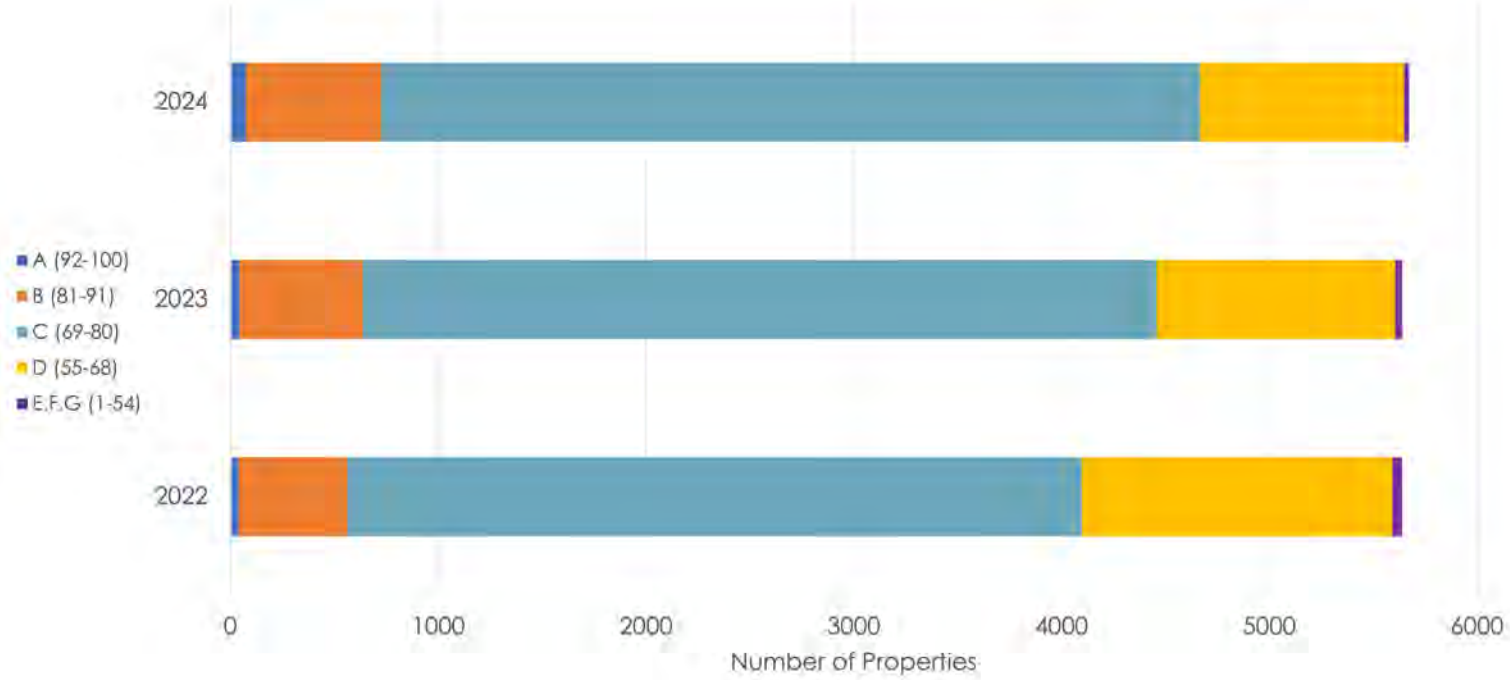


GBC Housing Stock Emissions

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) are required in the UK to provide a prospective owner or tenant with information on the energy performance of a building and recommendations for improvement. EPCs for homes use an A-G rating scale based on the modelled energy bill costs of running the building. As per new EPC Regulations, all existing council-owned homes are to meet EPC Band C or better by 2030, where practical, cost-effective, and affordable.

The graph below shows the improvement in energy performance for the council's social housing stock between 2022 and 2024.

GBC Housing - Energy Performance Ratings 2022-2024



The graph demonstrates that planned council activity during the year had a significant impact on improving the energy efficiency of its housing stock since the strategy was adopted in the year 2021; the proportion of homes with an EPC Rating of C or above is at 82% in 2024, up from 76% in 2023 and up from 63% in 2022.

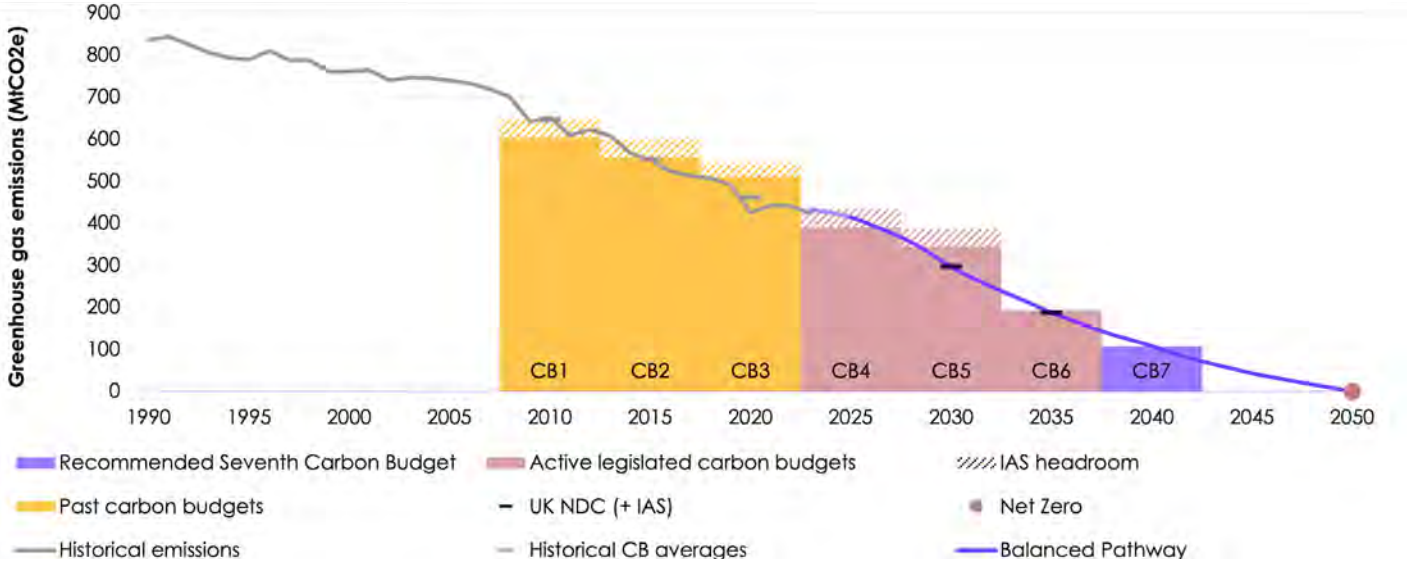
CARBON BUDGETS

UK Carbon Budget

The Climate Change Committee (CCC) is an independent, statutory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008. Their purpose is to advise the UK and devolved governments on emissions targets and to report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

The UK has committed to reaching Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with any residual greenhouse gas emissions balanced by removals. Their advice on the level of the Seventh Carbon Budget is based on Balanced Pathway: an emissions reduction pathway from 2025 to Net Zero by 2050. The pathway is in line with all of the UK's legislated carbon budgets and stated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). It achieves the recommended Seventh Carbon Budget via domestic action, without resorting to international credits.

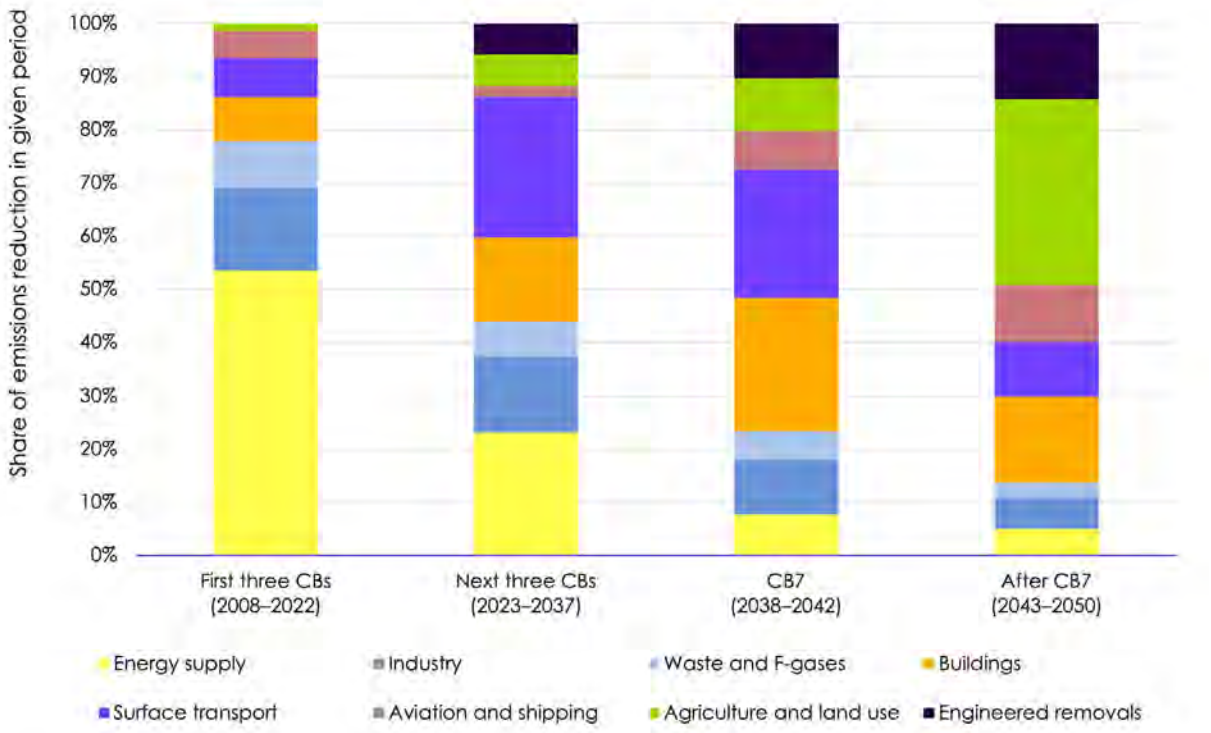
Figure 1-The recommended Seventh Carbon Budget



Description: The Balanced Pathway meets the UK's existing future emissions targets and sets the recommended level for the UK's next target: the Seventh Carbon Budget.
Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) (2024) Provisional UK greenhouse gas emissions national statistics 2023; DESNZ (2024) Final UK greenhouse gas emissions national statistics: 1990 to 2022; Climate Change Committee (CCC) analysis.
Notes: See Chapter 3. 'CB' refers to the UK's carbon budget. 'CB1' refers to the First Carbon Budget; subsequent numbers refer to subsequent carbon budgets. 'IAS' refers to international aviation and shipping. 'UK NDC' refers to the UK's Nationally Determined Contributions.

Emissions in the UK in 2023 were around half the levels they were in 1990. The pace of emissions reduction has more than doubled since the introduction of carbon budgets in 2008, driven by the phase-out of coal and the ramp-up of renewable electricity generation. By the middle of the Seventh Carbon Budget, on our pathway, emissions in the UK will be only a quarter of the level they are today, and 87% lower than levels in 1990 (90% lower excluding emissions from international aviation and shipping). Achieving this will require a significant reduction in emissions across sectors including surface transport, buildings, industry, and agriculture.

Figure 2 - Distribution of emissions reductions during each carbon budget period



Description: Over half of the emissions reduction to meet the first three carbon budgets came in the energy supply sectors. Looking forward, the majority of reductions to meet future carbon budgets will need to come from other sectors. Around half of the reduction during the Seventh Carbon Budget period will come from surface transport and buildings.
Source: CCC analysis.
Notes: See Chapter 3. 'CBs' refers to UK carbon budgets and 'CB7' refers to the Seventh Carbon Budget.

Source: www.theccc.org.uk/publication/the-seventh-carbon-budget/

The Seventh Carbon Budget is expected to be delivered through five routes,

1. Electricity
-> Low-carbon supply, Electric Vehicles (EVs), Heat pumps and Industrial electrification

2. Low-carbon fuels and carbon capture and storage (CCS)
-> Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) and shipping fuels, Hydrogen and CCS

3. Nature
-> new woodland creation and peatland restoration

4. Engineered removals

5. Demand
-> increased efficiency and low-carbon choices

Many of the solutions are available today and could be rapidly deployed, provided the right incentives are put in place. Other solutions, particularly within low-carbon fuels and engineered removals, are less certain and industry and government should continue to pursue multiple options for now.

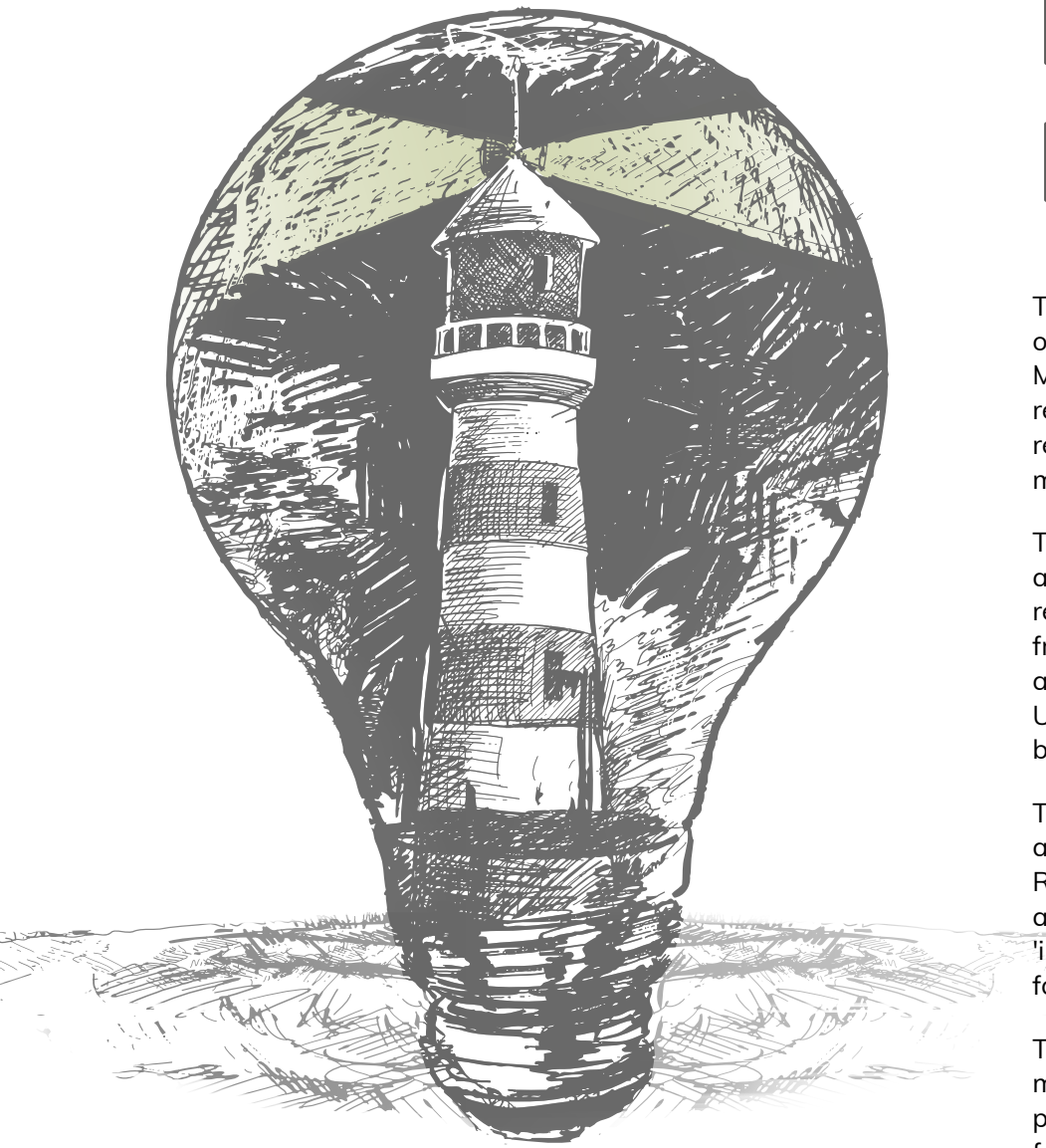
Gravesham Carbon Budget

The Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reduction (SCATTER) project funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) developed a methodology for Local Authorities to set carbon emissions targets that are consistent with the United Nations Paris Climate Agreement. This report uses the SCATTER methodology with revised global carbon budgets, based on the latest IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C and updated CO2 emissions datasets, to downscale global carbon budgets to Gravesham. This methodology has been successfully piloted with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and is being made available nationally to support all local authorities and groupings of local authorities. The report provides Gravesham with budgets for carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions and from the energy system for 2018 to 2100.

The carbon budgets are based on translating the “well below 2°C and pursuing 1.5°C” global temperature target and equity principles in the United Nations Paris Agreement to a national UK carbon budget.

Carbon Budget Period	Recommended Carbon Budget (Million tonnes (Mt) CO2)
2018 - 2022	2.0
2023 - 2027	1.0
2028 - 2032	0.5
2033 - 2037	0.3
2038 - 2042	0.1
2043 - 2047	0.1
2048 - 2100	0.1

As per the DESNZ statistics, the total emissions from the year 2018 to 2022 have been 2,019 Kt CO2 which is 1.83 MT CO2 which means we are well within the recommended carbon budget.



LOCAL CLIMATE RISKS

The Kent and Medway Resilience Forum (KMRF) is a collaboration of organisations and agencies aimed at enhancing the resilience of Kent and Medway communities and coordinating emergency responses. Established in response to the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004, KMRF is one of 38 local resilience forums across England, aligned with local police areas, and aims to minimise impact during emergencies.

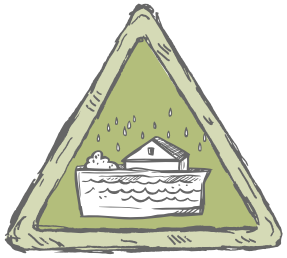
Their strategic aim is to promote a comprehensive and collaborative approach to the mitigation of risks to the public and to enhance response, resilience, and recovery. As climate change intensifies, its effects are felt from local to global scales, although the outcomes vary. Geographies play a crucial role in determining how specific areas experience these impacts. Understanding the particular risks relevant to each area is essential for building resilience.

The following section outlines the main risks that, in the worst case, could affect the borough and the entire county, according to the KMRF Community Risk Register. The register places risks into five categories. These categories are determined by assessing the 'likelihood' of a risk occurring and the various 'impacts' that the risk would cause. The categories are Accident and System failure, Cyber, Human and animal disease, and Societal and Natural hazards.

The likelihood of a risk occurring is based on historical evidence, subject matter expert opinion and local expertise. The KMRF constantly carries out a process called 'horizon scanning', in which they monitor various channels to forecast what may occur in the short, medium and long term (e.g. weather forecasting). Climate risks within the register are associated as natural hazards and are classified as follows.

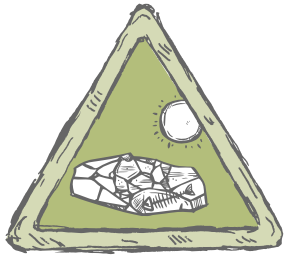
Very High Risks
– Coastal Flooding

These are classed as primary or critical risks requiring immediate attention. They may have a high or low likelihood of occurrence, but their potential consequences are such that they must be treated as a high priority.



High Risks
– Fluvial Flooding and Surface Water Flooding

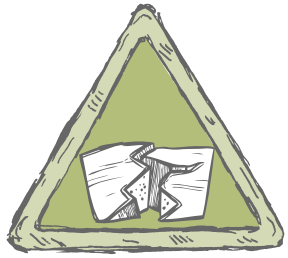
These risks are classed as significant. They may have a high or low likelihood of occurrence, but their potential consequences are sufficiently serious to warrant appropriate consideration after those risks classed as 'very high'. Consideration should be given to the development of strategies to reduce or eliminate the risks, but also mitigation in the form of at least (multiagency) generic planning, exercising and training should be put in place and the risk monitored on a regular frequency.



Medium Risks
– Drought, Poor Air Quality, Space Weather, Heatwave

These risks are less significant but may cause upset and inconvenience in the short term.

These risks should be monitored to ensure that they are being appropriately managed and consideration given to their being managed under generic emergency planning arrangements.

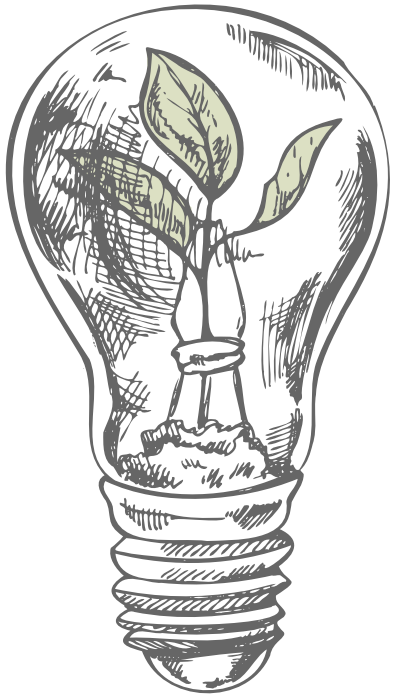


Low Risks
– Earthquake UK

This risk is unlikely to occur and not significant in their impact. It should be managed using normal or generic planning arrangements and require minimal monitoring and control unless subsequent risk assessments show a substantial change, prompting a move to another risk category.

Source: The Kent Community Risk Register

OUR CLIMATE CHANGE AMBITIONS



Our Climate Change Strategy marks the Council's commitment to tackling the challenge of climate change across the borough. It provides a framework for our actions aimed at reducing carbon emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change that are already happening to provide a better environment for future generations.

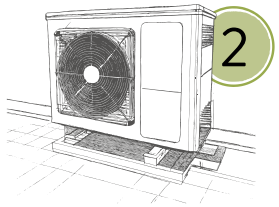
Adaptation to climate change is an essential component of our approach. This involves adjusting processes, practices, and frameworks to minimise possible harm or take advantage of climate change opportunities.

The council has developed a new strategy that includes the following priority areas and depends on all of us taking action to bring about significant change. We cannot accomplish these goals unless the entire Borough works together. For the borough to move closer to the net zero goal, the Council, our residents, businesses, and other important community members are all responsible for their actions.

Transport & Movement

Our goal is to transform our transportation habits by establishing a sustainable movement network throughout our borough that facilitates walking, cycling, public transportation, and wheeling. In addition to embracing new technologies, we'll make sure that the appropriate infrastructure is available when needed. The health and well-being of our communities will improve if we encourage active travel and lower transportation-related carbon emissions.

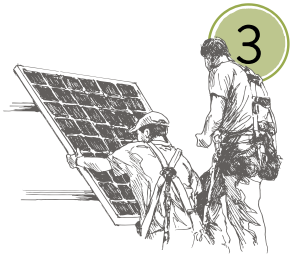
- **Encourage active travel through the use of public transport, cycle routes and walking facilities across the borough, promoting the health and climate change benefits for all.**
- **Produce an Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy and improve the network of EV Charge Points in the Borough.**
- **Work with Kent County Council to reduce the volume of traffic on our roads and improve our transport infrastructure.**
- **Develop and oversee delivery of a path towards a low-carbon taxi and private hire fleet and reduced engine idling.**
- **Explore and develop plans to improve air quality and manage traffic in the borough.**



Buildings and Energy Efficiency

Our goal is to make all existing and future dwellings as energy and water efficient as possible, hence lowering consumer prices. We will collaborate with partners and infrastructure providers to share the most recent details regarding the grants and programs that are accessible to our residents and communities.

- **Encourage and support homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes through insulation, double glazing, and energy-efficient appliances.**
- **Support and promote the installation of renewable energy sources such as solar panels, heat pumps, and biomass boilers.**
- **Encourage new developments to maximise opportunities for implementing renewable energy technologies and sustainable materials.**
- **Champion more sustainable development through the Local Plan.**
- **Ensure all Council-led housing development is built to low carbon standards.**
- **Identify opportunities and support community-led energy projects, e.g. local solar farms in the borough.**
- **Embrace new technology including carbon capture/storage.**



Low carbon Business & Industry

Our goal is to encourage businesses, industries and commercial buildings to reduce their carbon footprint. We will collaborate with partners and infrastructure providers to share the most recent details regarding the grants and programs that are accessible to our businesses and communities.

- **Encourage Businesses and Industries to adopt cleaner/renewable technologies and to comply with environmental regulations.**
- **Signpost commercial & industrial sectors to government-funded retrofit programmes.**
- **Establish local recognition programs for businesses that achieve high standards in sustainability.**
- **Foster collaboration between local authorities, industries, and environmental organisations.**

4 Waste production & Resource consumption

Our goal is to increase recycling rates and reduce the quantity of nonrecyclable material we receive. Additionally, we want our communities to have easy access to information so that people may make environmentally friendly decisions.

- **Deliver recycling services to domestic properties and commercial customers.**
- **Support and encourage residents and businesses to reduce, reuse, recycle and compost**
- **Improve recycling rates in the Borough.**
- **Support circular economy principles.**

5 Land Use & Biodiversity

Our goal is to conserve and improve the natural environment's preservation and environmental benefits as well as to demonstrate that we are responding to climate change in a timely and suitable manner.

- **Produce and adopt a Biodiversity Strategy.**
- **Improve access to open space, food growing and wildlife through land management, community gardening and habitat creation.**
- **Supporting improved food choices – healthy diet information, public health initiatives**
- **Increase biodiversity through local 'green' initiatives, volunteering opportunities and rewilding.**
- **Work with partners to reduce and manage the impact of climate change impacts through adaptation, mitigation, sustainable flood risk management and promotion of the benefits of green infrastructure.**

Community Engagement & Green Skills

Our goal is to bring together our residents and communities and work along with them to tackle the challenges of the climate crisis and convey the idea that any single step towards reducing emissions is beneficial.

- **Raise awareness of Climate Change via the implementation of a communications strategy and support community activities aimed at decreasing emissions and increasing local resilience to climate change.**
- **Signpost residents to relevant grants.**
- **Work with all partners and key stakeholders to address climate change.**
- **Organise workshops and informative sessions for residents on best practices for reducing emissions and sustainability.**
- **Develop and promote green skills and job opportunities within the Borough.**
- **Review Council procurement policies and practice to help mitigate Climate Change.**
- **Educate all Council Members and Officers on Climate Change, promoting awareness of carbon dioxide costs and impacts, and encouraging individuals, communities and organisations to reduce emissions.**

Council Assets & Fleet

As we work towards achieving net zero, we are and will continue to do everything we can to minimise emissions from our fleet and our own operational assets where financially viable.

- **Reduce carbon emissions from our operational assets through implementing heat decarbonisation plans.**
- **Reduce carbon emissions from our fleet through switching to electric vehicles or renewable fuels like HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil).**
- **Improve the energy efficiency of our housing stock and bring EPC rating to band C.**

CLIMATE ACTION CO-BENEFITS

Implementing climate action and reducing emissions offer numerous co-benefits beyond just mitigating climate change. Here are some key benefits.

1. Public Health Improvements

- **Reduced Air Pollution:** Lower emissions from fossil fuels decrease pollutants like particulate matter and nitrogen oxides, leading to fewer respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.
- **Healthier Lifestyles:** Promoting active transportation (walking, cycling) and sustainable diets can improve physical health and reduce obesity rates.

2. Economic Benefits

- **Job Creation:** The transition to renewable energy and green technologies creates new job opportunities in sectors like solar, wind, and energy efficiency.
- **Cost Savings:** Energy efficiency measures can reduce energy bills for households and businesses, leading to significant cost savings.

3. Environmental Protection

- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Actions like reforestation and habitat restoration help preserve biodiversity and maintain ecosystem services such as water purification and soil fertility.
- **Reduced Resource Depletion:** Efficient use of resources and reduced consumption help conserve natural resources like water and minerals.

4. Social Equity

- **Improved Living Conditions:** Climate actions can improve living conditions in vulnerable communities by reducing pollution and providing access to clean energy.
- **Equitable Access:** Ensuring fair access to the benefits of climate action, such as clean energy and green jobs, can help address social inequalities.

5. Enhanced Climate Resilience

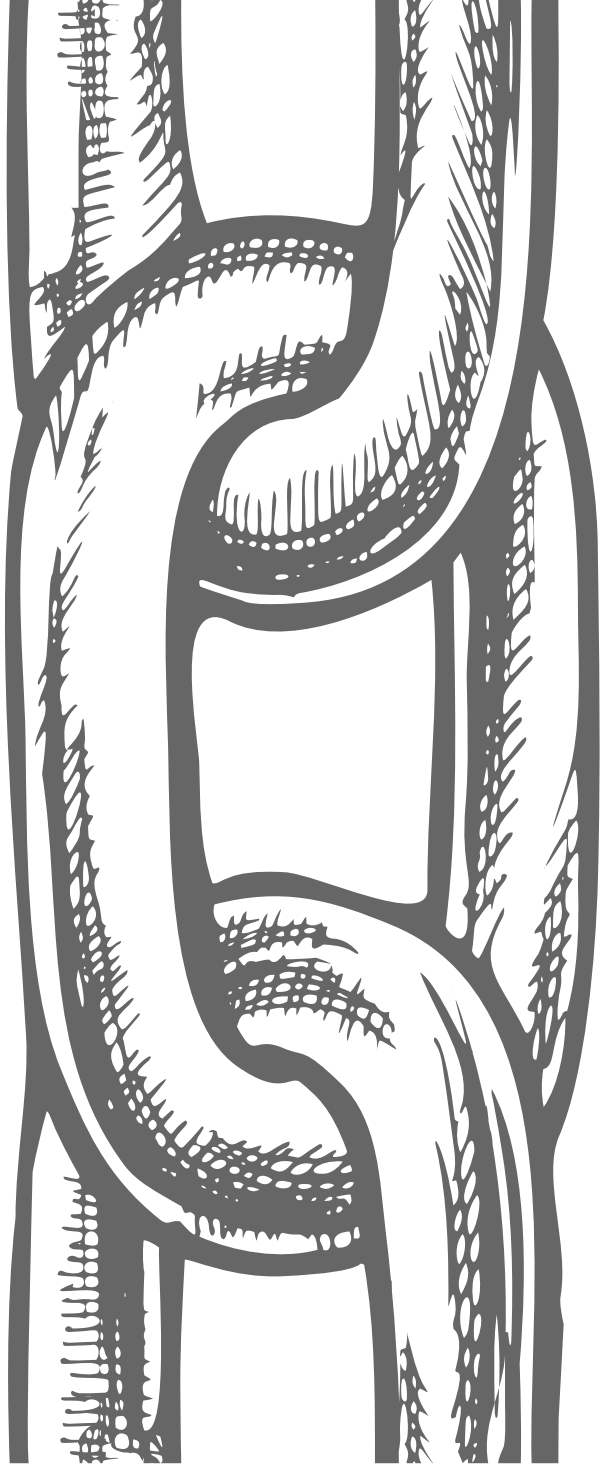
- **Infrastructure Adaptation:** Investing in resilient infrastructure can protect communities from the impacts of extreme weather events, such as floods and storms.
- **Sustainable Land Use:** Practices like sustainable agriculture and urban planning can enhance the resilience of food systems and reduce vulnerability to climate impacts.

6. Energy Security

- **Diversified Energy Sources:** Reducing reliance on fossil fuels and increasing the use of renewable energy sources can enhance energy security and reduce vulnerability to energy price fluctuations.
- **Local Energy Production:** Promoting local renewable energy production can reduce dependence on imported energy and increase energy independence.

7. Community and Social Benefits

- **Community Cohesion:** Climate action initiatives can bring communities together, fostering collaboration and strengthening social ties.
- **Education and Awareness:** Integrating climate education into schools and communities can empower individuals to take action and promote sustainable practices.



LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIES

The council's Climate Change commitment is intrinsically linked to several council policies and strategies, putting Climate Change at the heart of all of our activities:

- **Corporate Plan**
- **Local Plan**
- **Air Quality Monitoring Strategy**
- **Procurement Strategy**
- **Social Value Policy**
- **Waste Management Policy**
- **Street Cleansing Policy**
- **Animal Control and Environmental Protection Enforcement Policy**
- **Housing Development Strategy**
- **Treasury Management Strategy**
- **Communications Strategy**
- **IT & Digital Plan**

MONITORING & REPORTING

To ensure the Climate Change Strategy is delivered successfully, accountability must be embedded across all service areas and levels of authority within the council. The below management plan highlights how the Council will achieve this:

- **Officer working groups will be formed to carry out tasks within the scope of their departments.**
- **The Climate Action Delivery Manager will meet the officer working groups to monitor the progress of the delivery plan.**
- **The Management Team will be updated about the progress made through the delivery plan.**
- **Every six months, the Climate Change Advisory Board will receive a report detailing the progress of the delivery plan.**
- **Annual report will be produced to go to the Full Council for approval and adoption at the end of each year.**
- **Once approved, the annual report will be published on the Council's website.**

CONTACT DETAILS

Our dedicated Climate Change webpage has a wide range of information for residents and businesses along with annual reports. The webpage continues to develop as and when additional information is available to update.

For any further information, please email at climate@gravesham.gov.uk

Gravesham Borough Council