

# District Wide Carbon Strategy – Overview of Consultation Responses

## 1. Introduction and Consultation Methods

### Consultation methods

Consultation on the District-wide Carbon Strategy took place from Monday 6 November to Friday 1 December 2023.

The following methods were used to seek the views of residents and key stakeholders:

- Online through the council's consultation portal: <https://folkestone-hythe-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/>
- Targeted consultation by Canterbury City Council to randomly selected households within the district (5,000 addresses).
- Drop-in events in four locations across the district (Folkestone, New Romney, Hythe and North Downs).
- Through a dedicated email address: [DWCP.Consultation@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:DWCP.Consultation@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

The council commissioned Liu Batchelor of LVB Creative to produce video content, working closely with the council's communications team and these videos were shared on all the council's social media platforms.

Information about the consultation was distributed to the following by email:

- All Carbon Innovation Lab (CI-Lab) stakeholders.
- 834 businesses through the contacts maintained by the council's economic development team.
- Community contacts through the council's community development officer.
- 41 key stakeholders and partners on the list of statutory consultees maintained by the strategy and policy team.
- All town and parish councils within the district.
- Schools on the Eco-schools mailing list.
- Community groups included within the District-wide Carbon Plan.

The climate change officer attended a consultation event with key stakeholders for the 'Folkestone – A Brighter Future' project on 16 November 2023, using that audience to promote the District-wide Carbon Plan consultation.

In addition, the climate change officer held a question-and-answer session with a visiting group of school children in the Civic Centre on 22 November 2023 to explore their awareness and concern about environmental issues and to encourage them and their fellow pupils to respond to the consultation.

### Online through the council's Objective survey platform

To ensure the council sought the views from a broad range of residents, a questionnaire was developed along with a copy of the proposed district wide carbon

plan and a five-page summary document. The questionnaire was formatted on the Objective survey platform and the full plan and summary documents were uploaded. It was integrated on the council's website and the link was provided in all consultation emails.

### **Targeted consultation using Canterbury City Council's survey team**

Canterbury City Council's survey team was commissioned to undertake a survey of district households, following the work that Canterbury had previously undertaken for consultation on Folkestone & Hythe's Corporate Plan, Creating Tomorrow Together, in 2020.

This element of the consultation included an introductory letter signed by the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Biodiversity along with the five-page summary of the district wide carbon plan and a questionnaire. These were sent by post to 5,000 randomly selected addresses within the district. The letter the residents received included an address return envelope to enable them to send the questionnaire back to Canterbury City Council once completed.

### **Drop-in events at locations across the district**

Drop-in events were held in Romney Marsh, Hythe, North Downs and Folkestone. The events started at 12 to 4.00pm with the event at Folkestone running until 6.00pm following feedback received about having extended hours. Visitors were encouraged to fill in a copy of the questionnaire at the event or to visit the council's website to submit their responses through the Objective platform.

The community groups and businesses that the council had engaged while developing the District-wide Carbon Plan were contacted to offer the opportunity for them to have participants at the drop-in events. Hythe Environmental Community Group was present at the drop-in session in Folkestone, and they promoted their electrical waste recycling service.

### **Dedicated email address**

A dedicated email address was established particularly for this consultation.

### **Consultation results**

The consultation received comments from 460 respondents.

455 questionnaire responses were received through a variety of means, including Canterbury City Council's mailout, questionnaires completed at the drop-in events and responses submitted through the Objective portal.

Five responses, not in the questionnaire format, were received through the dedicated email address.

- **Section 2** of this report summarises the results of the questionnaire responses.
- **Section 3** provides the five responses received through the dedicated email address.

## 2. Analysis of Consultation Responses

### Overview

This section provides a summary of the 455 questionnaires received through the Canterbury City Council mailout, questionnaires completed at the drop-in events and questionnaire responses submitted through the Objective portal.

The questionnaire was divided into eight sections as follows:

- **Section 1 – About You** – Respondents were invited to provide some basic information about themselves, the capacity in which they were responding to the consultation and where they lived or were based.
- **Section 2 – Your Views on Climate Change** – Respondents were asked for their general views on climate change, whether they considered they had felt the effects of climate change and whether they would consider making changes to reduce their impact on the environment.
- **Section 3 – About the Plan** – Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the contents of the draft District-wide Carbon Plan and the five areas of focus it outlines (transport; residential; commercial and industrial; waste and water; and carbon absorption and biodiversity).
- **Section 4 – Challenges, Risks and Opportunities** – Respondents were asked what they considered were the most pressing climate change challenges and risks facing the district and whether the plan adequately addresses these challenges.
- **Section 5 – Where we are now** – The plan provides examples of environmental projects and initiatives that are taking place within the district and respondents were asked whether they could provide other examples.
- **Section 6 – Where we want to be** – The plan lists some actions that could be undertaken to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to a changing climate and respondents were asked for any other actions that could be taken.
- **Section 7 – About funding our vision** – The plan stresses that partnership working will be essential to address the challenge and the council cannot resource or lead all the actions that will be needed. Respondents were asked to identify resources that could be used to help deliver the plan's actions.
- **Section 8 – About monitoring and evaluating progress** – Respondents were asked how action could be coordinated and how progress could be monitored.

The following sections summarise the questionnaire responses. Questions were generally provided as tick box responses where respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a statement or were asked to rank priorities.

Some questions provided space for people to provide further comments or examples from their experience or best practice from other organisations, and the council received almost 2,500 individual comments to these questions. Given this, the climate change officer is still assessing these comments and will report back when the assessment has been completed.

## Section 1: About You

### 1. Who is responding to this consultation? Please tick one box only.

Who is responding	Number	Percentage
Individual	442	97.1%
Community Group	2	0.4%
Private Sector Organisation	4	0.9%
Public Sector Organisation	-	-
Voluntary Sector Organisation	1	0.2%
Social Enterprise	-	-
Charity	1	0.2%
Faith Group	-	-
Special Interest Group	-	-
Other, please specify	2	0.4%
No reply	3	0.6%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>455</b>	

#### Other, please state below

People stating 'other' to the above question gave the following responses:

- Our family.
- Retired pension.

### 2. In which area of Folkestone & Hythe District do you live or are based?

Please tick one box only.

Area of Folkestone & Hythe District	Number	Percentage
Broadmead	19	4.1%
Cheriton	38	8.3%
East Folkestone	33	7.2%
Folkestone Central	50	11.0%
Folkestone Harbour	22	4.8%
Hythe	87	19.1%
Hythe Rural	20	4.4%
New Romney	33	7.2%
North Downs East	22	4.8%
North Downs West	7	1.5%
Romney Marsh	35	7.7%
Sandgate	25	5.5%
Walland and Denge Marsh	3	0.6%
Other, please state	53	11.6%
No reply	8	1.7%
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>455</b>	

#### Other, please state

People stating 'other' to the above question gave the following responses:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number</b>
Capel le Ferne	1
Densole	1
Densole / Hawkinge	1
Dymchurch	1
Elham	3
Etchinghill	1
Folkestone West	3
Grantham*	1
Greatstone	2
Hawkinge	16
Lydd	4
Lyminge	6
Monks Horton	1
Saltwood	1
Seabrook	1
Sellindge	7
St Mary's Bay	1
Stelling Minnis	2

\* This response was from The Woodland Trust, which is based in Grantham, Lincolnshire.

**3. Please provide the first part of your home or organisation post code (e.g., TN12 or CT20)**

<b>Postcode</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
CT11	1	0.2%
CT18	48	10.6%
CT19	97	21.4%
CT20	101	22.2%
CT21	95	20.9%
CT4	17	3.7%
NG31*	1	0.2%
TN25	11	2.4%
TN26	1	0.2%
TN28	37	8.1%
TN29	42	9.3%
No reply	4	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

\*This response was from The Woodland Trust, which is based in Grantham, Lincolnshire.

**4. What is your connection to Folkestone & Hythe District (you can select multiple answers, for example, if you are both a resident and work in the district). Please tick all that apply.**

Connection to Folkestone & Hythe	Number	Percentage
Resident	446	98.0%
Local Community Group	14	3.0%
Local Charity Organisation	5	1.0%
Parish Council	2	0.4%
Town Council	1	0.2%
Business	22	4.8%
Charity	5	1.0%
School or college	2	0.4%
I work in the area	36	7.9%
Other, please state	7	1.5%
No reply	1	0.2%

Respondents could tick multiple answers (e.g. for a resident who also works in the district) and so the number of responses total more than the number of respondents. Percentages are of the total number of respondents (455).

**Other, please state**

People stating 'other' to the above question gave the following responses:

- Church.
- Church Warden of a local church.
- Council tenancy.
- Retired.
- Volunteer.

**5. Please select your age group. Please tick one box only.**

Age group	Number	Percentage
Under 16	-	-
16-24	2	0.4%
25-34	7	1.5%
35-44	21	4.6%
45-54	51	11.2%
55-64	100	22.0%
65+	257	56.5%
Prefer not to say	15	3.3%
No reply	2	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

**6. What gender are you? Please tick one box only.**

Gender	Number	Percentage
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Female	172	37.8%
Male	270	59.3%
Other	-	-
Prefer not to say	10	2.2%
No reply	3	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

## Section 2: Your Views on Climate Change

- 1. How optimistic are you about the present and future possibilities for addressing climate change's effects?** Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Extremely Optimistic	21	4.6%
Optimistic	118	25.9%
Neutral	108	23.7%
Pessimistic	133	29.2%
Extremely Pessimistic	50	11.0%
Undecided	21	4.6%
No reply	4	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

- 2. How much value do you place on addressing climate change?** Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Very High	176	38.7%
High	156	34.3%
Less High	87	19.1%
Undecided	28	6.1%
No reply	8	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

- 3. Have you experienced any climate-related events or incidents that have had a personal impact on you or someone you're familiar with?** Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	125	27.5%
No	324	71.2%
No reply	6	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

- 4. Do you think that individuals can play a role in tackling climate change?** Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	358	78.7%
No	90	19.8%
No reply	7	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

5. Are you open to embracing personal lifestyle adjustments that contribute to lessening your environmental footprint? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	312	68.6%
No	47	10.3%
Undecided	89	19.6%
No reply	7	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

### Section 3: About the Plan

1. What is your overall view of the District Wide Carbon Plan? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
I support the plan	251	55.2%
I support some of the actions but not others	116	25.5%
I do not support the plan	63	13.8%
No reply	25	5.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

2. Do you agree with the Five Priority Pillars of Focus (these are based on available data)? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	316	69.5%
No	106	23.3%
No reply	33	7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

3. Based on the information detailed in the plan, what date do you support as realistic for the district to reach net zero? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
2030	65	14.3%
2040	172	37.8%
2050	169	37.1%
No reply	49	10.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	



4. The Plan details the Five Priority Pillars of Focus that we need to address based on available data to tackle climate change. Please rate the Five Priority Pillars of Focus ranking each one from 1-5 with (5) = very important and (1) = not at all important. (This is to help us focus on the most important priority pillar(s) to you)

Pillar	5 (very important)	4	3	2	1 (not at all important)
Transport	56	68	49	61	36
	20.7%	25.2%	18.1%	22.6%	13.3%
Residential	76	41	61	48	72
	25.5%	13.7%	20.5%	16.1%	24.1%
Commercial and industrial	42	69	85	46	40
	14.9%	24.5%	30.1%	16.3%	14.2%
Waste and water	38	69	48	77	48
	13.6%	24.6%	17.1%	27.5%	17.1%
Carbon absorption and biodiversity	68	42	52	47	74
	24.0%	14.8%	18.4%	16.6%	26.1%

5. Do you think the district-wide carbon plan adequately addresses the unique challenges and opportunities of the district? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	250	55.0%
No	160	35.1%
No reply	45	9.9%
Total	455	

#### Section 4: Challenges, Risks and Opportunities

1. The Plan outlines some of the challenges and risks of addressing climate change for the district, do you agree? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
I agree	228	50.1%
I agree with some but not others	138	30.3%
I do not agree	59	13.0%
No reply	30	6.6%
Total	455	

2. The Plan outlines some opportunities to address climate change to the district, do you agree? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
I agree	235	51.6%
I agree with some but not others	137	30.1%

I do not agree	57	12.5%
No reply	26	5.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

## Section 6: Where we want to be

- 1. The Plan outlines some actions we will undertake together to reduce carbon emissions across the district. Do you agree with these actions we set out?**  
Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
I agree	218	48.0%
I agree with some but not others	148	32.5%
I do not agree	60	13.2%
No reply	29	6.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

- 2. Do you know of any other specific actions we can take to address climate change?** Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	120	26.4%
No	255	56.0%
No reply	80	17.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

- 3. Would support the idea of a local Sustainability Hub where you can find out what you can do about climate change?** Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	326	71.6%
No	111	24.4%
No reply	18	3.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

- 4. Would you be willing to help contribute to a local Sustainability Hub where you can work with other members of the community on specific projects?**  
Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	142	31.2%
No	291	63.9%
No reply	22	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

## Section 7: About funding our vision

1. Are you familiar with any creative funding avenues, community-driven initiatives, or forward-thinking strategies that can be harnessed to enable our vision of achieving net zero in a positive way? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	44	9.7%
No	388	85.3%
No reply	23	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

2. Which of these should we prioritise as a district to address climate change? Please tick one box only.

- Climate mitigation such as tree planting, renewable generation, and energy efficiency measures).
- Climate adaptation (such as storm drains and flood prevention).

Options	Number	Percentage
Mitigation	53	11.6%
Adaptation	69	15.2%
Both	313	68.8%
No reply	20	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

## Section 8: About monitoring and evaluating progress

1. Do you agree that the Carbon Innovation Lab (CI-Lab) should transition to an implementation group to help monitor and evaluate the progress of actions within this plan? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	322	70.8%
No	99	21.7%
No reply	34	7.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

2. Are there any existing frameworks or models for monitoring and evaluating carbon action plans that you think should be considered? Please tick one box only.

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	54	11.9%
No	311	68.3%
No reply	90	19.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	

**3. Would you be willing to be contacted to support or participate in future community initiatives that would help to deliver on the actions? Please tick one box only.**

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	129	29.0%
No	298	65.5%
No reply	18	3.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>445</b>	

### **3. Other Consultation Responses**

Five responses were received through the dedicated email address. These are provided below.

#### **1. Response from Elham Environmental Group**

Principal concern is how the objectives of the plan will be rolled out effectively to stakeholders. CI-Lab may not be the effective method to do so because it relies on voluntary organisations engaging and there is the fear that there will be large gaps in the districts that are not participants of the CI-Lab.

Suggestion: a more robust system might be to engage with Town and Parish Councils and require them to submit their carbon plans to F&HDC with ongoing updates of progress against milestones say on a 6 monthly basis. It is thought this would give the council a positive way of gathering data from the district and hence an effective overview of whether the plan is working on a broad front.

Schemes and initiatives mentioned within the plan appear to come and go and sometimes close when funding runs out. How does the Council intend to keep communities aware of these latest support / help initiatives so that residents can make an informed choice? The difficulty of so doing is appreciated but has social media been considered? Is there also a case for implanting an alert channel to Parish Councils so that they can inform residents either directly or via their environment groups?

The following plans / documents that provide some background or links were mentioned within the District Wide Plan:

- Net Zero Strategy, Build Back Greener 10/21 (UK Gov).
- National Planning Policy Framework 7/21 (UK Gov).
- National Planning Practice Guidance on Climate Change (UK Gov).
- The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (KCC).
- The Local Transport Plan 5 (KCC).
- The Climate Change Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway (KCC).
- The Kent and Medway Emissions Analysis and Pathways to Net Zero 12/2020 (KCC).
- The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy 6/2020 (KCC).
- The Kent and Medway Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment (KCC).

- The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (KCC).
- The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (KCC).
- The Bikeability Programme (KCC).
- The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (FHD).
- The district carbon Action Plan (FHD).
- The District Food network (FHD).
- Creating Tomorrow Together (FHD).
- Places and Policy Local Plan 2020 (FHD).

We can appreciate the difficulty of managing with such a diverse plethora of background documents. Is there a case for constructing a structure diagram showing the paths and linkages between documents in a way that helps to ensure that this plan is compliant?

## 2. Response from a member of the public

I received my winter copy of the 'your district today' magazine and was having a read through when the article about the plan to reduce carbon emissions caught my eye. I am currently a tenant in the maisonettes in [address removed], I am a single mum with two small children and in my property, I currently have only bathing facilities, it is a well-known fact that showers take far less water and gas to run than running baths. I run 2 baths per day, one for me and one for my children, but if we had a shower the amount of water and gas used would be considerably lower, this got me thinking about how many other council tenants do not have a shower. I believe installation of showers in all council properties would massively impact our districts carbon emissions, furthermore, will reduce water and gas bills for the tenants which during the current cost of living crisis would be extremely beneficial to all.

## 3. Response from National Highways

Time Horizon - It is unclear what the time horizon is for the Plan. Is it 2030 or 2050? A time horizon would be helpful so that readers can understand what the vision relates to and how the actions will be implemented across the plan period.

Policy Drivers - This section needs to recognise the expectations and opportunities presented by the following Government plans and policies:

- Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021):  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-decarbonisation-plan>
- Department for Transport Circular 01/2022 Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development (2022):  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development>

Circular 01/2022 is Government policy and should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It highlights that the proposed location of future growth, e.g. homes and jobs, is an important factor in demonstrating that

a local authority area is on a pathway to net zero by 2050 and therefore compliant with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008 (para. 32 of the Circular).

**Actions: Development Plan** - It is helpful that the actions are set out according to the five pillars of focus ('transport', 'residential', 'commercial industrial', 'waste and water', and 'carbon absorption and biodiversity'). However, there are potential strategic over-arching actions that can achieve benefits across multiple pillars of focus. This needs to be recognised.

A significant over-arching action is the review of the Council's development plan ('Places & Policies Local Plan (2020) and Core Strategy Review (2022)'). In particular, the spatial strategy and where future growth (homes and jobs etc) is planned for. Locating development in areas of high accessibility by sustainable transport modes (or areas that can be made more accessible), e.g. walking, wheeling, and cycling, public transport and shared travel, can help reduce the dependency upon the car, especially for local trips. This is a positive action that can help reduce carbon emissions from transport. To support this, the development plan would need a vision-led approach to development (overall and for larger allocations) that moves away from 'predict and provide' transport planning to planning that sets an outcome communities want to achieve and provides the sustainable transport solutions to deliver those outcomes ('vision and validate', 'decide and provide' or 'monitor and manage'). We are happy to support the Council in achieving this aim through our engagement with your plan-making and decision-taking stages, while recognising the varying challenges that will be presented by certain sites based on their land use, scale and / or location.

We have noted the sections on the Local Plan and Core Strategy review (2.2.1) and place shaping (4.1.3) which are helpful, but they do not focus on the strategic spatial strategy.

**Actions: Timeframes** - This section would benefit from the inclusion of timeframes for the various actions. This does not need to be overly prescriptive but could include short-term, medium-term, long-term, and on-going.

**Vision** - It is unclear what the vision is and what year the visions is for. Is it 2030 or 2050?

Given the significant contribution of road transport to carbon emissions in the district, the vision should refer to a place where there are ample accessible opportunities for people to move around the district by sustainable travel modes including walking, cycling, and wheeling.

**Action Plan: Monitor and Manage** - More detail needs to be provided on the monitoring regime for the Plan. If the Council is to keep track with progress made on the actions in the Plan a clear monitoring framework needs to be established. An annual monitoring report is recommended.

#### **4. Response from New Romney Town Council**

New Romney Town Council's Planning and Environment Committee fully support your Carbon Reduction plan and would like to be kept up to date on this consultation

and the outcome / next steps. We were disappointed in the lack of advertisement for your drop-in event and would ask if you let us know in advance when you are holding any future events and NRTC will help promote them via the Town Council's website, Facebook pages and posters in our noticeboards.

## **5. Response from Natural England**

Natural England is not able to provide specific advice on this application and therefore has no comment to make on its details. Although we have not been able to assess the potential impacts of this proposal on statutory nature conservation sites or protected landscapes, we offer the further advice and references to Standing Advice.

Natural England advises Local Planning Authorities to use the following tools to assess the impacts of the proposal on the natural environment:

Impact Risk Zones - Natural England has provided Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) with Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) which can be used to determine whether the proposal impacts statutory nature conservation sites. Natural England recommends that the LPA uses these IRZs to assess potential impacts. If proposals do not trigger an Impact Risk Zone, then Natural England will provide an auto-response email.

Standing Advice - Natural England has published Standing Advice. Links to standing advice are in Annex A.

If after using these tools, you consider there are significant risks to statutory nature conservation sites or protected landscapes, please set out the specific areas on which you require Natural England's advice.

Further information on LPA duties relating to protected sites and areas is here- [Protected sites and areas: how to review planning applications - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-sites-and-areas-how-to-review-planning-applications)

Further guidance is also set out in Planning Practice Guidance on the natural environment [Natural environment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment) and on Habitats Regulations Assessment [Appropriate assessment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment)

Non detailed advice from Natural England does not imply that there are no impacts on the natural environment. It is for the local planning authority to determine whether the proposal is consistent with national and local environmental policies. Other bodies and individuals may provide information and advice on the environmental value of this site and the impacts of the proposal on the natural environment to assist the decision-making process.