

Climate Change Action Plan – Annual Progress Report 2025

This report summarises key progress and achievements during **Year 1 of the Climate Change Action Plan 2025–2028**.

Reporting has moved from a financial year to a calendar year. As a result, there is some overlap with the 2024–25 Progress Report for the period January–March 2025.

Knowledge and Empowerment

- The **Climate Change Action Plan 2025–2028** was adopted by Cabinet in **August 2025**, introducing **two new aims** and **five priority areas of action** for Medway.
- Medway launched its **Marmot Place commitment** with environmental sustainability one of the **eight core principles** to tackle inequalities and improve health outcomes
- **Five meetings of the Community Climate Working Group** were held bringing representation from across Medway’s communities.
- A new **Medway Community Energy Project Working Group** was established, led by community volunteers and supported by the Climate Response team.
- **Three meetings of the Climate Change Members Working Party** took place, and the **first Climate Action Parish Improvement Plan** was completed for High Halstow.
- The Climate Response Team partnered with the University of Kent to deliver **A Park for Life workshops**, and with Electric Medway on **Hopes for our Future Environment workshops**. The team also engaged widely with residents, schools, local organisations and businesses at a variety of events across the Medway towns.
- The **A Better Medway Schools Award** continues to drive climate action through school pledges, with **15 schools** achieving Bronze, Silver or Platinum awards and **a further 19** actively working towards Bronze.
- The **Medway Healthy Early Years (HEY) Award** criteria were updated to embed climate action and sustainability, and **two climate training sessions** were delivered to **27 early years practitioners** across **22 settings**.
- Medway strengthened its leadership on climate and business by hosting its **first Climate Business event** with over 100 attendees, while the Medway Business and Skills Showcase, with more than 200 participants, featured a **Net Zero panel**.
- **Four free business net zero audits** were undertaken, and **six Partners for Green Growth grants totalling £20,000** were awarded.
- The Medway Business Awards **Sustainable Innovation Award** went to Syntech Biofuel.
- 21 creative organisations signed up to the **Kent & Medway Environmental Sustainability Pledge**
- The **Medway Sustainable Events Guide** was launched and 30 learners participated in *Events Uncovered* to find out more about the guide.

- Medway Adult Education promoted and delivered **21 courses incorporating climate change themes**, such as reducing water consumption and reducing food waste, supporting 138 individuals.
- The Climate Change **Newsletter** continued to provide regular updates on all things climate related in Medway. Targeted **social media** content, including the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Service, the National Energy Action campaign the government's Clean Energy Campaign, led to increased engagement across the climate channels.

Clean, Efficient and Equitable Energy

- Significant **energy efficiency improvements were made to council-owned homes**, with 88 properties receiving cavity wall insulation and 281 upgraded with new boilers. Other measures included new windows and doors, loft insulation, and new LED lighting.
- **63 homeowners were supported to install energy efficiency measures in their properties** funded by ECO4, Great British Insulation Scheme and HUG2 grant programmes.
- **Solar Together Kent was supported for a fifth year**. 45 installs have been completed to date, giving an estimated Co2e reduction in year 1 of 35,938kg. 42 homeowners added a battery to their solar installation.
- A feasibility study for a **heat network in Hoo** was completed and £100,000 funding secured for the next detailed planning and development stage.
- **LED lighting** was installed at Hoo Sports Centre, providing an anticipated saving of 14,000 kWh per year of electricity.

Sustainable Travel and Transport

- Participation in the **Walk on Wednesday (WOW) scheme grew to 22 schools**, with full-year data showing a 15.48% rise in active travel, nearly a 15% reduction in car trips, and **national top-10 rankings** in the Autumn competition
- **Five new School Streets** were delivered, bringing the total to 12 locations across Medway.
- Bus travel incentives proved highly effective, enabling **31,000 free child journeys** over the summer and generating **passenger uplifts of 32.5% in June and 61% in December** through Free Bus Travel Weekends.
- Timetable refinements improved **bus punctuality to over 85%**, with several days reaching around 90% and one depot achieving **best punctuality day nationally** in May.
- A **draft Local Bus Infrastructure Plan** was completed, with priority routes identified and funding secured. **Phase 1 improvements at Chatham Waterfront Bus Station** have improved passenger access and operational conditions.
- Eight additional **green roof bus stops** were installed across Medway.
- The **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan** was approved by Cabinet in March, creating a **10-year investment plan** for walking and cycling routes.

- **Cycling levels continue to increase** across the year, including a 37% increase from April to June compared to the previous year.
- The **Refuse Collection Vehicle fleet replacement programme completed**, replacing 46 vehicles with more efficient Euro 6 diesel models, with solar-powered ancillaries and climate-focused branding.

Resource Efficiency

- Child-Friendly Medway continued to provide a **Book Swap Shop** at The Pentagon Shopping Centre, operating 42 times across the year, with hundreds of books exchanged.
- The **Medway Integrated Community Equipment Service collected 4,511 items**, diverting the vast majority from disposal with 54% recycled and 45% reused for parts.
- At our existing allotment sites, **40 unused plots were brought back into use and 63 new plots were created.**
- **12 monthly Repair Cafes** were hosted in libraries, attracting over 330 residents and supporting repair and reuse.
- A **Clothes Swap** launched at Gillingham Library, with 6 events held to date and more than 370 attendees.
- The **Small Waste Electrical and Electronic (WEEE) service** expanded to larger containers at key collection sites in response to high demand.

Green and Resilient Medway

- Over **3,500 tree plugs and feathers** were planted at Deangate Park by community volunteers and Council Staff.
- Medway **secured funding from the Tree Council to plant 1,300 trees** at Burnham Walk as part of the National Highways Tree Programme.
- Progress continued on a **new Community Tree Nursery at Cozenton Park**, supported by the **Friends of Cozenton Park Tree Nursery**, formally inaugurated in April 2025.
- Medway supported the development of the **Kent and Nature Local Nature Recovery Strategy** which launched in November 2025.
- The third **annual tree whip giveaway** as part of National Tree Week supported the planting of **75 new trees** in gardens and community green spaces.
- The **draft Local Plan was published** in June 2025 and submitted to the planning inspectorate for examination.