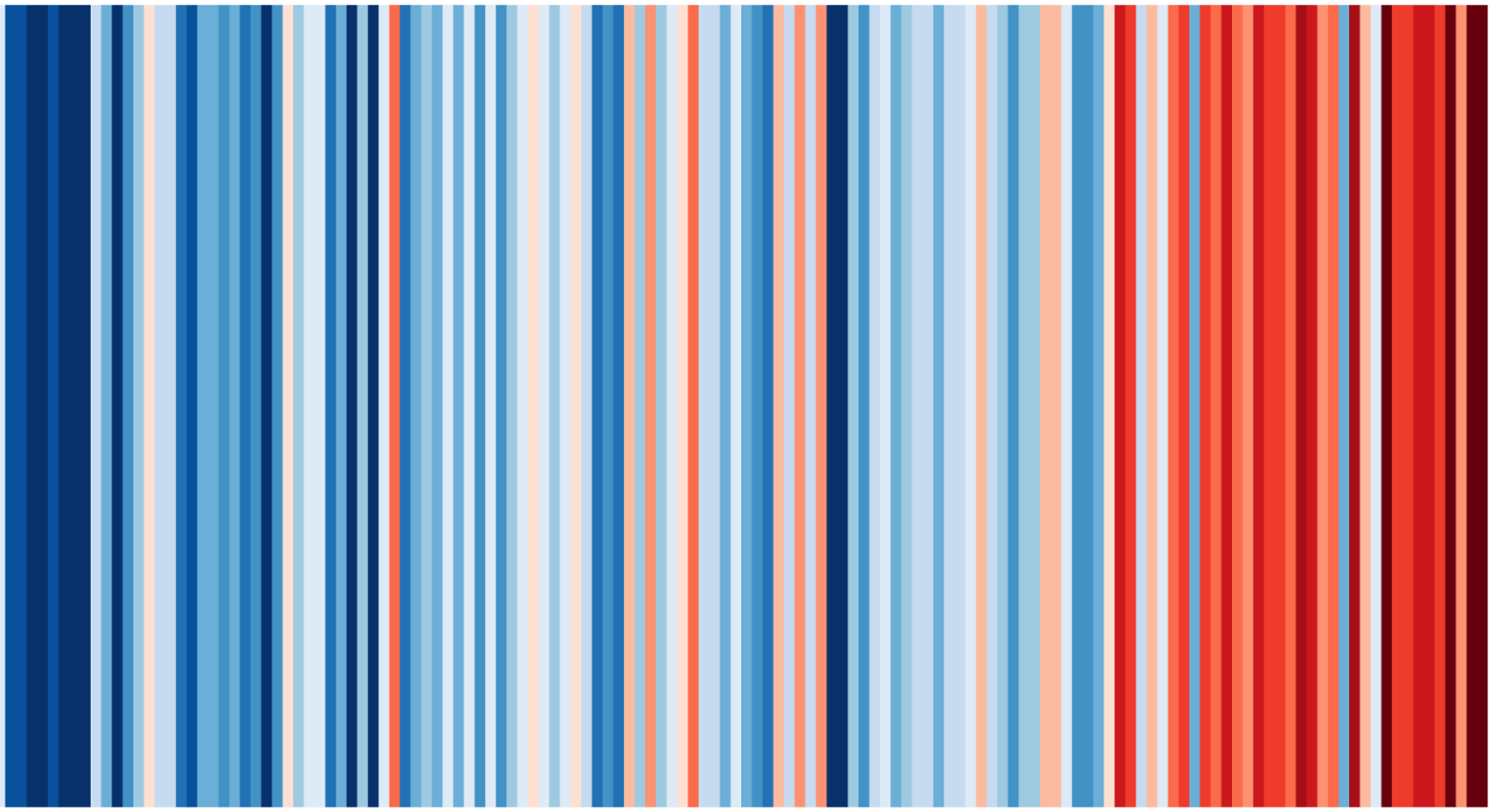

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Supporting Evidence Document

Borough Climate Change Strategy

July 2025

TWBC CLIMATE ACTION

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Contents

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1. Legislation, Policy, and Strategy Review

This section summarises significant agreements, legislation, policies, and strategies from an internation, national, and local perspective, relevant to the borough and UK's decarbonisation, for which the Borough Climate Change Strategy should account for.

1.1. International Agreements

1.1.1. The Paris Agreement (2015)

The Paris Agreement[1] is an international treaty adopted in December 2025 at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21), hosted in Paris. The objective of this treaty was to obtain international consensus on climate change mitigation and obtain commitment to limit global warming. The milestone target set at this conference was to limit global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, while pursuing efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C.

Nearly every country in the world signed up to this treaty. As of 2025, signatories of the treaty account for over 98% of all global greenhouse gas emissions.

As stated in article 2 of the Paris Agreement:

1. *"This Agreement, in enhancing the implementation of the Convention, including its objective, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by:*
    a. *Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.*
    b. *Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production; and*
    c. *Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.*
2. *This Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances."*

[1] The Paris Agreement, UNFCCC, 2015

To ensure delivery against the Paris Agreement, countries must submit national climate action plans known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs). These NDCs allow countries to communicate their targets and actions to reduce levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

1.2. National Legislation

1.2.1. Climate Change Act (2008)

In 2008, the UK became the first country to establish a legally binding national climate commitment with the Climate Change Act. This act set an emissions reduction target of 80%, which was later revised to achieve net zero emissions by 2050[2].

As stated in the legislation, the target for 2050:

1. *"It is the duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that the net UK carbon account for the year 2050 is at least [100%] lower than the 1990 baseline.*
2. *"The 1990 baseline" means the aggregate amount of—*
    a. *net UK emissions of carbon dioxide for that year, and*
    b. *net UK emissions of each of the other targeted greenhouse gases for the year that is the base year for that gas."*

The Climate Change Act requires the UK government to set emissions targets or "carbon budgets," every five years. Carbon budgets set legally binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions over five-year periods, creating a cost-effective pathway to meet long-term climate targets. To date, five carbon budgets have been enacted, extending to 2032.

As stated in the legislation regarding carbon budgets:

1. *"It is the duty of the Secretary of State—*
    a. *to set for each succeeding period of five years beginning with the period 2008-2012 ("budgetary periods") an amount for the net UK carbon account (the "carbon budget"), and*
    b. *to ensure that the net UK carbon account for a budgetary period does not exceed the carbon budget."*

[2] Climate Change Act 2008

1.2.2. The Seventh Carbon Budget (2025)

Developed by the Climate Change Committee (CCC), this is a statutory report providing advice to government on the emissions level of the Seventh Carbon Budget (2038 to 2042)[3]. Whilst this is not yet legislation, all carbon budgets to date have been accepted and legislated by government. It is widely expected that the current government will legislate the recommendations from the carbon budget in 2025.

The key recommendation from this carbon budget is to set the limit on the UK's greenhouse gas emissions from 2038 to 2042 at 535 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MtCO_2e$), including international aviation and shipping. This budget sets out an achievable and balanced pathway (Figure 1) for the UK to achieve net zero, proposing emissions reductions of 81% by 2035. This target was agreed by the government and set when the UK submitted its NDC as required under the Paris Agreement.

The clear message from this pathway is that net zero is achievable and that electrification will drive 60% of all emissions reductions by 2040. This covers the roll out of electric vehicles, air source heat pumps and increases in renewable energy generation. The cost of achieving the balanced pathway is estimated to be 0.2% of GDP, with a significant amount of the investment to come from the private sector and net savings being realised during the 2038 to 2042 period. This cost is much lower than the expected 0.5% to 0.6% forecast in the sixth carbon budget.

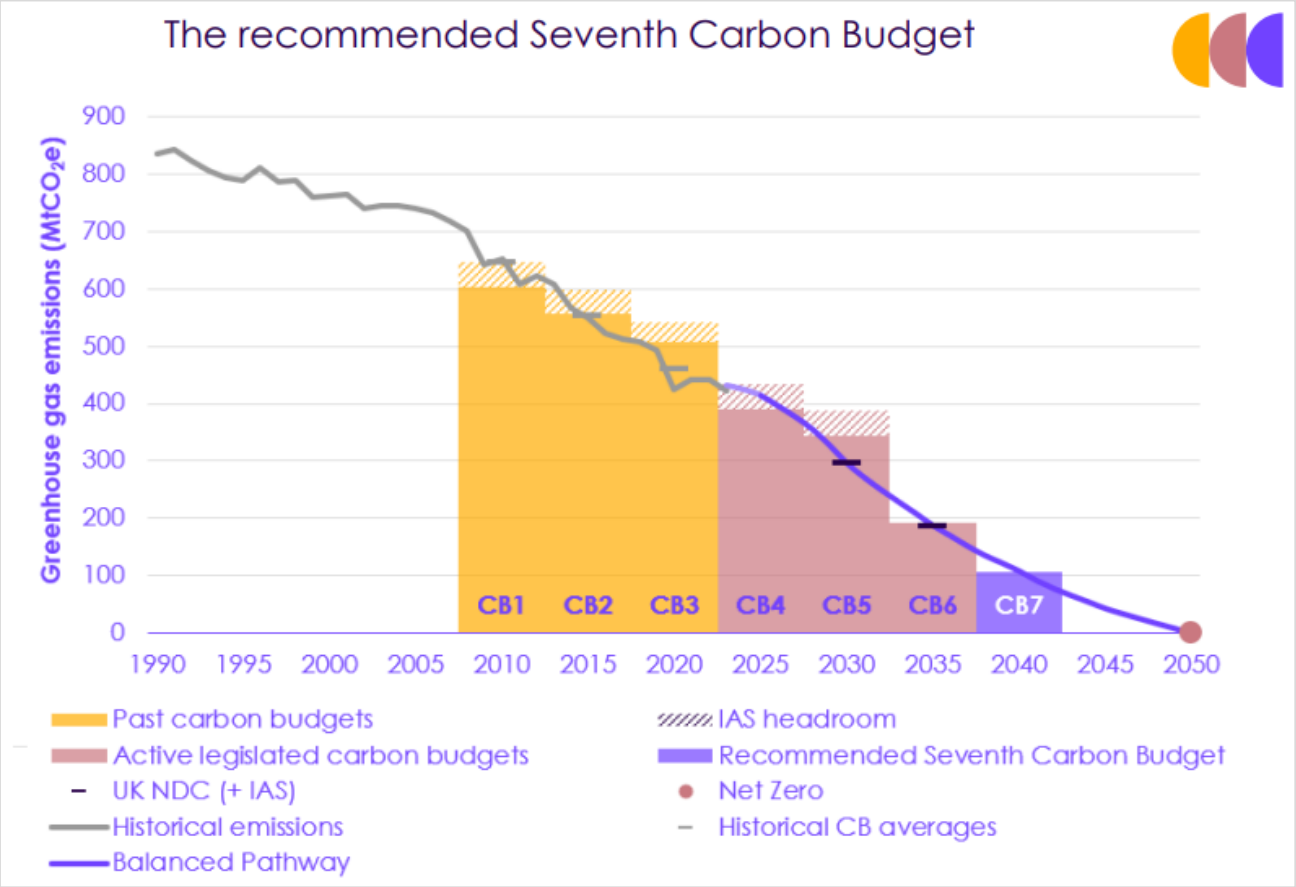

Figure 1: Seventh Carbon Budget Balanced Pathway, Climate Change Committee, 2025

[3] The Seventh Carbon Budget, Climate Change Committee, 2025

An overview of select key policies and proposals from the seventh carbon budget is provided in appendix A.

1.3. National Policy and Strategy

1.3.1. Clean Growth Strategy (2017)

The UK's 2017 Clean Growth Strategy[4] outlines how the UK would work to achieve its initial targets of an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050 (prior to this being upgraded to 100%). This strategy included plans for phasing out petrol and diesel cars, increasing energy efficiency in homes and buildings, phasing out fossil fuel heating, and generating a significant portion of electricity from low-carbon sources. Several key policies are outlined below:

Policy Area	Policies
Buildings	• All fuel poor homes to be upgraded to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030 and for as many homes as possible to be EPC Band C by 2035 where practical, cost-effective, and affordable. • Improve the energy efficiency of industry, businesses, and public sector buildings by at least 20% by 2030.
Power	• Phase out the use of unabated coal to produce electricity by 2025. • Deliver new nuclear power and support up to 10 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2030, subject to costs coming down.
Transport	• End the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040.
Natural environment	• Plant 11 million trees and restore 1 million hectares of degraded peatland in England.
Waste	• Work towards zero avoidable waste by 2050 and eliminate food waste to landfill by 2030.

1.3.2. Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Walking & Cycling (2020)

This strategy[5], developed by the Department for Transport (DfT) sets out how walking and cycling infrastructure will be improved throughout the UK. The key aspiration of this strategy is to increase all journeys in towns and cities made by active travel to 50% by 2030. Aside from these ambitions the strategy sets out the following policies and commitments:

[4] Clean Growth Strategy, DBEIS, DESNZ, 2017
[5] Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Walking & Cycling, DfT, 2020

Policy Area	Policies
Transport	• Active Travel England established. • The development of thousands of miles of protected cycle lanes. • Government support provided to the creation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). • Expansion of access to e-bikes through subsidies and hire schemes. • Commitment to make active travel a priority in all future transport planning.

1.3.3. The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (2020)

The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution[6] was introduced by the UK in 2020 as a policy framework aimed at driving the UK's action to achieve net zero by 2050. This £12 billion plan aimed to mobilise substantial investment from both the private and public sectors into the green economy as a framework to not only net zero, but also COVID-19 recovery. Ultimately, this plan provided a pre-courser to multiple decarbonisation focused national strategies. Important policies from the plan are highlighted below.

Policy Area	Policies
Offshore wind	• Our commitment to a 40GW offshore wind target could help bring forth around £20bn of private investment in renewable energy. • An estimated 60% of spending on UK offshore wind will be invested back into the economy by 2030.
Hydrogen power	• Aiming for 5GW Hydrogen production capacity by 2030 in partnership with industry. • Lower carbon heating and cooking with no change in experience for domestic consumers through hydrogen blends and reducing the emissions of the gas used by up to 7%.
Nuclear power	• Key role for nuclear in delivering deep decarbonisation of our electricity system, alongside renewables and other technologies. • Role for AMRs in decarbonising industry, heat, and transport.
Zero emissions vehicles	• All new cars and vans will be zero-emission from the tailpipe leading to cleaner, greener vehicles on UK roads by 2035. • England's motorways and major A roads will have around 6,000 high powered charge points by 2035.
Public and active travel	• We will double cycling rates from 2013 levels to 1.6 billion stages per year by 2025.

[6] Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, DBEIS, DESNZ, 2020

	• We will bring 4,000 zero emission buses onto our roads, representing 12% of the local operator bus fleet in England. • Over 1,000 miles of safe and direct cycling and walking networks delivered by 2025 with network plans developed and being built out in every town and city in England.
Jet zero and green ships	• We will consult on a SAF mandate and run a £15 million competition for fuel plants in 2021, with a mandate possibly starting in 2025.
Buildings	• Ensure that the public sector has reduced its direct emissions by 50% compared to a 2017 baseline, by 2025. • Ambition of 600,000 heat pumps installations per year by 2028. • Homes built to the Future Homes Standard will be 'zero carbon ready' and have 75–80% lower carbon dioxide emissions than those built to current standards.
Carbon capture	• Ambition to capture and store 10Mt of CO_2 per year by 2030.
Natural environment	• Investment in flood defences will support 2,000 flood schemes across every region of England and will better protect over 336,000 properties from risk of flooding. • Between 2022 and 2024 we aim to initiate 10 long-term Landscape Recovery projects.
Finance	• Announce the site for UK fusion power plant demonstrator.

1.3.4. Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)

In response to the UK's 2019 climate emergency declaration and the Climate Change Act 2008, the UK Government set out its overarching approach to achieving net zero by 2050 in the Net Zero Strategy[7]. This strategy sets outs the UKs emissions reduction pathway to 2037, covering the following policy areas: power, fuel supply and hydrogen, industry, heat and buildings, transport, natural resources, waste and F-gases, and greenhouse gas removals.

The following table highlights key policies from each area:

Policy Area	Policies
Power	• Decarbonise electricity system by 2035. • Quadruple offshore wind capacity to 40GW by 2030. • Support new nuclear projects, including Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)
Fuel supply and Hydrogen	• Develop 5GW of low-carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030. • Reduce emissions in the oil and gas sector by 50%. • Support carbon capture and storage (CCS) infrastructure.

[7] Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, DBEIS, DESNZ, 2021

Industry	• Establish Industrial Decarbonisation and Hydrogen Revenue Support scheme. • Invest in industrial clusters for CCS and hydrogen. • Introduce UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS).
Heat and Buildings	• Phase out new gas boilers by 2035. • Support 600,000 heat pump installations per year by 2028. • Launch Boiler Upgrade Scheme.
Transport	• End sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030. • Invest in zero-emission public transport and cycling infrastructure. • Expand EV charging infrastructure.
Natural resources, Waste and F-gases	• Restore 280,000 hectares of peatland by 2050. • Increase tree planting to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025. • Reduce F-gas emissions through tighter regulations.
Greenhouse gas removals	• Invest in engineered removals like Direct Air Capture (DAC). • Support nature-based solutions like afforestation. • Develop a robust monitoring and verification framework.

1.3.5. Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021)

This strategy[8] was developed to set out a system-wide approach to decarbonising the UK's buildings. The strategy largely focuses on the impact of fossil fuel power heating systems in the UK's homes and workspaces, with the aim of ending the installation of new gas boilers by 2035. A summary of 10 key policies is provide below:

Policy Area	Policies
Buildings	• End the installation of new natural gas boilers by 2035, encouraging a shift to low-carbon heating systems. • 600,000 heat pump installations per year by 2028. • Continued investment in the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. • Support hydrogen heating trials, including a neighbourhood trial by 2023 and a village-scale trial by 2025. • Scale up low-carbon heat networks, especially in urban areas, with funding through the Green Heat Network Fund. • Introduce new regulations and standards to ensure buildings are built and renovated to high energy efficiency and low-carbon standards. • Provide £950 million to support low-income households in off-gas grid homes through the Home Upgrade Grant. • From 2025, new homes must produce 75–80% less carbon emissions.

[8] Heat and Buildings Strategy, DBEIS, DESNZ, 2021

	• By 2025, local authorities will designate heat network zones, where buildings will be required to connect to heat networks if feasible. • Launch a review of energy levies and obligations to make electricity cheaper relative to gas.

1.3.6. Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021)

This strategy was published in 2021 outlining a suite of policies aimed to decarbonise all forms of transport in the UK. This strategy defines a specific net zero pathway for the transport sector, as part of the UK's legal commitment to Net Zero by 2050. A summary of key policies is provided below:

Policy Area	Policies
Railways	• Remove all diesel-only trains (passenger and freight) from the network by 2040. • Support the development of battery and hydrogen trains and deploy them on the network as we decarbonise.
Buses	• Consult on a phase out date for the sale of new non-zero emission buses.
Cars	• Consult on regulatory options, including zero emission vehicle mandates, to deliver petrol and diesel phase out dates for new vehicles. • Ensure the UK's charging infrastructure network meets the demands of its users
Aviation	• Consult on a target for UK domestic aviation to reach net zero by 2040. • Consult on a UK sustainable aviation fuels mandate.
Active Travel	• Invest £2 billion over five years with the aim that half of all journeys in towns and cities will be cycled or walked by 2030. • deliver a world class cycling and walking network in England by 2040.

1.3.7. Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy (2021)

This strategy[9] was introduced to provide clear direction for industry to decarbonise by two thirds by 2035. The strategy covers a host of industrial sectors, such as: metals, minerals, chemicals, food and drink, paper, glass, and general manufacturing. These sectors together with wider UK industry contribute one sixth of the UKs total emissions. Proposals in this strategy largely focus on carbon capture and storage and hydrogen, providing an indicative

[9] Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy, DBEIS, DESNZ, 2021

roadmap for industrial decarbonisation. The following table highlights and number of polices proposed to deliver on this ambition.

Policy Area	Policies
Industry	• Align the UK emissions trading scheme cap with net zero. • Use carbon pricing as a tool to send a clear market signal, providing certainty over net zero ambition for industrial sectors. • £1 billion CCUS Infrastructure Fund and £240 million Net Zero Hydrogen Fund to support deployment and use of CCUS and low carbon hydrogen infrastructure. • Support deployment of CCUS on industrial sites in clusters to capture and store around 3 $MtCO_2$ per year by 2030.

1.3.8. Second Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (2022)

The Second Cycling and Walking Investment Plan[10] was introduced to build upon the significant transport shift observed during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time cycling rates increased by 46% and over a million more people began walking for leisure. This plan also looked to leverage the wider benefits of active travel, such as improved public health, reduce congestion, reduced NHS pressure, improved economic output and reduced emissions. A summary of policies is provided below.

Policy Area	Policies
Transport	• 50% of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. • Commitment to making walking, wheeling, and cycling safer and more accessible for all, including children, older adults, and disabled people. • 55% of primary school-aged children to walk to school by 2025/ • £2 billion over five years to support active travel. • Integrate walking and cycling into local transport and planning decisions. • Local authorities to develop Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)

[10] Second Cycling and Walking Investment Plan, DfT, Active Trave England, 2022

1.3.9. Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2022)

The Government's Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy[11] sets out a nation-wise plan to support and accelerate the transition towards electric vehicles. The main purpose of the strategy is to remove one of the most significant barriers to electric vehicle adoption; adequate charging infrastructure. The key targets set out in this strategy is to ensure a around 300,000 public chargepoints in the UK by 2030, with 6,000 "high powered" chargepoints on motorways and major A-roads by 2035. A summary of headline policies is provided in the table below.

Policy Area	Policies
Transport	• All new petrol and diesel cars and vans will be phased out by 2030. • By 2035, all new cars and vans must be zero emission at the tailpipe. • Around 300,000 public chargepoints as a minimum in the UK by 2030. • By the end of 2023, every motorway service area will have at least six high powered, open access chargepoints. • By 2035, around 6,000 high powered chargepoints across England's motorways and major A roads. • Increase the LEVI Fund to £450 million to help local authorities scale up infrastructure provision. • From June 2022, all new homes and non-residential buildings with associated parking must have chargepoints installed at the point of construction. • All publicly available rapid chargepoints of 50kW and over will have to meet 99% minimum reliability standards by the end of 2023. • British Standards Institute (BSI) to develop charging standards to improve disabled people's experience when using public EV chargepoints across the UK.

1.3.10. UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022)

The Climate Change Act (2008)[12] requires the UK Government to undertake an assessment of the risks of climate change on the UK. An assessment must be published every 5 years.

The 'UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022'[13] is the third five-year risk assessment the government have published. The report outlines the UK government and devolved administrations' position on the key climate change risks and opportunities that the UK faces today. The government worked closely with the Climate Change Committee to undertake this assessment.

[11] Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy, DfT, 2022
[12] The Climate Change Act 2008, UK Government
[13] UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022, DEFRA, 2022

The assessment presents strong evidence that even under low warming scenarios, the UK will be subject to a range of significant and costly impacts unless significant further action is taken now.

It considers sixty-one UK-wide climate risks and opportunities cutting across multiple sectors of the economy and prioritises the following eight risk areas for action in the next two years[14]:

- Risks to the viability and diversity of terrestrial and freshwater habitats and species from multiple hazards.
- Risks to soil health from increased flooding and drought.
- Risks to natural carbon stores and sequestration from multiple hazards.
- Risks to crops, livestock, and commercial trees from multiple climate hazards.
- Risks to supply of food, goods, and vital services due to climate-related collapse of supply chains and distribution networks.
- Risks to people and the economy from climate-related failure of the power system.
- Risks to human health, wellbeing, and productivity from increased exposure to heat in homes and other buildings.

1.3.11. Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: A New Era of Clean Electricity (2024)

This plan sets out how the UK will achieve the goal of clean power (electricity) by 2030, five years ahead of the initial target. Building on advice from the National Energy System Operator (NESO), this plan sets out a clear pathway and steps to achieving this ambitious target. The following policies are identified to achieve this pathway.

Policy Area	Policies
Clean Power	• Set up Great British Energy, capitalised with £8.3 billion. • Update the National Policy Statements for Energy and Planning Policy Guidance in 2025 and confirm changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. • End the de facto ban on onshore wind development. • Legislative reform, including through the Planning and Infrastructure Bill. • £46 million package of investment into the planning system to support capacity and capability including the recruitment and training of graduate and apprentice planners. • Improve contracts for difference allocations. • Support the delivery of Hinkley Point C.

[14] UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022, DEFRA, 2022

	• Total renewable capacity targets: 29GW onshore wind, 47GW solar, 50GW offshore wind, 27GW battery storage.

1.4. Local Policy and Strategy

1.4.1. Tunbridge Wells Transport Strategy 2015 – 2026 (2015)

The Tunbridge Wells Transport Strategy was developed jointly between Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) and Kent County Council (KCC). The strategy sets out a vision for the borough from 2015 to 2026, seeking to address transport issues, whilst also supporting wider development. The strategy proposes the following eight objectives:

- Objective 1: Provide transport infrastructure to support new development, facilitate growth in the local economy and improve rural accessibility.
- Objective 2: Improve strategic road and rail links between the borough, London and the wider Southeast.
- Objective 3: Reduce congestion on the highway network, particularly on key radial routes into Royal Tunbridge Wells.
- Objective 4: Improve travel safety across the borough especially for vulnerable road users, including cyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians.
- Objective 5: Improve air quality, particularly within the designated Air Quality Management Area.
- Objective 6: Prioritise development of sustainable and active transport modes including cycling, walking and public transport.
- Objective 7: Provide parking to support the borough's town centres.
- Objective 8: Improve the quality of public spaces within Royal Tunbridge Wells to make the town centre more legible, safe, and attractive, and improve mode integration.

1.4.2. Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment for Kent and Medway (2019)

Developed by KCC, this risk and impact assessment[15] sets out the likely impacts of climate change on Kent. The assessment highlights areas of high priority where risk is likely going to increase and worsen over the next 80 years. The following seven priority risks for Kent and Medway are:

[15] Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment for Kent and Medway, 2019, KCC

- Risks to health, wellbeing, productivity, and infrastructure from high temperatures.
- Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses, and infrastructure.
- Risk of store events/intense rainfall impacting productivity and transport infrastructure.
- Risks of shortages in the public water supply and for agriculture, energy generation and industry.
- Overheating, flooding, drought, and coastal change risks for natural capital.
- Soil erosion and slope destabilisation because of flooding and drought impacting infrastructure, natural environment, and productivity.
- Risk of new and emerging pests and diseases and invasive non-native species affecting people and biodiversity likely to affect Kent (first) in the future.

Analysis from the Met Office UKCP19[16] projections were used as a basis for this work. These projections identify the following climate changes in Kent:

- Hotter summers with an increase in average summer temperature of 2 –3°C by 2040 and 5 – 6°C by 2080.
- Warmer winters with an increase in average winter temperature of 1 –2°C by 2040 and 3 –4°C by 2080.
- Drier summers with a reduction in average precipitation of 20 – 30% by 2040 and 30 – 50% by 2080.
- Wetter winters with an increase in average precipitation of 10 – 20% by 2040 and 20 – 30% by 2080.
- Increases in sea-level rise by up to 0.3m by 2040 and 0.8m by 2080.

1.4.3. Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (2020)

The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy[17] (2020) sets out how KCC, in partnership with Medway and the Kent district councils, will respond to the UK climate emergency.

The Strategy identifies ten high-level priorities for collaborative action in the short- and medium-term:

- Priority 1: Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050
- Priority 2: Public Sector Decision Making
- Priority 3: Planning and Development
- Priority 4: Climate Emergency Investment Fund
- Priority 5: Building Retrofit Programme
- Priority 6: Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity

[16] UK Climate Projections, Met Office
[17] Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emission Strategy (2020)

- Priority 7: Renewable Energy Generation
- Priority 8: Green Infrastructure
- Priority 9: Supporting Low Carbon Business
- Priority 10: Communications

Two implementation plans[18] have been created alongside the strategy setting out detailed actions that will be taken to support these priorities. Driven by KCC, the strategy is owned by all 14 Kent and Medway local authorities, but the actions will also need to be taken in partnership with other public and private sector partners, academic and charitable organisations.

The below table provides a selection of actions from this strategy:

Priority Area	Actions
Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050	• Set detailed, area-based emission reduction pathways to net zero by 2050, with significant reduction by 2030. Pathways to cover all public and private organisations and communities. • Set costed and jointly owned area-based carbon budgets for Kent and Medway.
Public Sector Decision Making	• Develop a full net-zero and climate change impact assessment and social value framework aligned with Kent and Medway targets. • Develop a supply chain support programme to enable small and medium sized enterprises.
Planning and Development	• Refresh the Kent Design Guide to reflect clean growth, net-zero and climate change mitigation and adaptation. • Set stretching net-zero targets for any new development over 100 houses by 2030.
Climate Emergency Investment Fund	• Develop and promote a Kent and Medway offset scheme and permanent crowd funding space to support new and existing local environmental projects and groups. • Further develop a cross-sector, multi-agency sequestration, offset and low carbon investment fund for Kent and Medway.
Building Retrofit Programme	• Establish a public sector building retrofit programme, identifying joint initiatives that maximise economies of scale. • Develop a large scale, cross-sector, area-based retrofit programme. The programme will focus on place and public realm, including business and communities, to create net-zero and “energy positive” communities.

[18] Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy Implementation Plans

Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity	• Develop and expand sustainable travel policies that reduce car use and business miles. • Support public transport providers, including school transport providers, to use lower emission vehicles.
Renewable Energy Generation	• Support residents and small businesses to install roof-top solar panels, by offering a group purchasing scheme such as Solar Together Kent. • Undertake a renewable electricity and heat energy generation opportunities study for Kent and Medway.
Green Infrastructure	• Produce tree planting guidance to ensure the right tree species are planted in the most appropriate places. • Assess the carbon and resilience value of natural capital in Kent and Medway, together with other potential functions.
Supporting Low Carbon Business	• Working in partnership with local authorities and the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership, develop a targeted business support supply chain programme for the Kent and Medway public sector, building on LOCASE. • Develop local supply chain, low carbon clusters or opportunities (dependent on supply chain analysis).
Communications	• Develop a joint communications, engagement and behaviour change strategy and programme for residents, public sector staff and businesses. • Monitor effectiveness of campaigns and develop into targeted behaviour change programmes.

Further documentation for the strategy, including an impact assessment, public consultation and supporting evidence documents can be found online[19].

1.4.4. Tunbridge Wells Borough Submission Local Plan (2025)

The TWBC Submission Local Plan[20] outlines a strategic framework to guide development in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells from 2020 to 2038. The purpose of this plan is to manage general growth in the borough in a sustainable way; prioritising housing needs, supporting economic development, ensuring sustainability and net zero ambitions are furthered and ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with demand and growth.

Key policies from this submission local plan are outlined below:

Policy	Climate Change Policies

[19] Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emission Strategy, KCC, 2020
[20] Submission Local Plan, TWBC, 2025

EN 1 Sustainable Design	• Where possible, materials should be used that are sustainably sourced by local suppliers and with low embodied carbon such as recycled or secondary aggregates and can be easily reused or recycled at the end of their life. • Proposals should be designed for significant carbon dioxide emissions reductions and more sustainable energy sources, through energy efficiency improvements and facilitating low and zero carbon technology to ensure development supports a path to net zero emissions by 2030. • Proposals should include infrastructure that meets modern communication and technology needs, and restricts the need for future retrofitting, including broadband, fibre to the premises (FTTP) where possible, high speed internet cabling/ducting, and provision of a power supply and infrastructure that would support green technology initiatives, such as electric vehicle charging points. • Proposals should incorporate measures for the adequate storage of waste, including recyclable waste and domestic paraphernalia. • Proposals should follow the waste hierarchy during construction, by first minimising the generation of waste and then maximising reuse or recycling of waste. For all development, sending waste to landfill must be a last resort. • Proposals should encourage positive behaviour change, such as provision of drinking fountains in public realm developments to discourage purchase of single use plastic. • Proposals should ensure there is adequate drainage provision so that surface water is appropriately controlled within the development site by using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), flood risk is managed on-site and off-site, and any existing flood risk in the locality is not exacerbated. • Proposals should maximise opportunities for increasing biodiversity potential, and retaining and enhancing blue/green infrastructure features, including SuDS.
EN 3 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	• A ‘fabric first’ approach in which all development comprising the construction of new buildings is required to reduce operational CO_2 emissions by at least 10% below the Target Emission Rate (TER) as set out in Building Regulations Part L (2013). • Requirement for major development comprising the construction of new buildings to reduce operational CO_2 emissions by 15% using renewable energy-generating technology to be installed on site. The 15% reduction will be calculated only after the ‘fabric first’ approach has been applied. • Where relevant, development must incorporate measures that adapt to the impacts of climate change.

2. Emissions Calculation

2.1. Greenhouse Gas Protocol

A greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory allows organisations to understand their emissions and identify emission reduction opportunities. The greenhouse gas protocol is the most widely used and accepted methodology for greenhouse gas accounting. The GHG protocol divides emissions into three scopes:

- **Scope 1: All direct emissions** from operations that are owned or controlled by the reporting company.
- **Scope 2: Indirect emissions** from the generation of purchased or acquired electricity, steam, heating, or cooling consumed by the reporting company.
- **Scope 3: All other indirect emissions** (not included in scope 2) that occur from sources that the reporting company do not own or control, covering emissions associated with staff commuting, business travel, procurement, waste, and water.

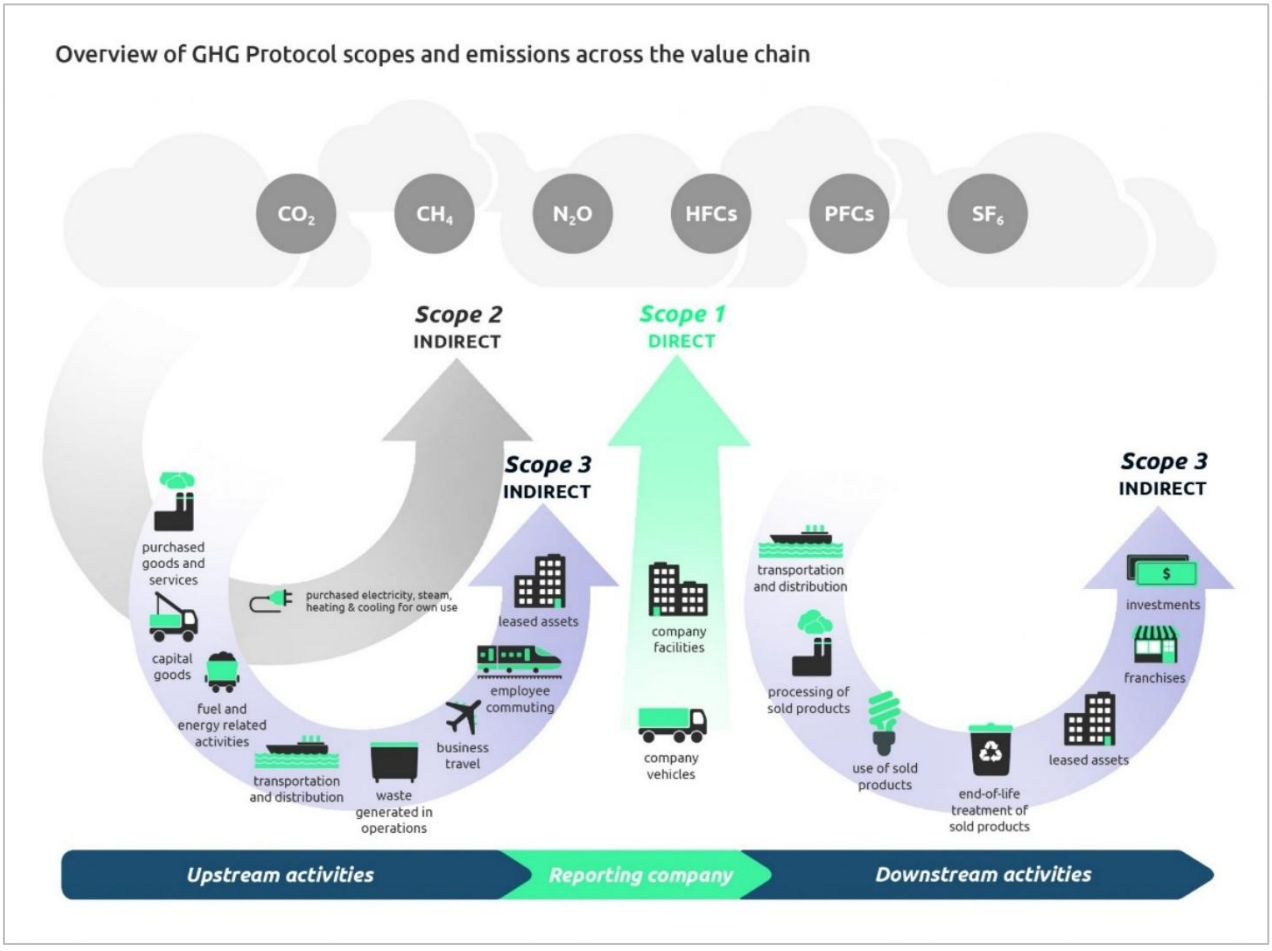

Figure 2: GHG Protocol Emissions Scopes, GHG Protocol, 2025

Scope 3 emissions are usually the most substantive for an organisation, as they consist of all the wider associated activities. The nature of scope 3 emissions also means that they are the most difficult to calculate, due to data collection largely relying on suppliers and staff surveys. As such it is common for scope 3 emissions to initially increase over time as organisational reporting improves.

TWBC's emissions scopes are as follows:

- **Scope 1:** Gas consumption, stationary combustion fuels, fugitive emissions, and vehicle fleet.
- **Scope 2:** Electricity consumption.
- **Scope 3:** Electricity transmission and distribution losses, water supply, water treatment, business travel, staff commuting, well to tank, leisure centre contract, refuse and street cleaning contract and grounds maintenance contract.

TWBC currently use the GHG Protocol approach to calculate corporate emissions.

TWBC emitted 5,055.1 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2e) in 2023/24, a reduction of 24% since the 2018/19 base year. This reduction can be attributed to a 29% reduction in electricity consumption, alongside the decarbonisation of the national grid, a 99% reduction in stationary diesel consumption and a 58% reduction in vehicle fleet fuel usage.

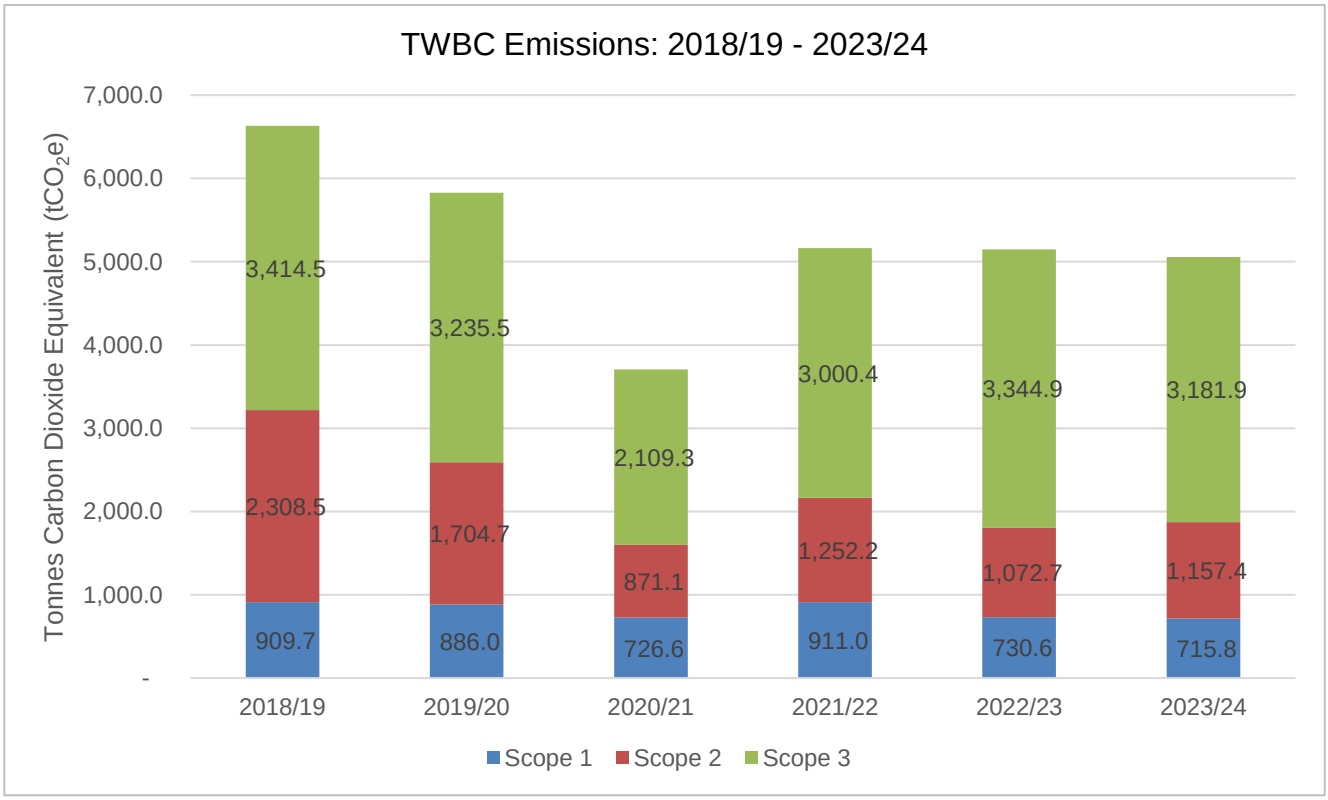

Figure 3: TWBC Emissions 2018/19 - 2023/24, TWBC, 2024

2.2. Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)

Government data from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) is used to create the GHG inventory for Tunbridge Wells Borough. This dataset is widely recognised and used by local authorities across the country.

DESNZ have publicly available datasets of UK local authority and regional estimates of greenhouse gas emissions. These datasets are published annually, dating back to 2005[21].

The most recent publication (2025) presents emission estimates from 2005 to 2023. This allows local authorities to compare data across a 15-year period. In this dataset, UK territorial emissions (emissions which occur within the UK's borders) are included. Emissions are measured in Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO_2e), which consist of carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4) and nitrous oxide (N_2O). Prior to the 2005 to 2020 publication, these statistics covered emissions of CO_2 only.

The most recent data available for the Borough is 2023 due to this data always being two years in arrears. These emissions are allocated on an end-user basis, meaning they are attributed to the locations where energy is consumed.

Whilst emissions from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council are included within this overall figure, this data includes emissions from all activities within the borough boundary. Borough CO_2e emissions are split into eight sectors:

- Industry
- Commercial
- Public sector
- Domestic
- Transport
- Land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF)
- Agriculture
- Waste

Of these eight sectors, the domestic, transport and agriculture sectors are the largest contributors to borough emissions, contributing 32%, 31% and 11%, respectively. A full breakdown is provided in figure 5.

[21] UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, GOV.UK

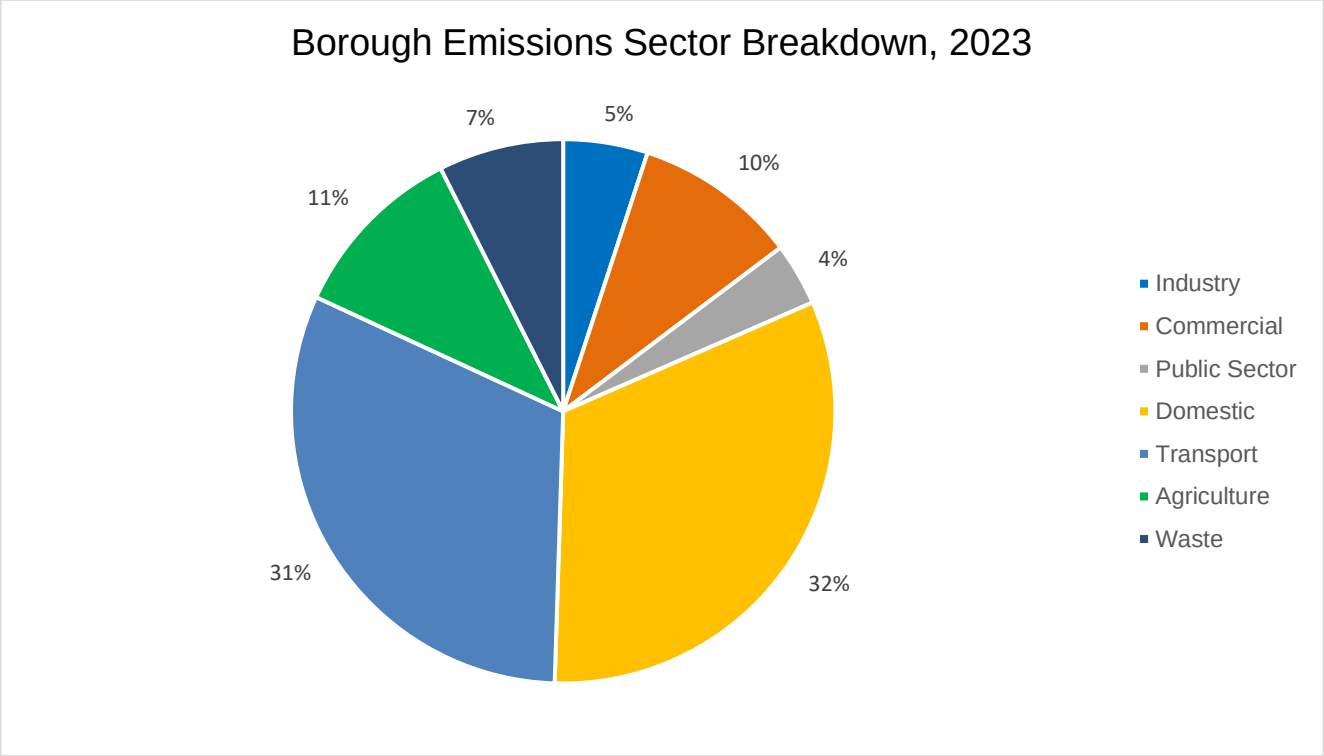

Figure 5: Tunbridge Wells Borough Emissions Breakdown, DESNZ, 2023

In 2022 the Borough of Tunbridge Wells emitted 422.8 kilotonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent ($ktCO_2e$), a reduction of 47.3% since 2005. Largely the general declining trend is driven by the decarbonisation of the national grid. Some further reductions are attributed to improved transport and building energy efficiencies.

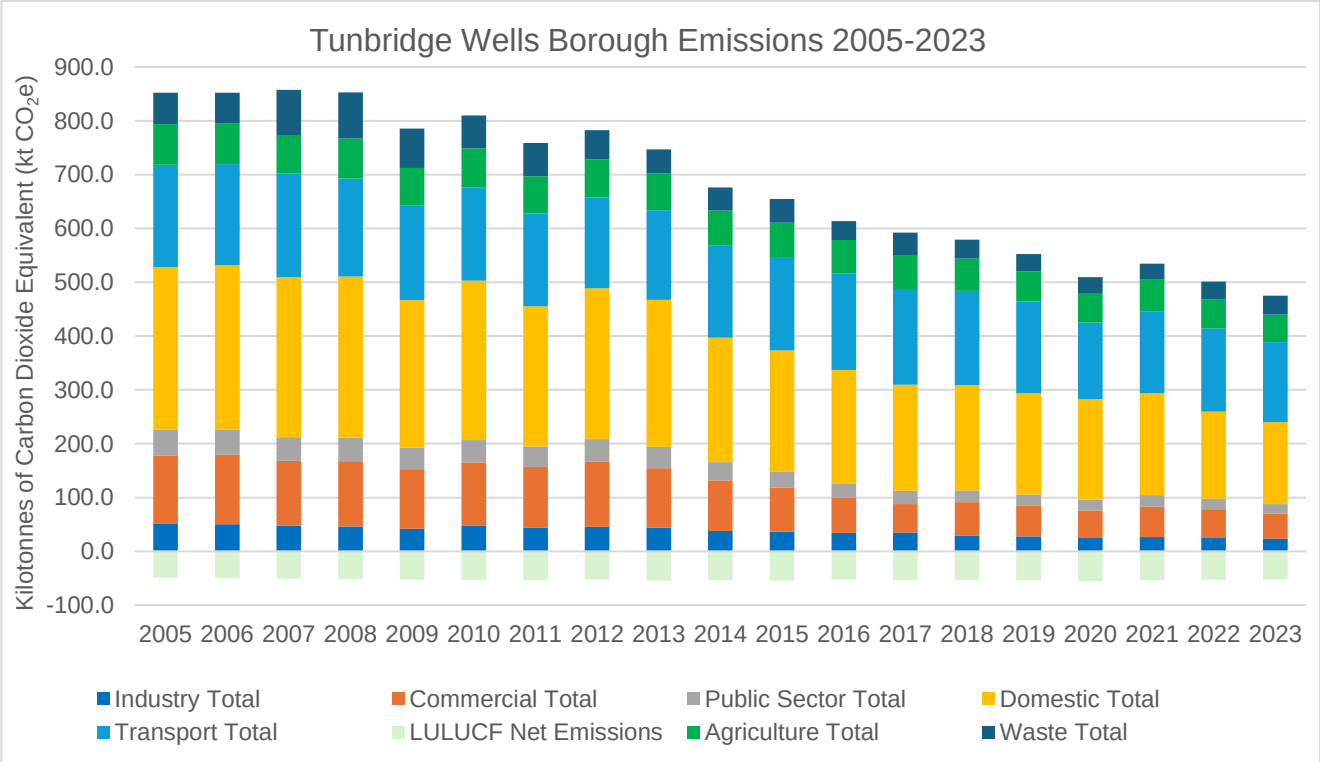

Figure 4: Tunbridge Wells Borough Emissions, DESNZ, 2023

2.3. SCATTER Emissions

SCATTER[22] (Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reduction) is a local-authority-focussed emissions tool, created by the Anthesis Group in collaboration with Nottingham City Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Tyndall Centre. The tool is funded by the DESNZ.

The tool allows local authorities to create an emissions inventory and understand potential emission reduction pathways for their area. This inventory covers emissions within the local authority boundary, calculated in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2e).

The inventory is made up of six sectors: Stationary, Transportation, Waste, Industrial processes, and product use (IPPU), and Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AOLU). The methodology and key data sources used to create the inventory are described in more detail on the SCATTER website. The key underpinning data includes the DESNZ emission data, which has then been further amended to account for broader emissions from transport and consumption.

The emissions inventory for Tunbridge Wells created by SCATTER uses 2020 data. Figure 5 shows the sector inventory summary for Tunbridge Wells. The figure shows that stationary energy (emissions associated with industrial buildings and facilities) makes up the majority of total emissions for Tunbridge Wells.

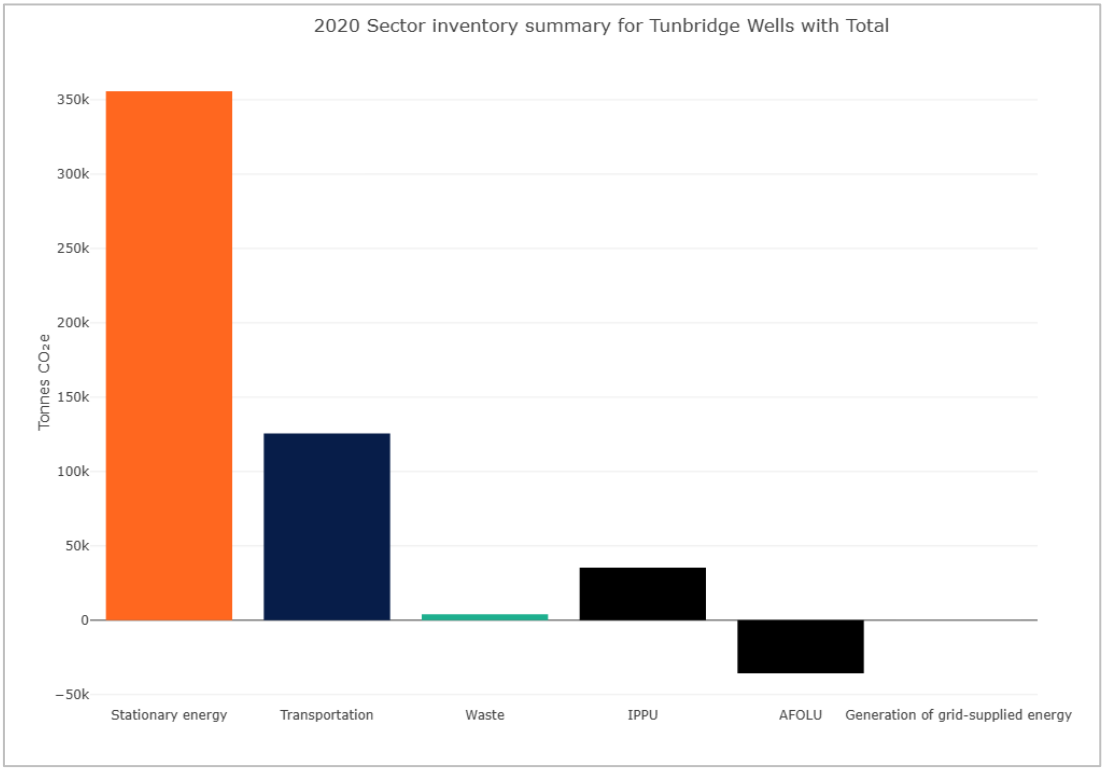

Figure 6: Tunbridge Wells Borough SCATTER Emissions, SCATTER, 2025

[22] SCATTER, 2025.

Whilst this data provides another useful baseline for Tunbridge Wells borough emissions, SCATTER is not updated frequently. Therefore, it cannot be relied upon to monitor progress long term.

3. Emissions Pathways

3.1. SCATTER Pathways

The SCATTER[23] tool was also developed to create emissions reduction pathways for local authority areas. SCATTER uses a range of national and local public data to help local authorities understand what net zero pathways will work for them.

The SCATTER pathways model uses a set of 30 evidence-based interventions that local authorities can model to implement GHG emissions across their local authority area. These interventions range from retrofitting homes and increasing renewable energy use to promoting active travel and reducing car dependency.

SCATTER pathways allow users to see the scale and speed of reductions expected based on the selection of these different emissions reduction interventions. The tool provides each local authority with four default pathways. These include a 'Business as Usual' (BAU) emissions pathway and a 'High Ambition' pathway (covering direct emissions only). Figure 7 displays the BAU pathway for Tunbridge Wells and figure 8 displays the 'High Ambition' pathway.

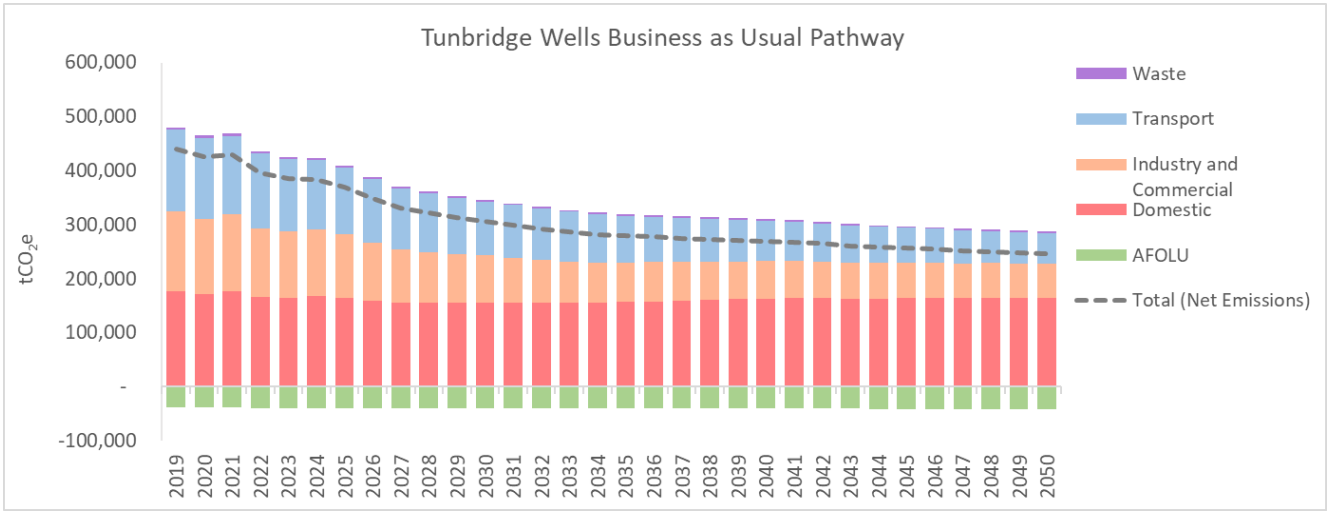

Figure 7: Tunbridge Wells BAU Pathway, SCATTER, 2025

[23] SCATTER, 2025

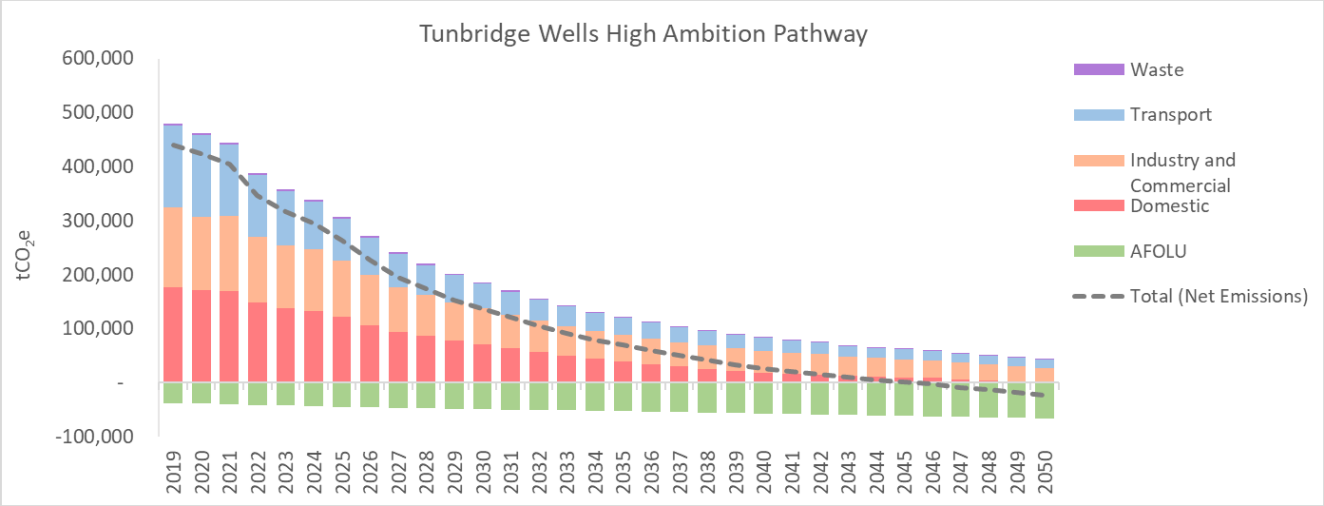

Figure 8: Tunbridge Wells High Ambition Pathway, SCATTER, 2025

As shown in figure 8, the high ambition pathway scenario does not show the Borough achieving net zero until 2046. This pathway relies on national levers to drive a large amount of the emissions reductions forecast. Of the 30 interventions identified, 21 rely on national levers for the borough and UK or societal change (consumption, diet, travel, and energy use).

Here are the proposed interventions for a high ambition pathway for Tunbridge Wells Borough:

1. 24% increase in forest cover by 2030.
2. By 2050, 7% decrease in grassland. Cropland decreases 1%. 13% increase in the coverage of settled land as in BAU.
3. 0.5% annual reduction in livestock numbers.
4. Domestic lighting and appliance total energy demand decreases to 27% by 2050.
5. Small reductions in efficiency of domestic cooking. Proportion of cooking which is electric increases to 100% in 2050.
6. Hot water demand per household reduces by 8% every 5 years.
7. From 2021, 100% new-build properties are built to passivhaus standard.
8. By 2050, 10% of current housing stock is retrofitted to a medium level; 80% deep retrofit.
9. By 2050, 10% resistive heating; 60% air-source heat pumps and 30% ground-source heat pumps for domestic space heating and hot water.
10. Onshore wind generation is 2.4 times bigger by 2030, tripling by 2050.
11. By 2030, offshore wind electricity generation is six times bigger than current levels, dropping slightly by 2050.
12. 610% increase in large-scale solar PV generation by 2030; 1250% increase by 2050.
13. 610% increase in small solar PV by 2030; 1250% increase by 2050.
14. By 2030, hydroelectric power generation increases by 90%; by 2050 generation is 230% of current levels.
15. For areas with wave / tidal power, 320-fold increase by 2030, 1300-fold increase by 2050.
16. Solid biomass generation quadruples in 2025, dropping off after that; Coal phase-out follows trajectories from the National Grid's Two Degrees scenario.
17. In 2050, commercial heating, cooling and hot water demand is 60% of current levels.

18. By 2050, 50% of heating is from air-source heat pumps; 30% from ground-source heat pumps and the rest comes from community-scale CHP for commercial heating and cooling.
19. Commercial lighting & appliance energy demand decreases 25% by 2050.
20. By 2050, 100% of commercial cooking is electrified.
21. Industrial electricity consumption is 50% of total energy consumption by 2035; 65% by 2050. Output falls by 2% every year for non-heavy industry.
22. Reductions in process emissions from all industry: general industry reduces process emissions at a rate of 4.5% per year. Chemicals emissions reduce 1% per year; metals 0.7% per year, and minerals 0.8% per year.
23. By 2050, 22% decrease in distance travelled by road freight: 75% increase in efficiency. In waterborne transportation, 28% increase in use of waterborne transport.
24. 25% reduction in total distance travelled per individual per year by 2030, staying constant at this level until 2050.
25. Average modal share of cars, vans and motorbikes decreases from current national average 74% total miles to 38% in 2050.
26. Cars and buses are 100% electric by 2035. Average occupancies increase to 18 people per bus km (from 12), 1.65 people per car-km (up from 1.56), and 0.42 people per rail-km (from 0.32).
27. Department for Transport "Low" forecast for aviation. The "Low" forecast encapsulates 'lower economic growth worldwide with restricted trade, coupled with higher oil prices and failure to agree a global carbon emissions trading scheme. For reference see Pathways Methodology on the SCATTER website.
28. By 2050, 28% decrease in fuel use at UK ports.
29. 65% recycling, 10% landfill, 25% incineration achieved by 2035, recycling rates increasing to 85% by 2050.
30. Total volume of waste is 61% of 2017 levels by 2040.

4. Strategy Ambition Context

This section draws together a broad range of data sources that have been used to help inform the development of the Borough Climate Change Strategy. Insights from this information have been essential in helping shape the 21 ambitions in the strategy, ensuring they are grounded in evidence and aligned to national and local policy. This data also helps underpin the seven TWBC focused action plans, to help achieve the ambitions. Much of this data will be used as key performance indicators (KPIs) to help monitor progress against the strategy ambitions.

4.1. Buildings

4.1.1. Energy Efficiency Certificates

Energy Efficiency Certificates (EPCs) are used in the UK to determine the energy efficiency of a property, using the scale A-G (A being the highest and G the lowest). EPCs are a useful tool for homeowners to understand how their property is performing, what can be done to improve it, how much money can be saved by improving it and how much it will cost to install energy efficiency measures.

It is worth noting that government have been consulting on EPC system reform[24], to provide improved information a buildings energy efficiency, emissions and running cost. This reform will also see EPC validity shortened to improve the quality of up-to-date data available. Finally, a new calculation methodology will be introduced called the UK Home Energy Model. Subject to government approval, these reforms are expected to be introduced in 2026.

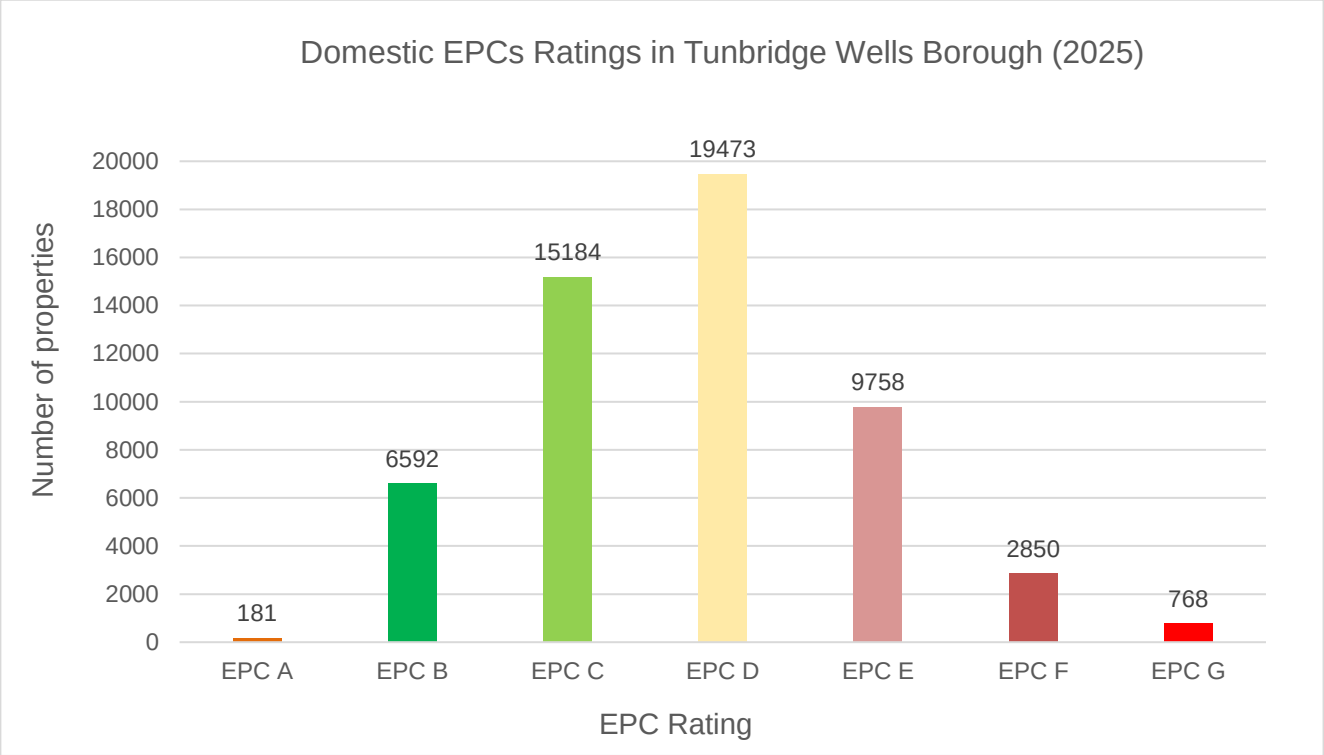

Figure 9: Tunbridge Wells Domestic EPC Ratings, DLUHC, 2025

Using data from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) we can identify how energy efficient the housing stock in our borough is, based on existing EPC records. The Energy Performance of Buildings Register[25] identified that our borough has 54,807 dwellings with an EPC rating. Of these dwellings, 12.4% of properties received an A or B energy efficiency rating, with the largest proportion of dwellings rated EPC D (35.6%).

[24] Reforms to the Energy Performance of Buildings Regime, DESNZ, 2024
[25] Energy Performance of Buildings Register, 2025

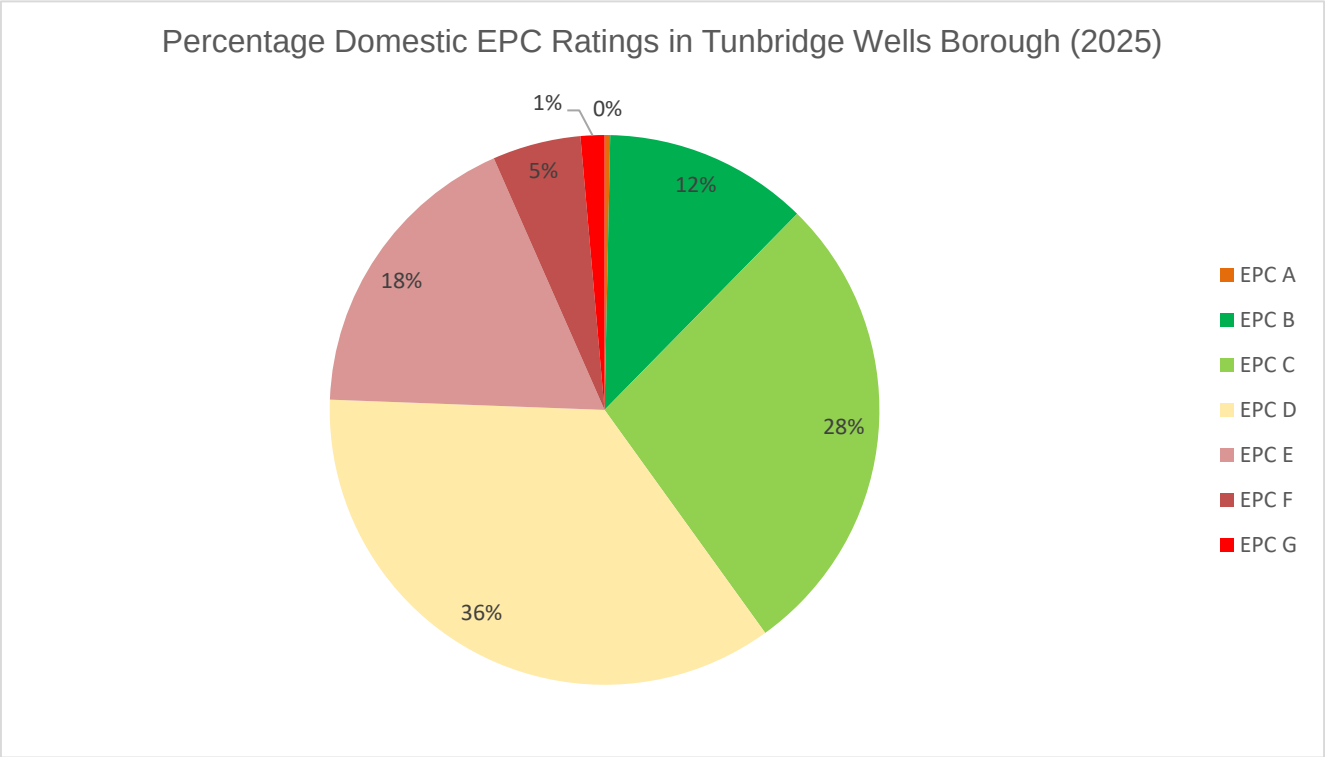

Figure 10: Percentage Domestic EPCs in Tunbridge Wells, DLUHC, 2025

In the borough there are 3,595 registered non-domestic EPCs, of which 56% are registered EPC C or EPC D (1,995). 56% of all registered EPCs are rated below an EPC C, whilst less than 1% are rated A+, which is effectively net zero.

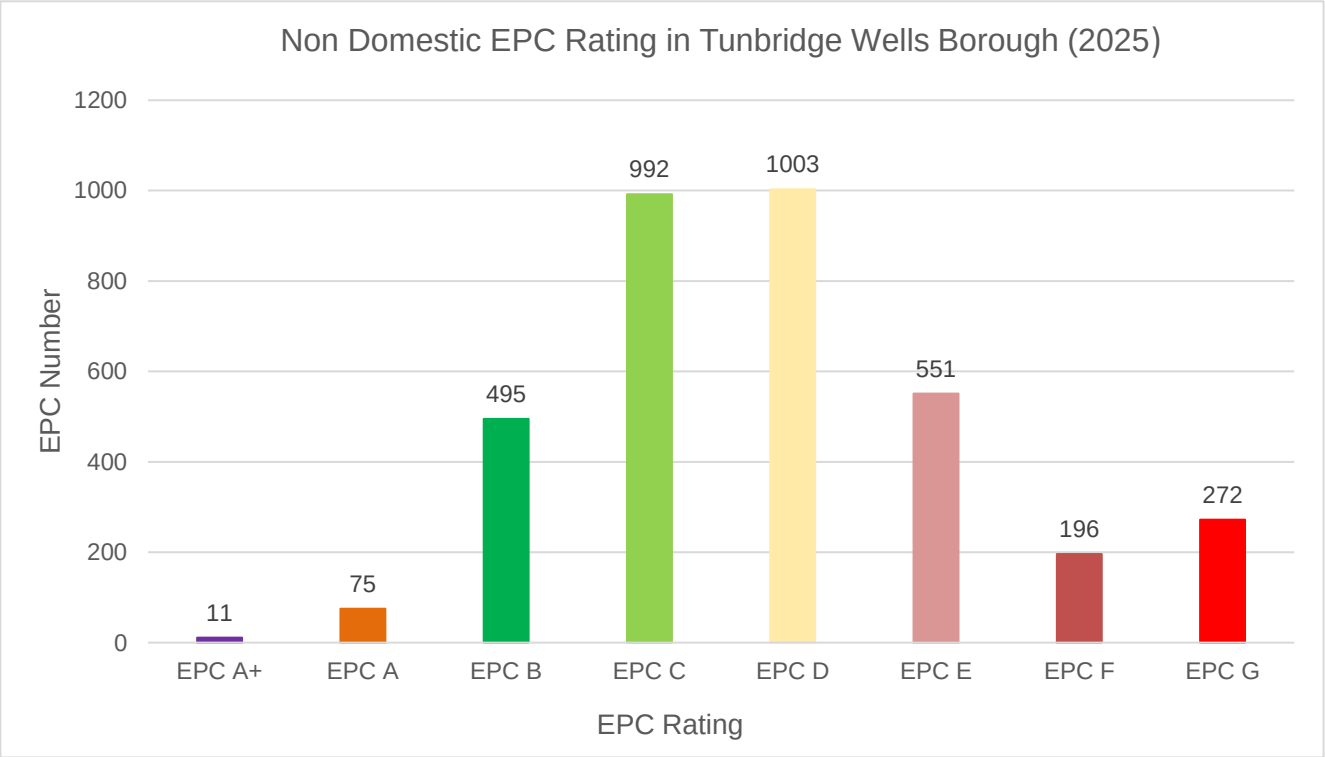

Figure 11: Tunbridge Wells Non-Domestic EPC Ratings, DLUHC, 2025

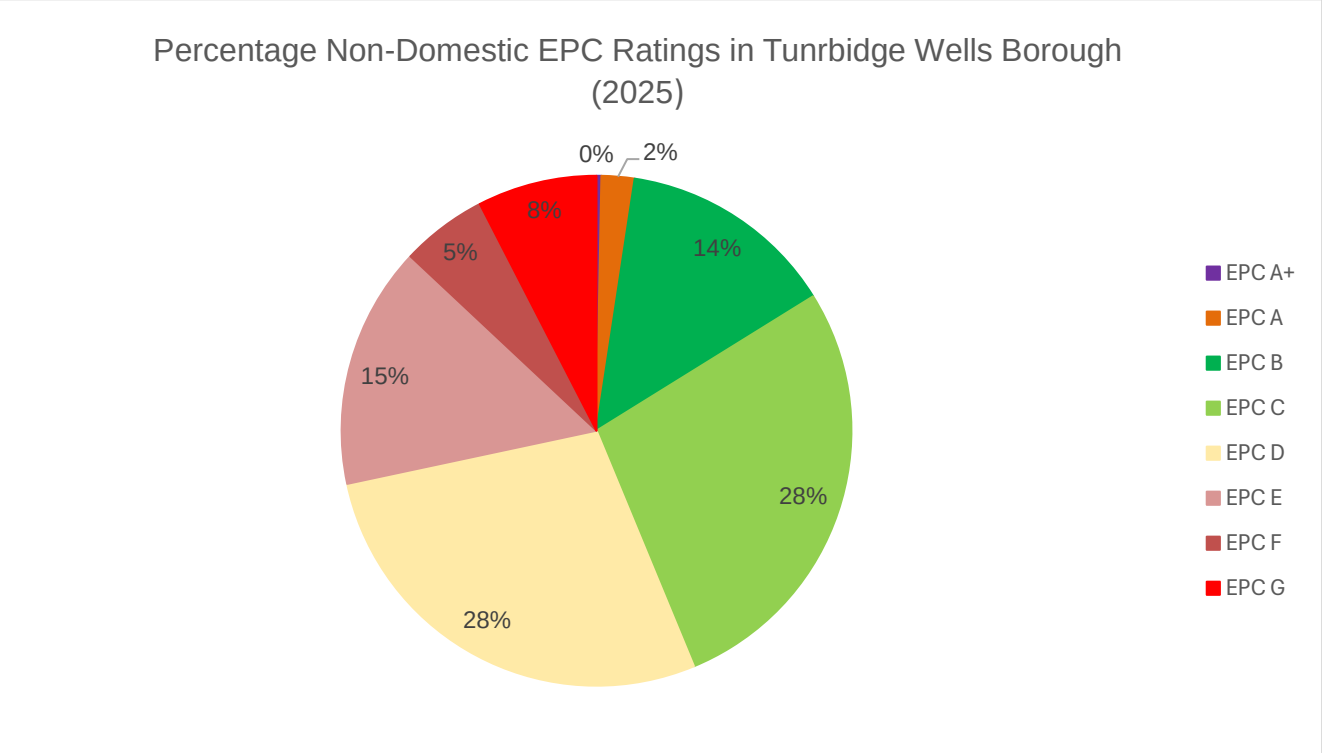

Figure 12: Percentage Non-Domestic EPCs in Tunbridge Wells, DLUHC, 2025

4.1.2. Air Source Heat Pump Uptake

Whilst there is no granular data for borough wide ASHP uptake, the government provides quarterly data on heat pump uptake, supported by the boiler upgrade grant. DESNZ data indicates that since 2018, there have been 18,078 heat pump installations in the Southeast. There are approximately three million dwellings in the Southeast of England, meaning only 0.6% have installed heat pumps since 2018, under government schemes. A full breakdown of annual installations is provided in figure 13.

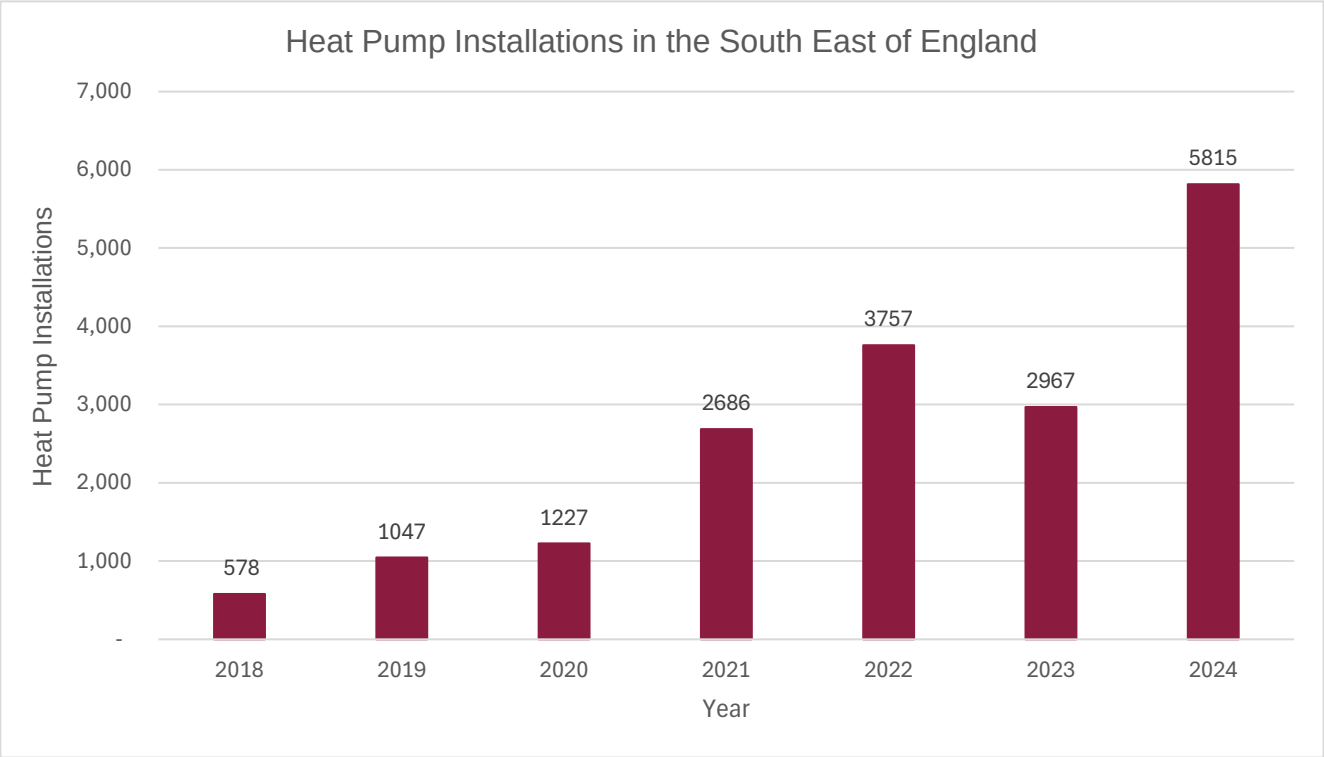

Figure 13: Heat Pump Installations in Southeast England, DESNZ, 2025

4.2. Transport

4.2.1. Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI)

Required EVCI

To determine EVCI requirements we used a database called NEVIS[26], developed by CENEX. This database provides localised qualitative data and modelling on existing Tunbridge Wells Borough EVCI and projected requirements under a low, medium, and high electric vehicle (EV) uptake scenario. Figure 14 below, highlights, projected EVCI requirements based upon a high ambition scenario. These projections only cover public EVCI and does not consider private EVCI, such as chargepoints installed into domestic properties. This scenario has been chosen as it aligns with the current government policy to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel internal combustion engine (ICE) cars in 2030. This scenario projects EVCI requirement in the borough to be 685 public sockets by 2030, 1,448 by 2040 and 1,631 by 2050.

[26] Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Projections, NEVIS, 2025

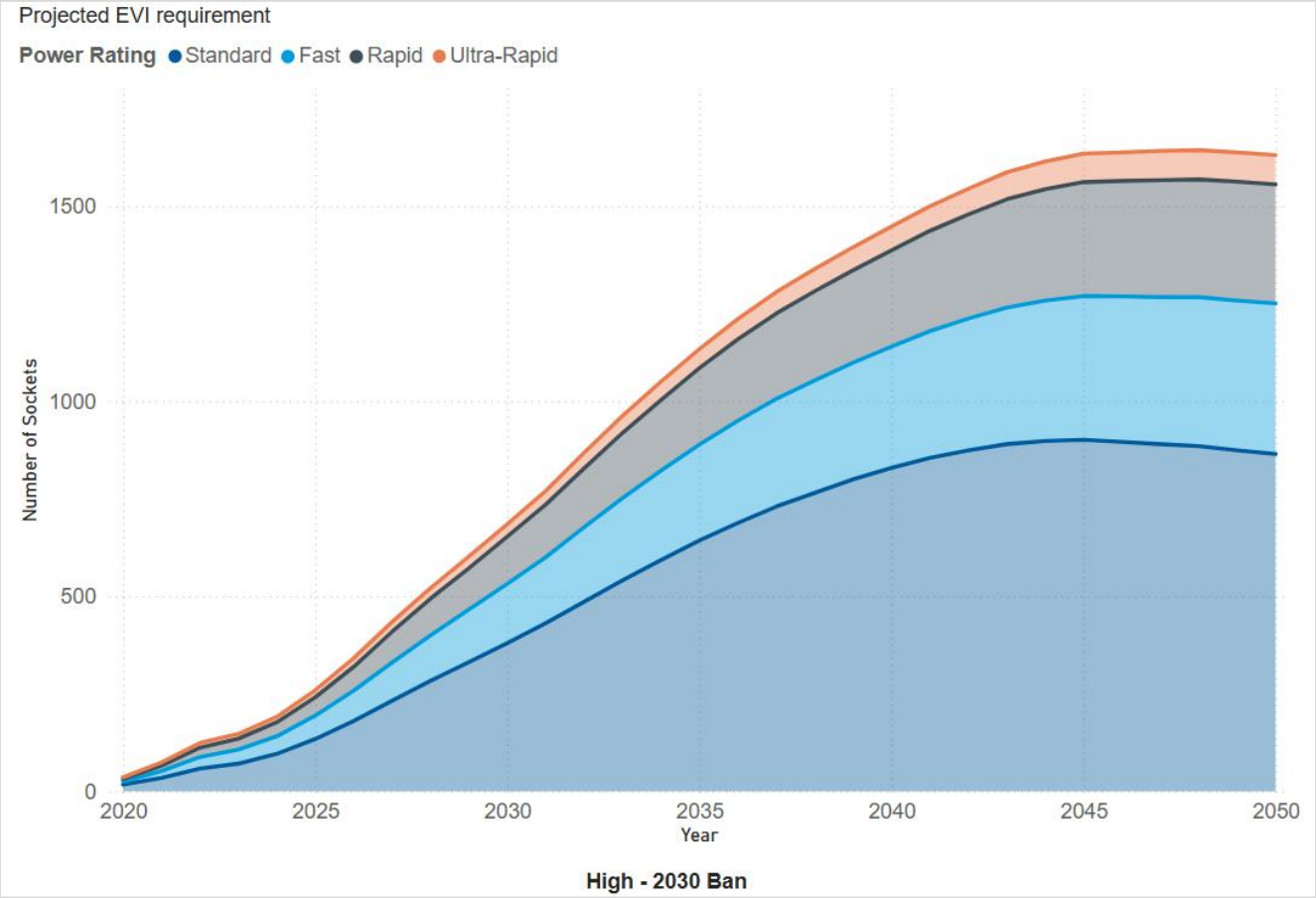

Figure 14: Projected EVCI Requirement in Tunbridge Wells, NEVIS, 2025

To aid future implementation planning, this database further breaks down EVCI requirements into the total amount of required charging sockets per charger speed. The below table breaks down the total requirements from 2030 to 2050.

Charging Speed	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Standard	380	643	829	901	865
Fast	152	246	311	369	386
Rapid	121	196	247	292	305
Ultra-Rapid	32	49	61	73	75

Existing EVCI

Currently, according to data from Zap Map[27], the borough has a total of 86 chargepoints. The government target of 300,000 chargepoints by 2030, is approximately 4.4 public chargepoints per 1,000 people. In comparison, Tunbridge Wells Borough currently only has 0.7 chargepoints per 1,000 people. For comparison, Kent has approximately 0.8 chargepoints per 1,000 people. Figure 15 below compares EVCI in local authority areas across Kent.

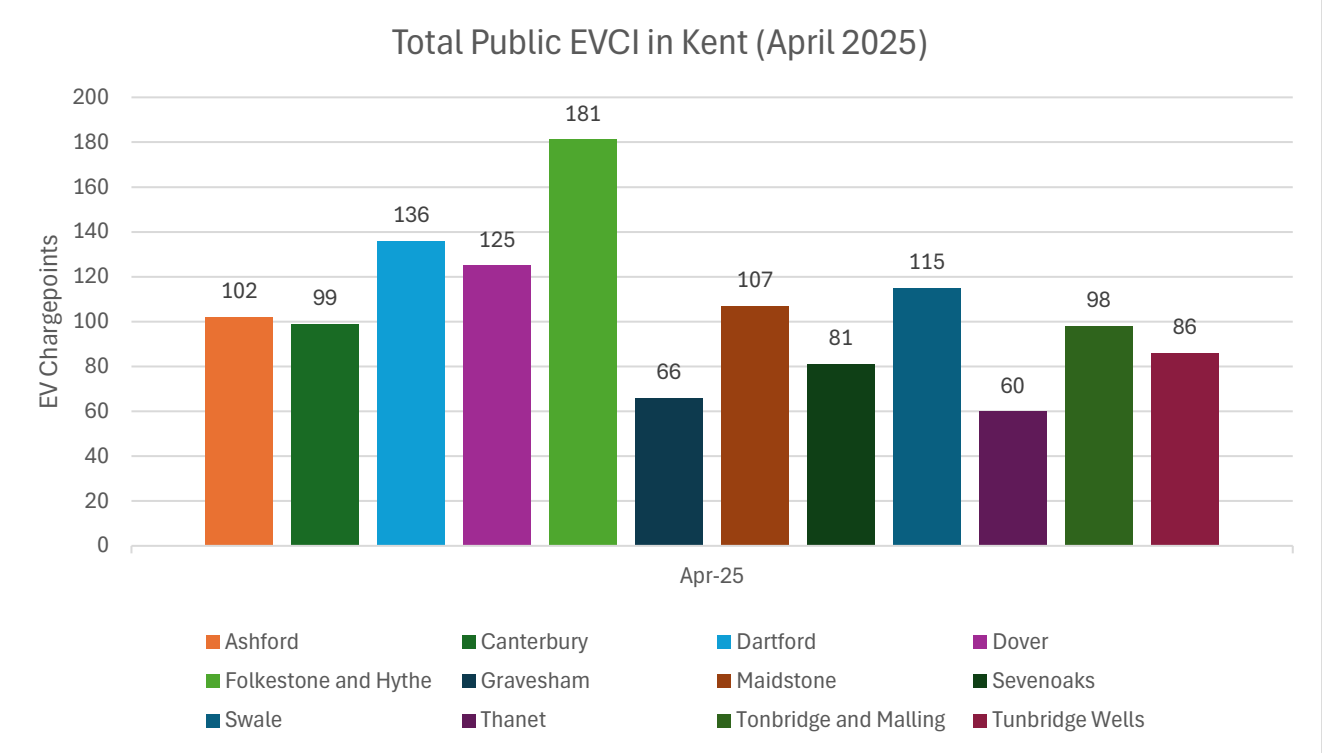

Figure 15: Public EVCI in Kent, Zap Map, 2025

TWBC has developed a guidance note for new developers regarding EV charging points (2018)[28]. This document provides advice to developers about how the Local Planning Authority want to secure the provision of EV charging point infrastructure as part of residential and commercial developments.

4.2.2. Active Travel

To determine how residents are travelling around the borough, specifically using active travel methods, we use DfT walking and cycling statistics[29]. Figure 16 below shows the proportion of adults in the borough who walk and cycle for travel, leisure, or any reason, once, three times,

[27] Electric Vehicle Public Charging Infrastructure Statistics: April 2025, Zap Map, 2025
[28] Electric Vehicle Charging Points for New Developments, TWBC, 2018
[29] Walking and Cycling Statistics, DfT, 2024

five times a week or once per month. Whilst 84.6% of residents walk or cycle for any reason once per month and 77.6% once per week, this figure reduces by 39% for three times per week and then 58% to five times per week.

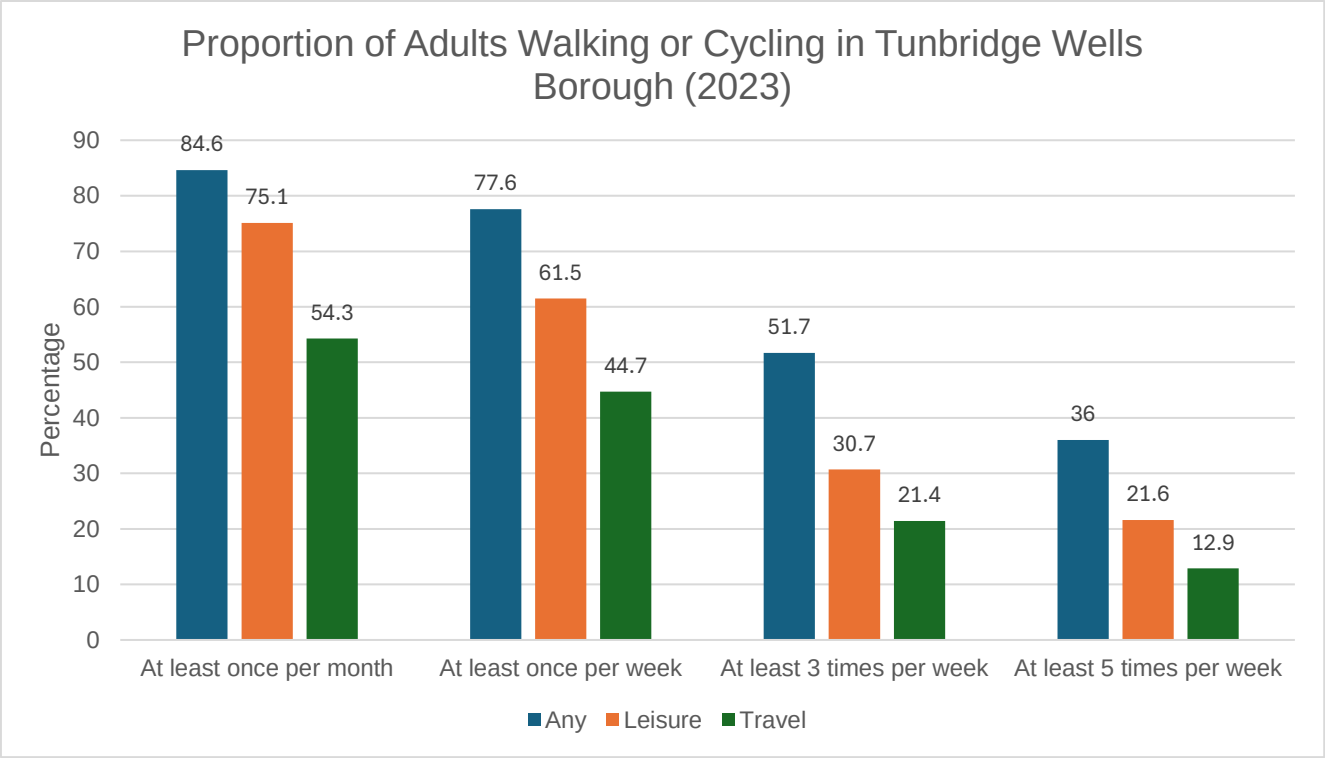

Figure 16: Proportion of Adults Walking or Cycling in Tunbridge Wells, DfT, 2023

Another way we can gage active travel journeys in the borough is how residents get to work. Data from the most recent census (2021)[30] tells us that 42% of residents work mainly from home and 39% drive in a car of van. Only 10% get to work using active travel methods (walking and cycling) and 5% use public transport. See figure 17 below for an overview of this data.

[30] Methods Used to Travel to Work, ONS, 2021

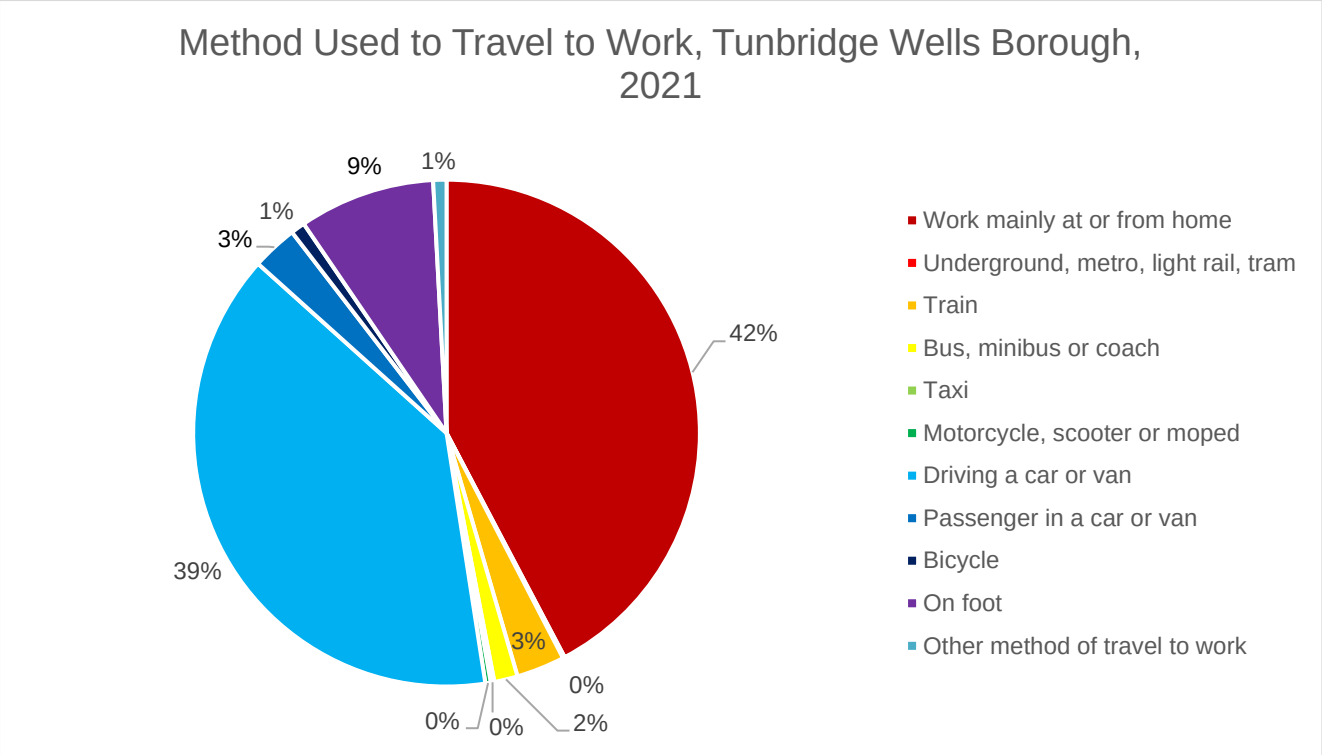

Figure 17: Method Used to Travel to Work in Tunbridge Wells, Census, 2021

4.3. Biodiversity and Environment

To develop a baseline for this priority, there are some data sets we can use to develop a proxy for improvements in biodiversity and environment. One of these is woodland area in the borough. Data from the Office for National Statistics[31] tells us that Tunbridge Wells has the highest percentage of its area as woodland (22.2%) compared to other local authorities in Kent. See figure 18 for these comparisons.

Data from the Friends of the Earth woodland opportunity mapping[32] study, estimates Tunbridge Wells woodland area percentage slightly higher at 22.4%. This study also tells us how much opportunity there is in the borough to increase woodland. According to Friends of the Earth, Tunbridge Wells has a woodland opportunity percentage of 4.5%, which is equivalent to 1,498.5 hectares.

TWBC works in partnership with the Kent High Weald Partnership (KHWP). KHWP manage several green spaces. They undertake actions and projects related to sustainability and biodiversity, collaborating with local volunteers, they help manage the borough's nature reserves and green spaces on behalf of TWBC. On top of this, they deliver nature-based education and wellbeing programmes. Since 2021, KHWP have planted over 4,000 trees in Tunbridge Wells. Achievements from 2024/25 include[33]:

[31] Woodland as a Percentage of Area, Local Authority Districts, ONS, 2019
[32] Woodland Opportunity Mapping, Friends of the Earth, 2025
[33] KHWP Annual Report 2024/25, KHWP, 2025

- Improved over 30 sites / 150 hectares for biodiversity.
- Created and restored six ponds to help provide habitat for great crested newts.
- Maintained ten “leaky” dams, providing natural flood defences.
- Planted over 2500 trees with the help of four schools, 30 community volunteers, 2 young offenders, and 65 staff from local businesses, TWBC and KCC.

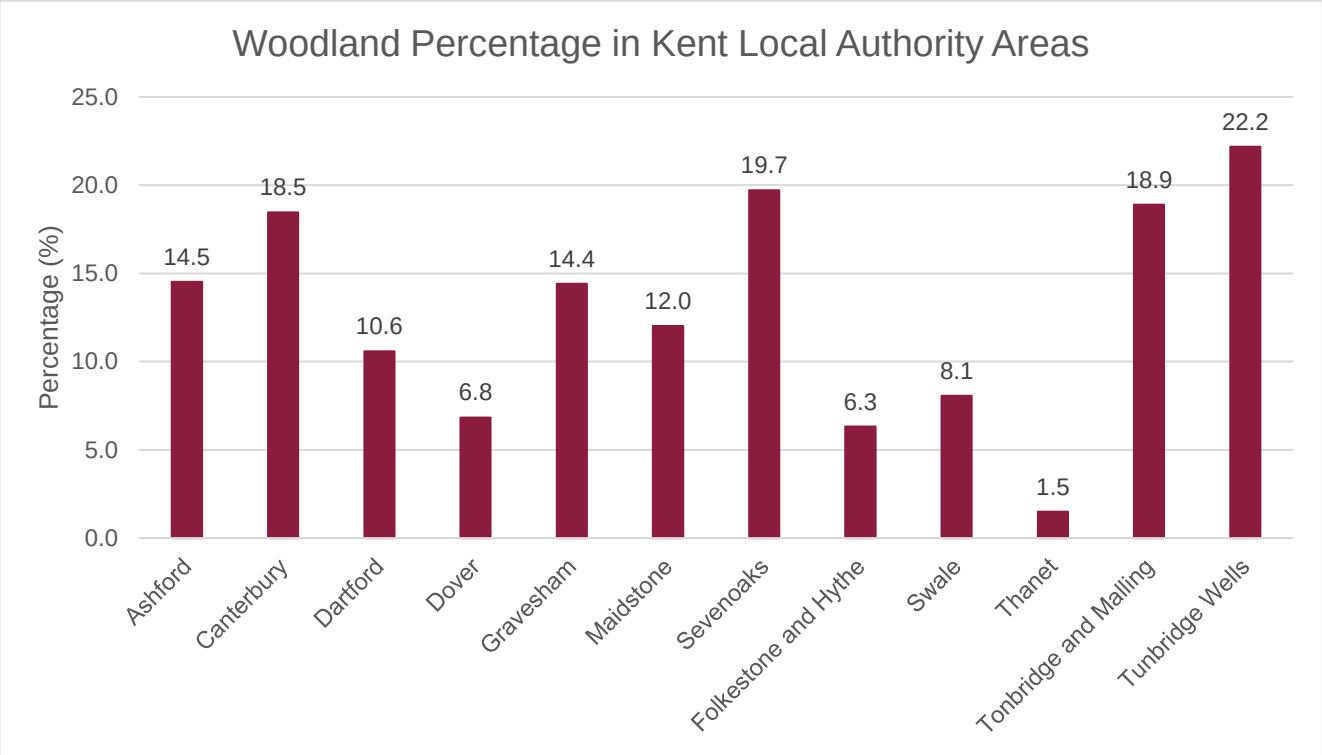

Figure 18: Woodland Percentage in Kent Local Authority Areas, ONS, 2019

4.4. Renewable Energy

To determine increases in renewable energy generation in the borough, there is numerous data we can use (both primary data from the work we are doing and data from government departments). This data, alongside SCATTER interventions, has helped to develop ambitions for this priority.

TWBC collects data from each solar together round to understand how it is performing and to identify how renewable energy capacity is increasing in the borough. Since 2022 the scheme has installed 3,290 panels in the borough, as shown in figure 19.

Further data, as presented in the strategy comes from DESNZ[34], showing total solar pv generation and installation increasing in the borough since 2014. Since 2014, solar pv generation in the borough has increased by 1,387% (figure 20), with site installations increasing by 208% (figure 21).

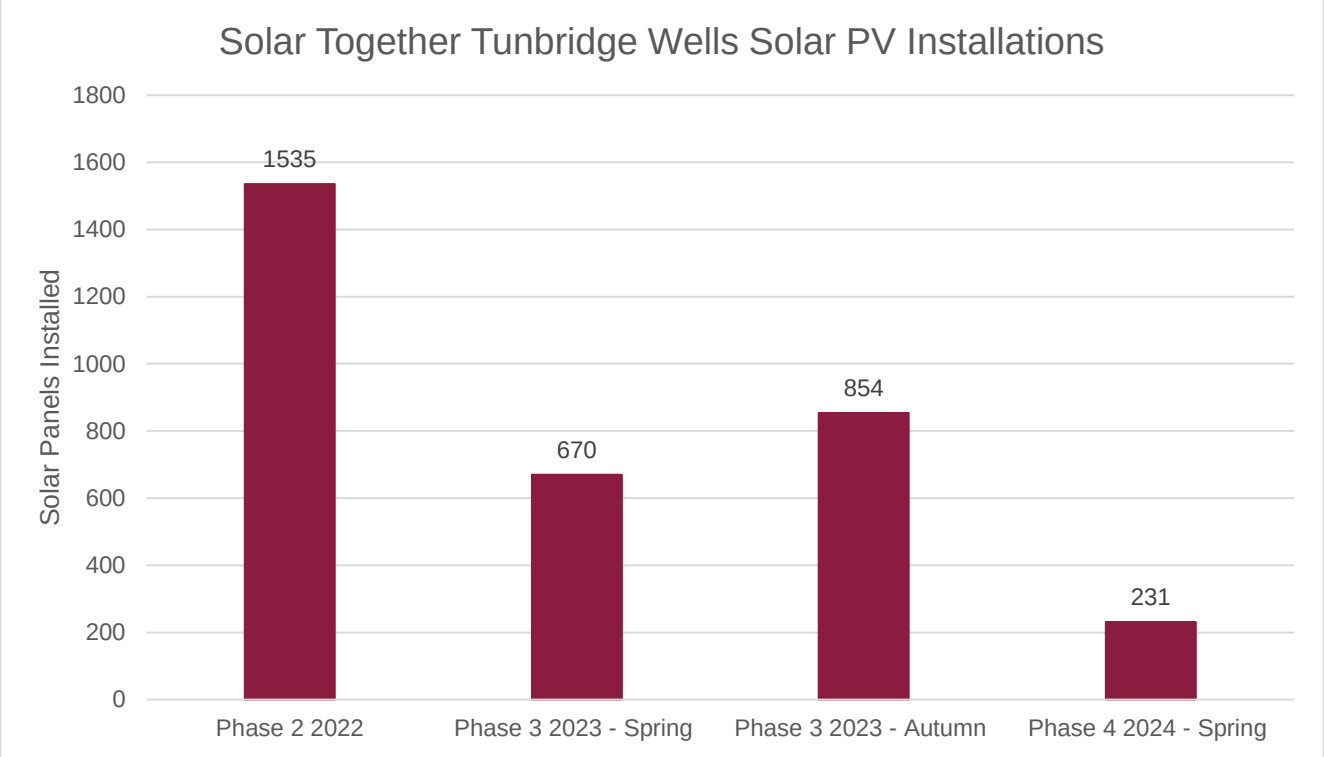

Figure 19: Tunbridge Wells Solar Photovoltaics Generation, DESNZ, 2024

[34] Regional Renewable Statistics, DESNZ, 2024

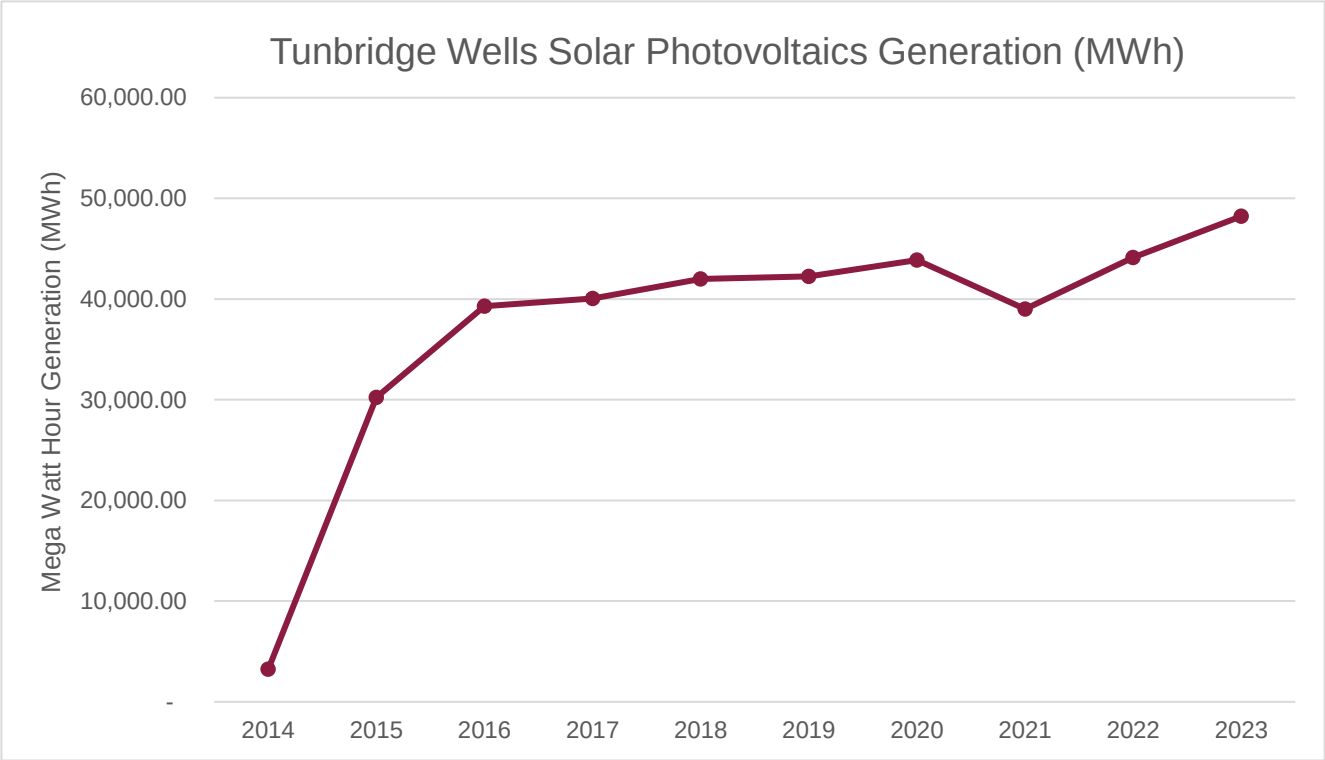

Figure 20: Tunbridge Wells Solar Photovoltaics Generation, DESNZ, 2024

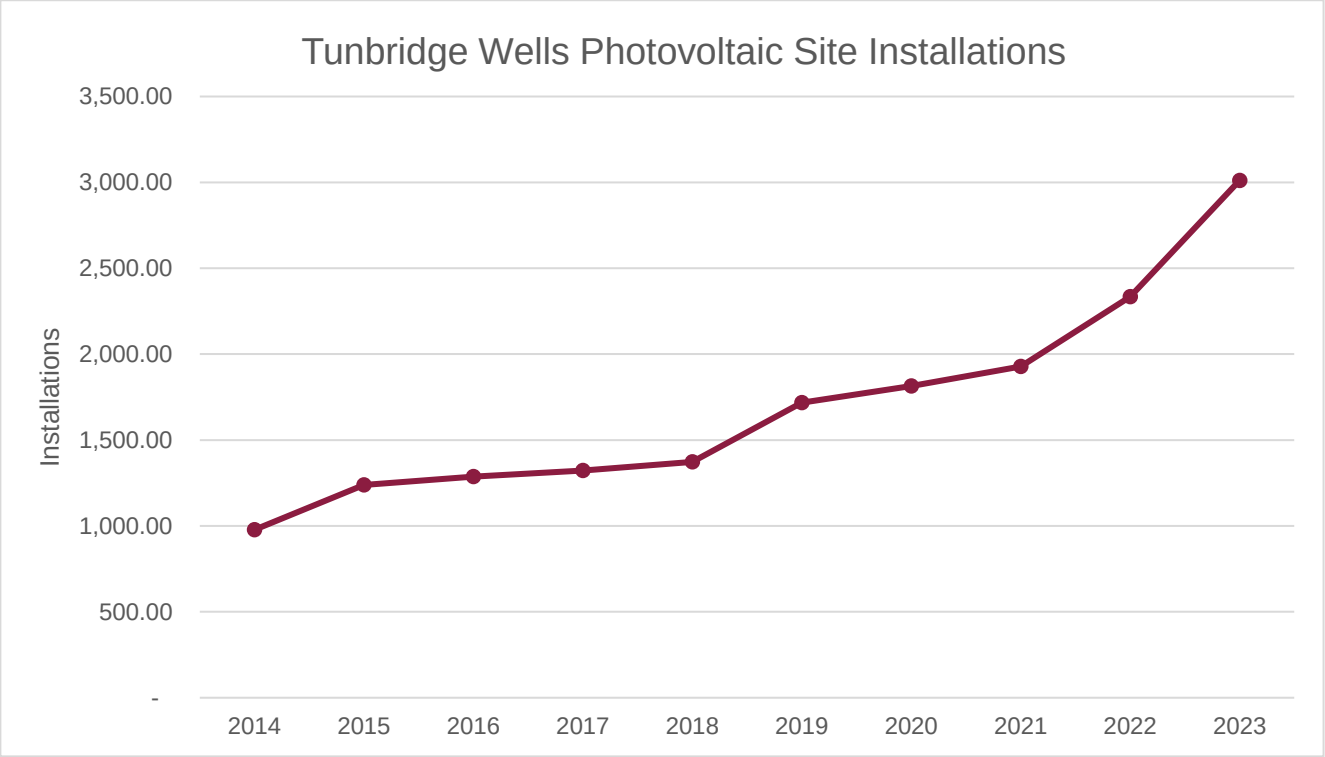

Figure 21: Tunbridge Wells Photovoltaic Site Installations, DESNZ, 2024

4.5. Waste and Resources

Recycling rates in the UK have remained quite stagnant since 2015. The latest data from 2022 showed recycling rates in the UK achieved 44.1%, a reduction from the 44.5% achieved in 2015 and the all time high achieved in 2019 (46%). Conversely, for Tunbridge Wells, recycling rates have increased over the same period, whilst being above the UK total. Since 2015, Tunbridge Wells recycling rates have increased from 45.6% to 52.2% (figure 22).

A similar trend is also observed for total household waste generation. In Tunbridge Wells, waste generation has decreased since 2009/10, from 47,095 tonnes to 39,888 tonnes in 2023/24. However, the mean for all districts in the Southeast shows an increasing trend, with waste increasing from 40,241 tonnes in 2009/10 to 42,781 in 2023/24 (figure 24).

Finally, TWBC has been able to monitor food waste recycling since the introduction of dedicated collection in October 2019. Since its introduction, total food waste recycling has increased in three of the four years in which we have complete data (figure 23).

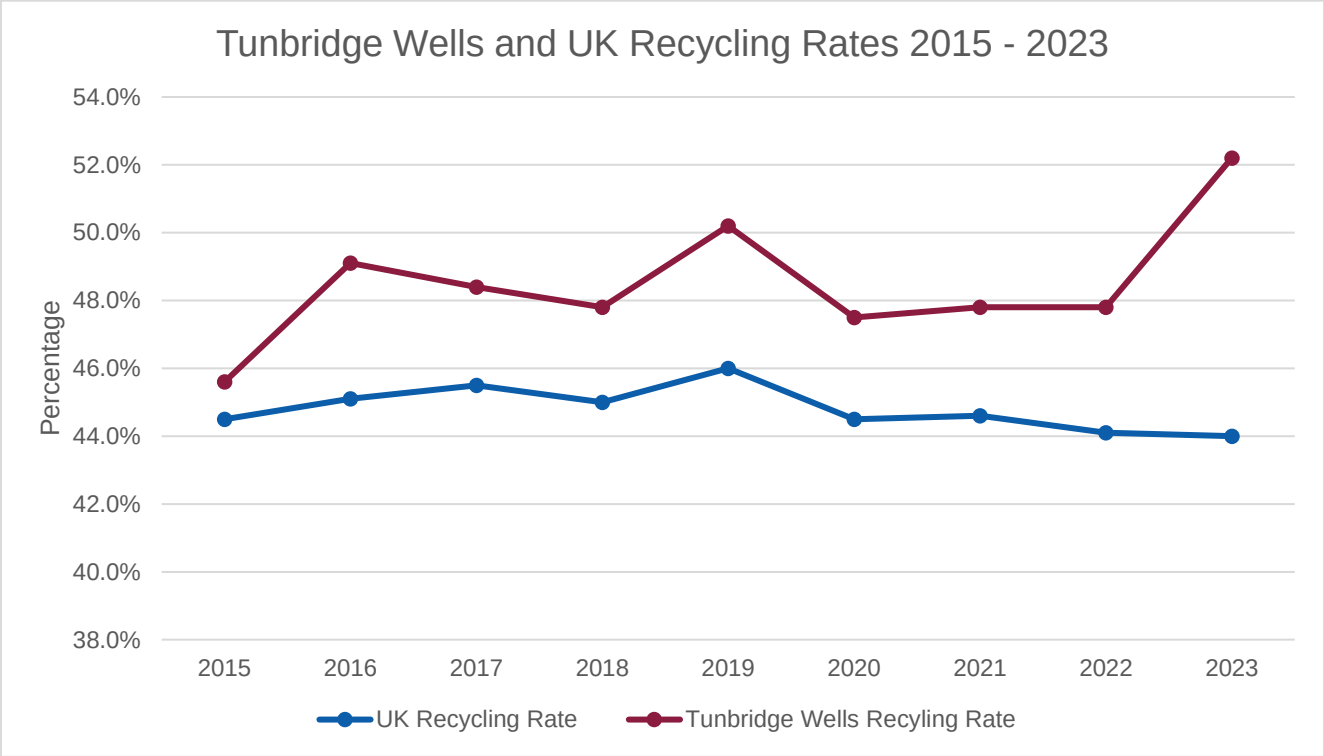

Figure 22: Tunbridge Wells and UK Recycling Rates, DEFRA, 2024

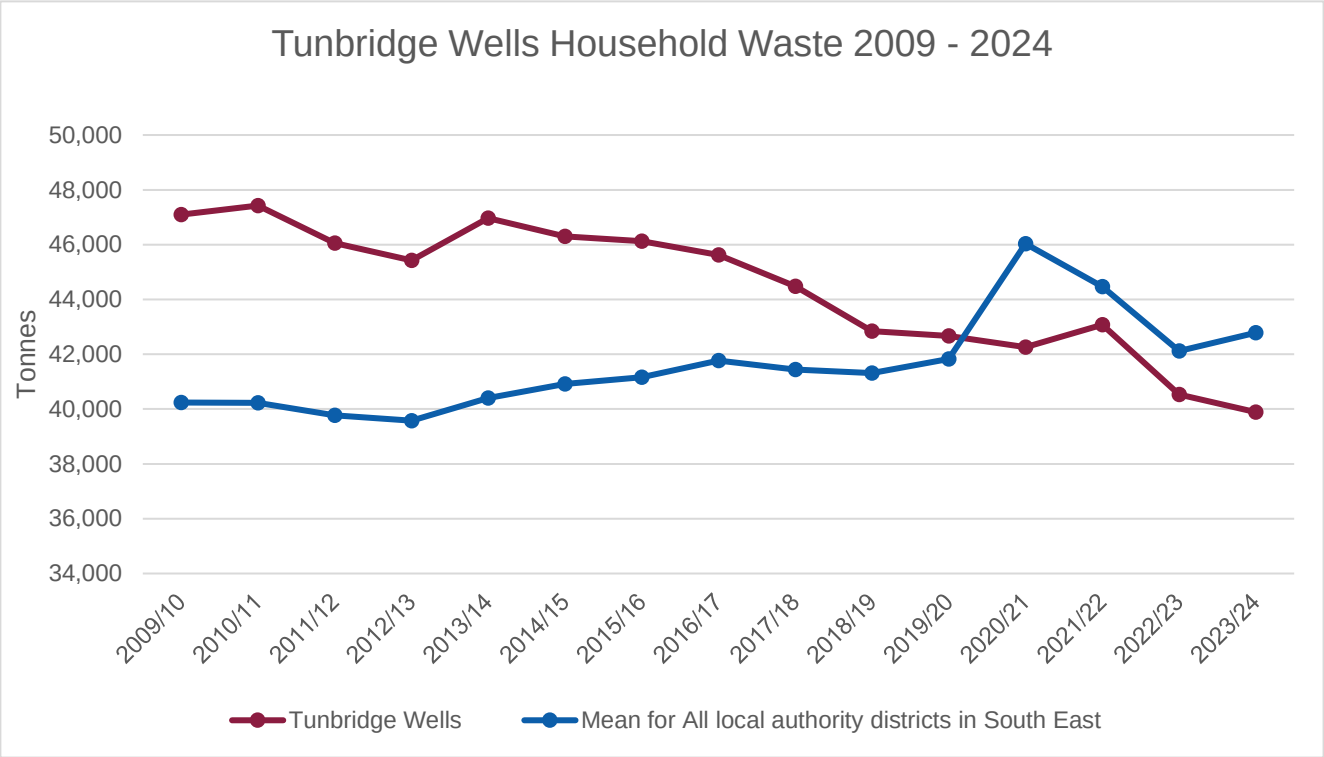

Figure 24: Tunbridge Wells Household Waste, DEFRA, 2025

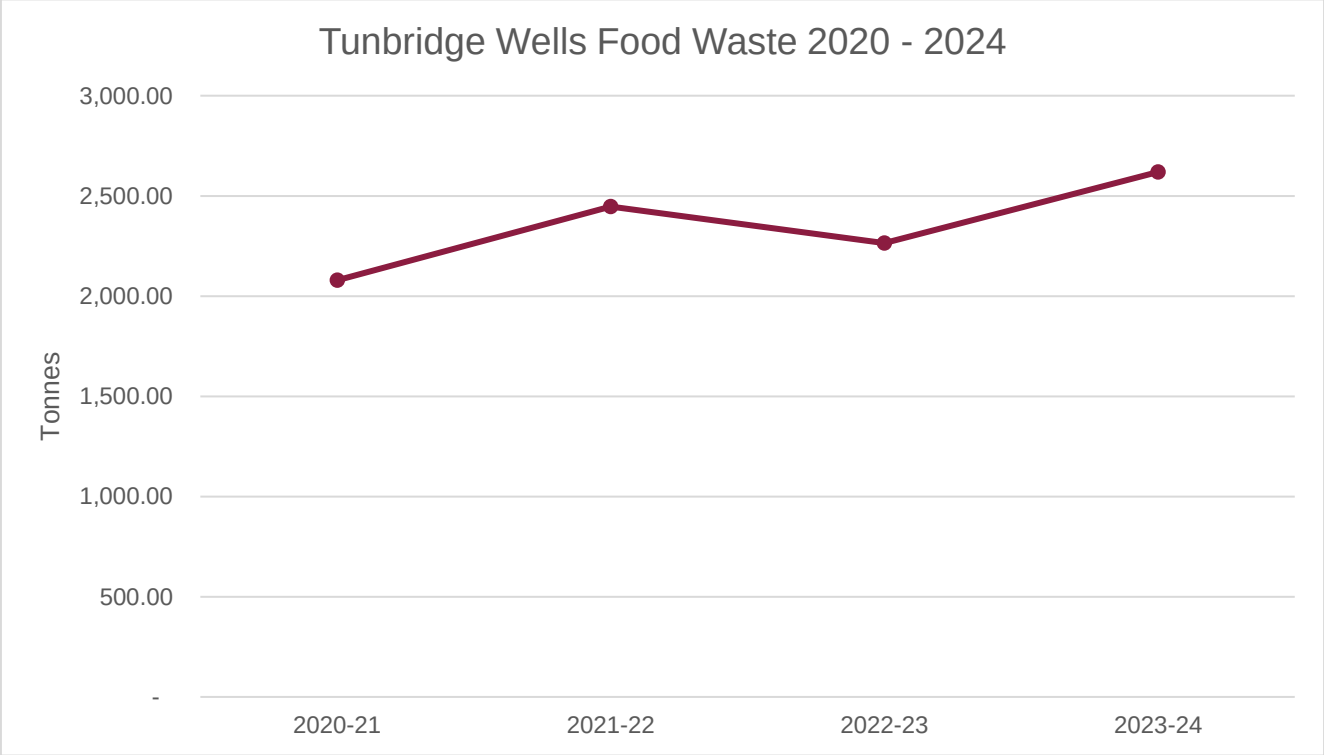

Figure 23: Tunbridge Wells Food Waste Tonnage, TWBC, 2025

4.6. Business and Community Engagement

In 2023, TWBC launched its resident survey. This survey was developed to understand resident opinions on the borough, TWBCs work and several key issues. This survey included a question on the borough's understanding on climate change and willingness to take action to reduce emissions. TWBC will continue to collect this data through the resident survey as a measurement of local attitudes towards climate change and willingness to take action to address it.

Figures 25, 26, and 27 highlight the findings from the resident survey.

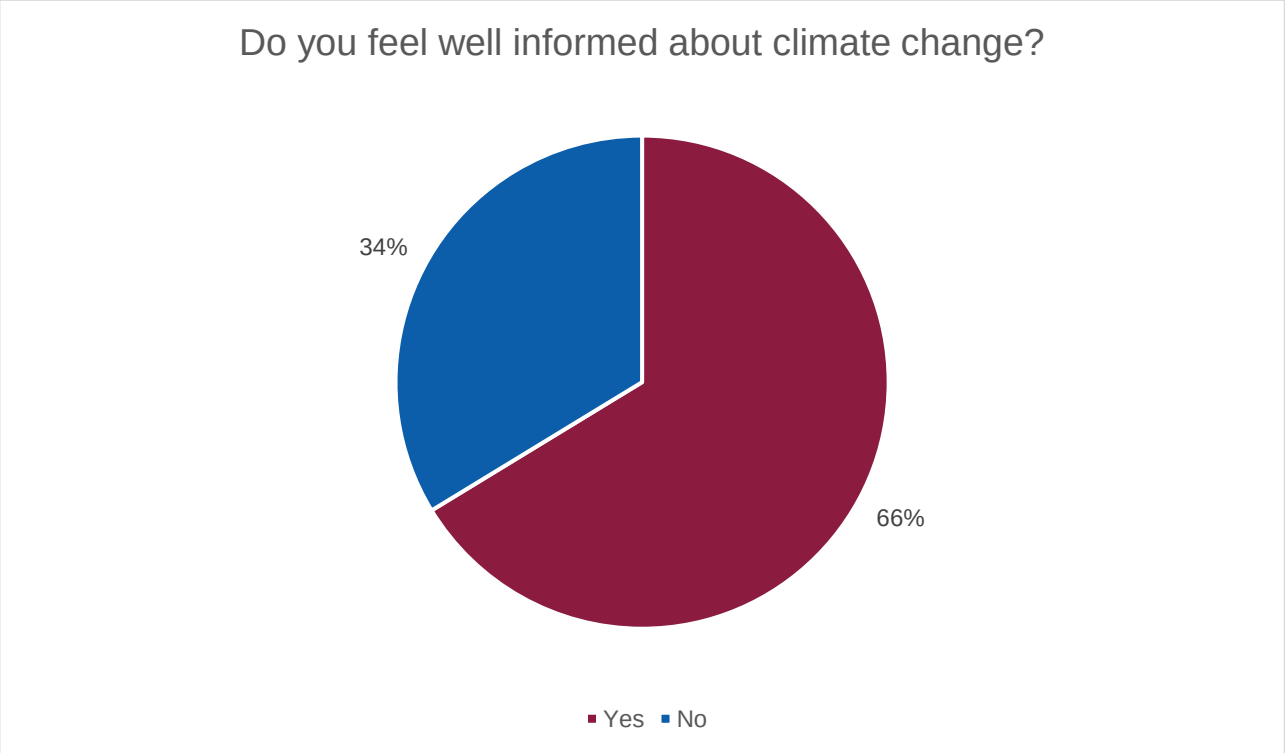

Figure 25: Percentage of Resdients Informed about Climate Change, TWBC, 2023

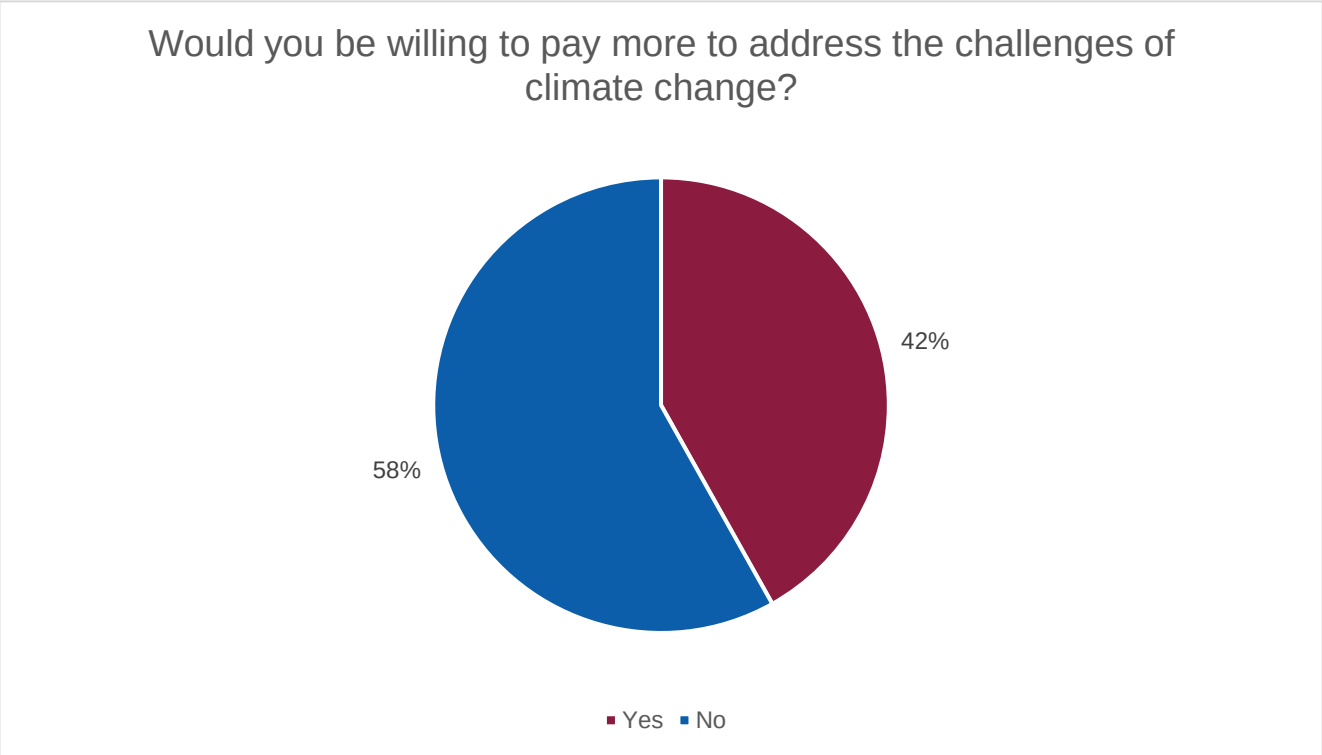

Figure 26: Percentage of Residents willing to pay for Climate Initiatives, TWBC, 2023

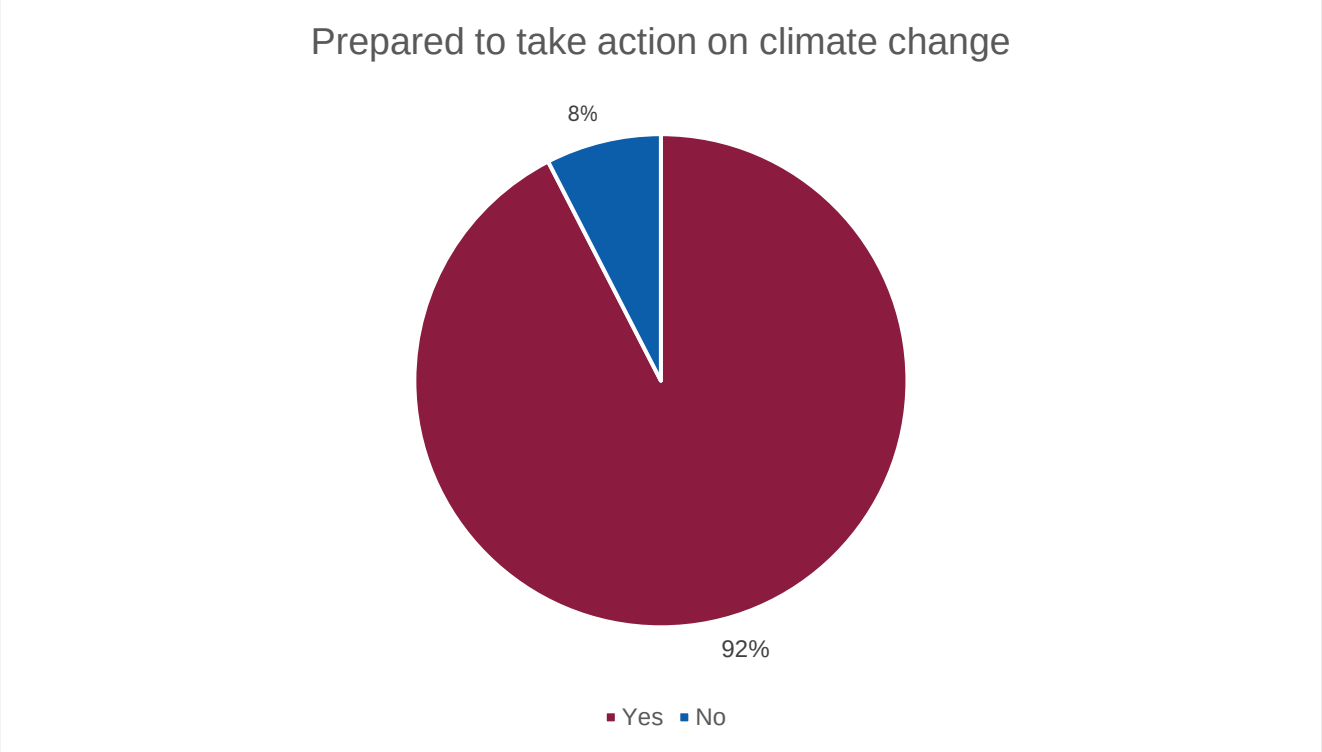

Figure 27: Percentage of Residents Prepared to act on Climate Change, TWBC, 2023

Using data from DESNZ, we can monitor decarbonisation progress among different sectors in our borough. Sectors include, commercial, waste management, agriculture, and wider industry. As highlighted in figure 28 below, all sectors have observed a reduction in emissions since 2005. The commercial sector has observed the largest reductions, whilst agriculture has observed the smallest reduction. Back in 2005, commercial emissions were the largest from these sectors by a significant margin. Now, in 2025, agriculture emissions are the highest from business and industry.

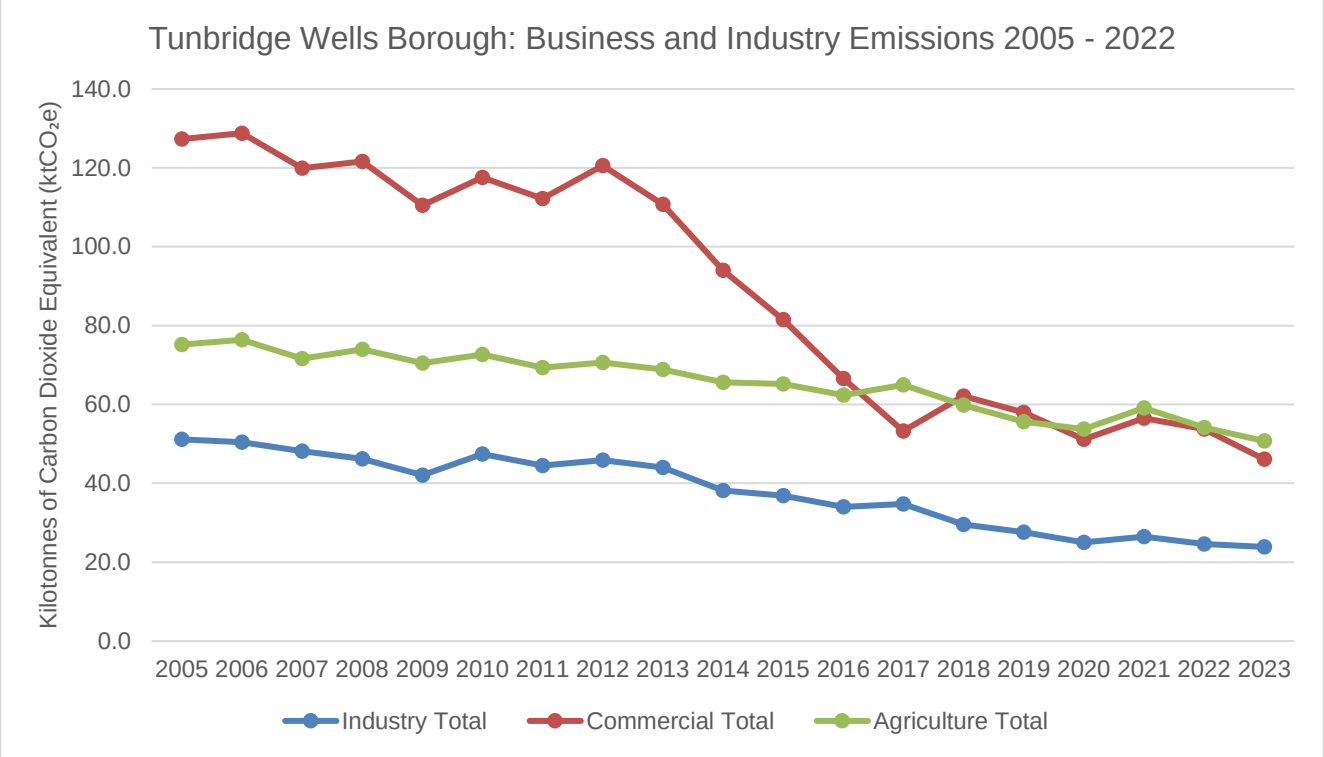

Figure 28: Business and Industry Emissions 2005-2023, DESNZ, 2025

4.7. Adaptation

To help determine borough preparedness for climate change, data has been obtained regarding flood risk awareness. According to the environment agency, in Tunbridge Wells, only 18% of those living in flood risk areas are signed up to flood alerts. That is approximately 342 households out of 1,900[35].

TWBC commissioned a strategic flood risk assessment in 2019[36] as part of the Submission Local Plan process. The below map outlines areas of historical flooding in the borough, developed by JBA Consulting, using Ordinance Survey data.

[35] Flood Alerts in Tunbridge Wells, Environment Agency, 2025
[36] Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, TWBC, 2019

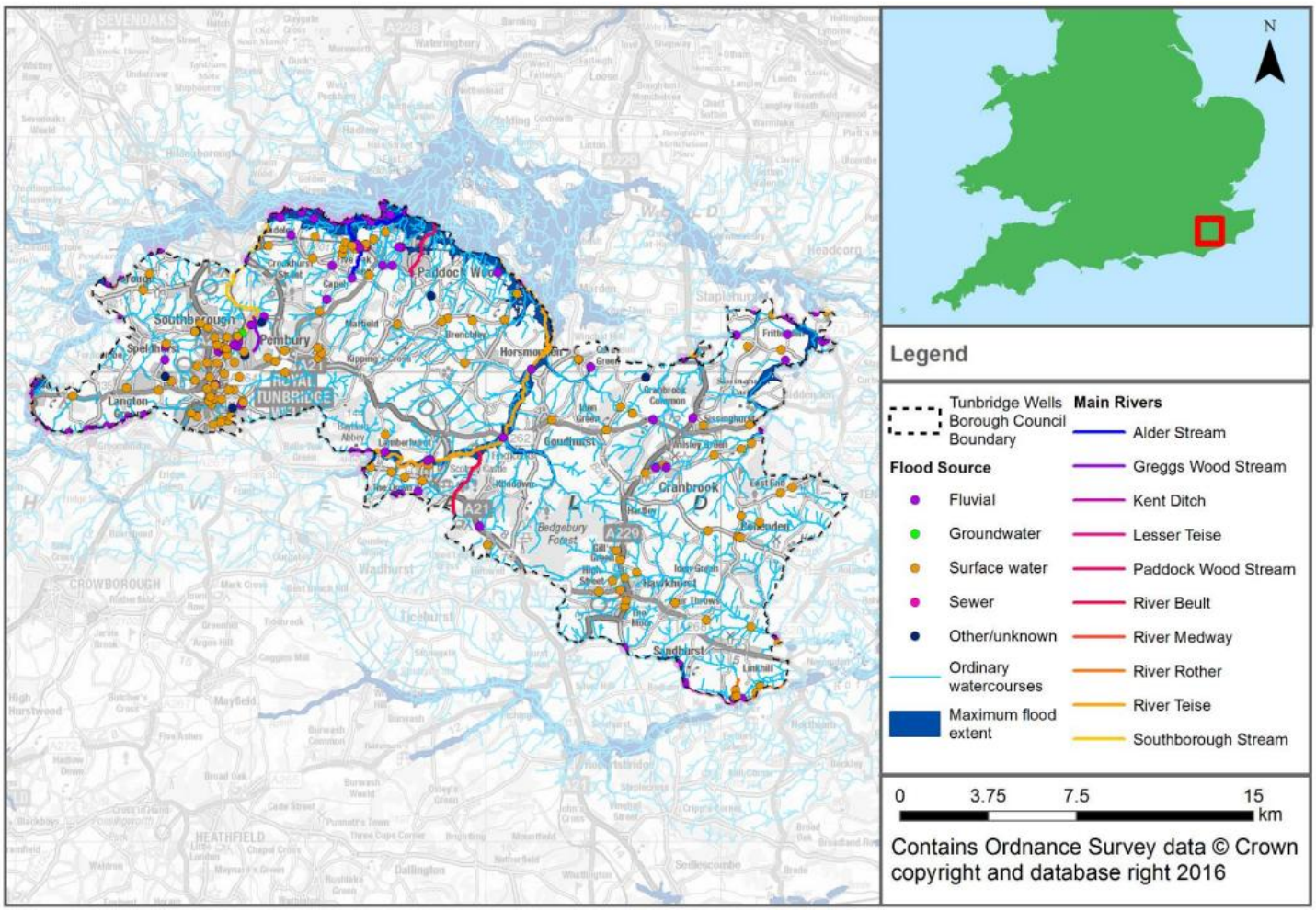

Figure 29: Historical Flood Records in Tunbridge Wells Borough, TWBC, 2019

Further data on the impact of extreme weather attributed to climate change has been collected by TWBC through online resident surveys. In 2022, TWBC conducted a climate change adaptation survey, following the heatwave experienced throughout that summer. 98 residents completed the survey.

Of those who completed the survey:

- 82% of respondents said that the heatwave has either ‘significantly’ or ‘somewhat’ affected them, with 18% of respondents ‘not affected’.
- 74% of respondents stated that the heatwave impacted their awareness of climate change.
- 59% of respondents stated that they experience anxiety or stress related to climate change.
- 76% of respondents stated that they had made changes to their lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprints.

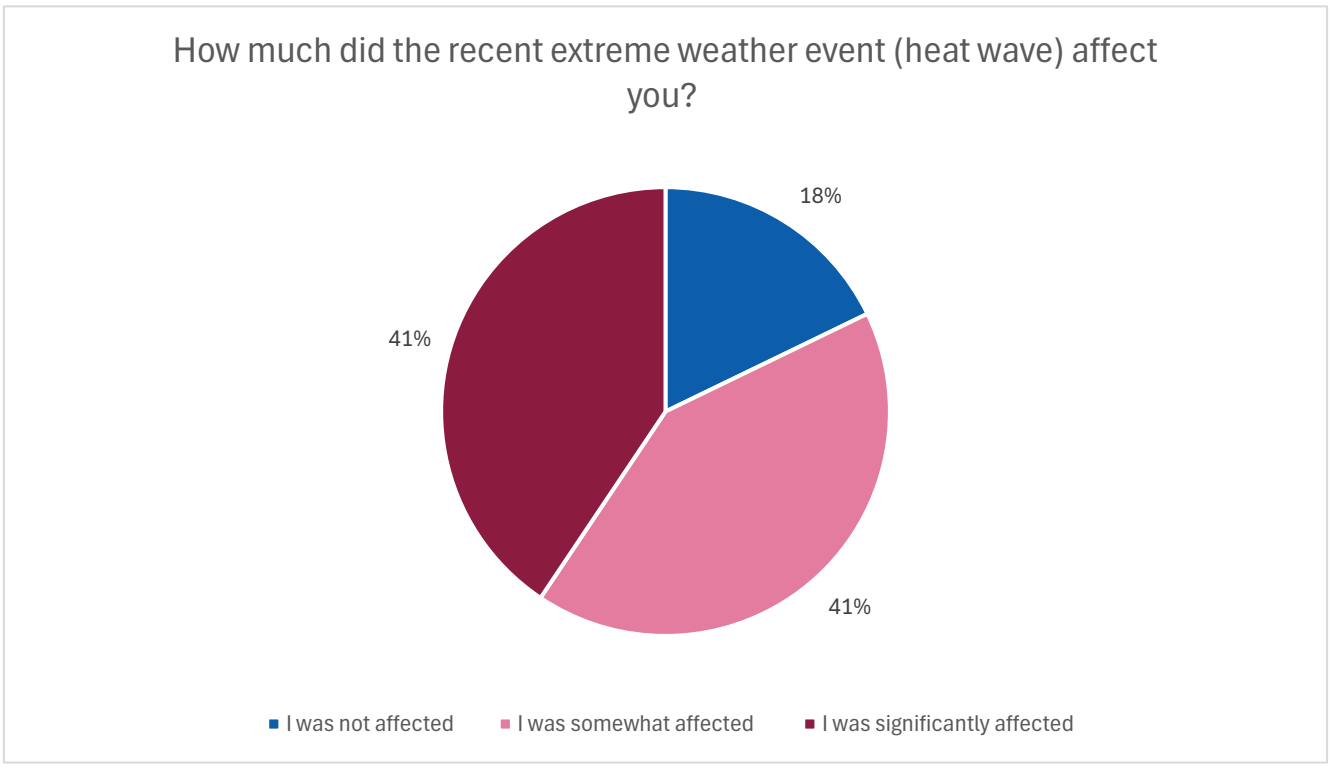

Figure 30: Impact of Extreme Weather Event on Tunbridge Wells Residents, TWBC, 2022

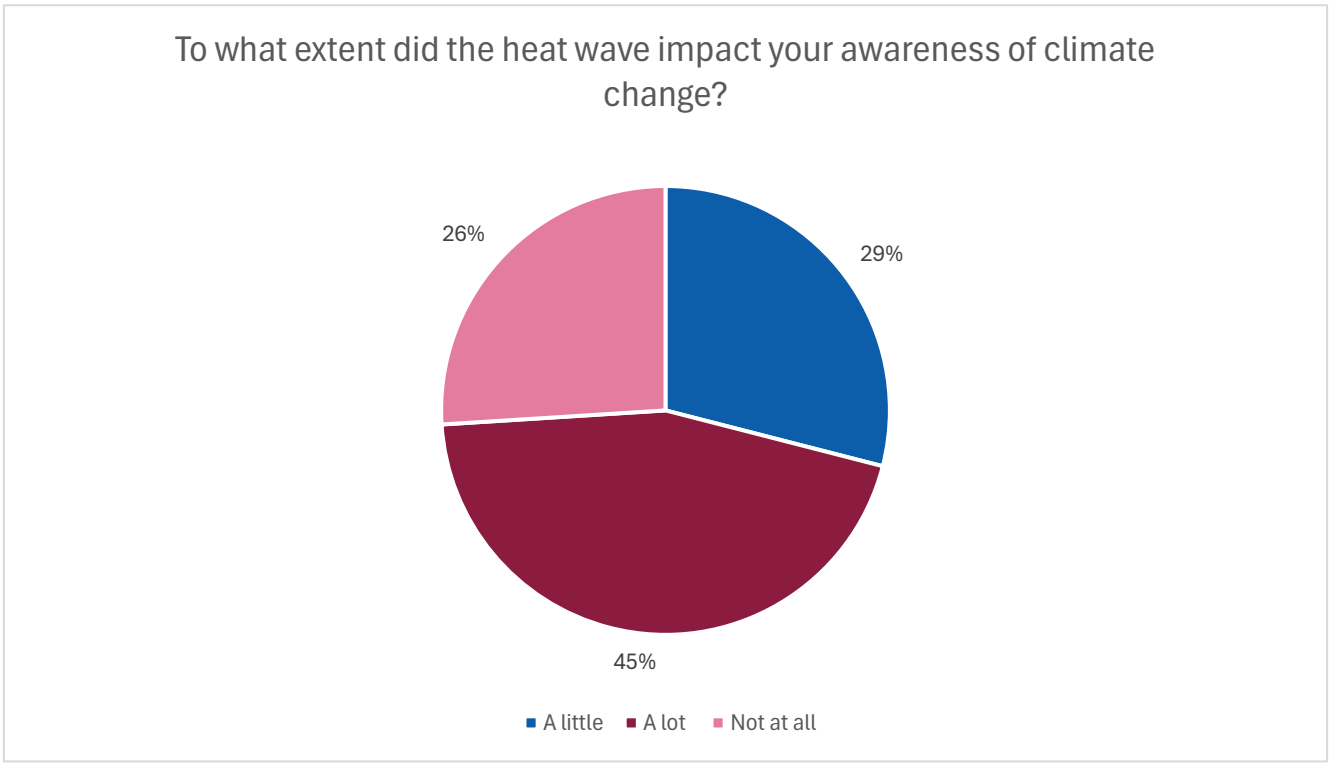

Figure 31: Climate Change Awareness Following Extreme Weather, TWBC, 2022

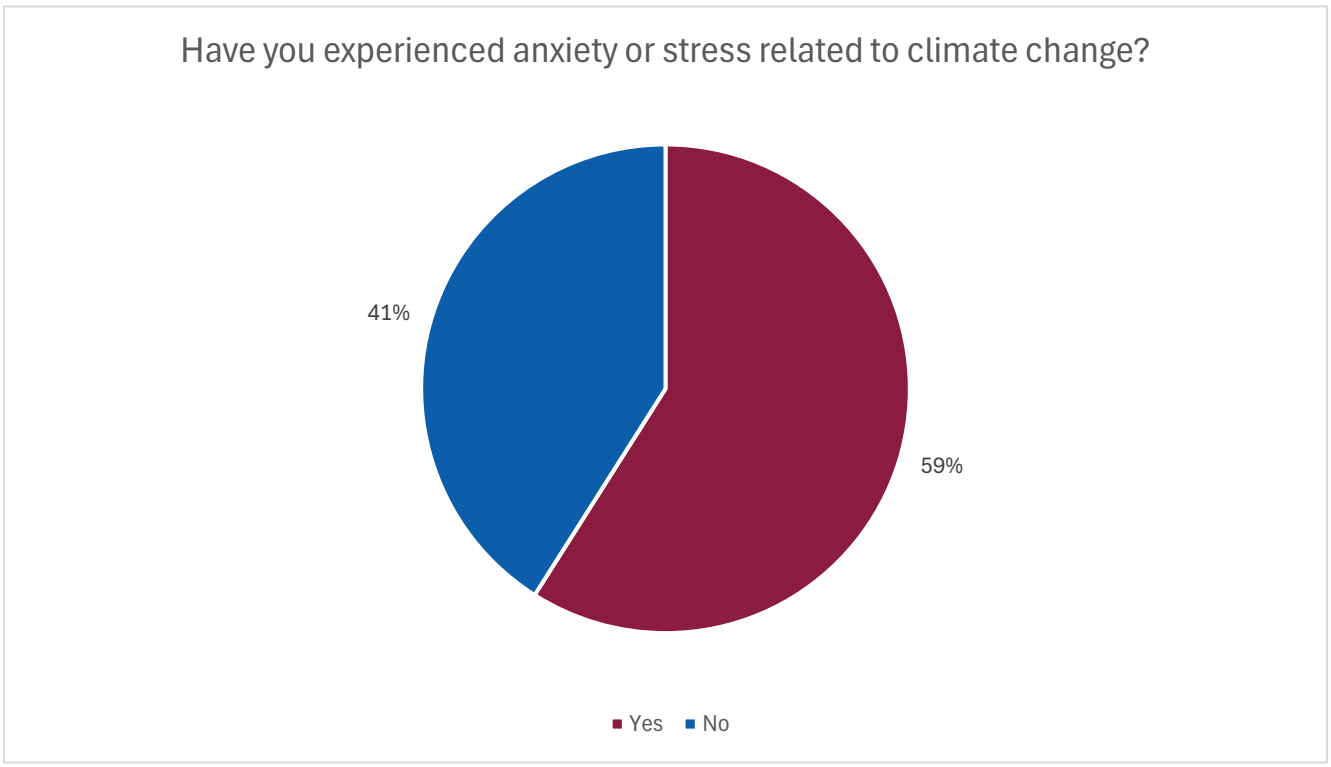

Figure 32: Experience of Climate Change Stress or Anxiety, TWBC, 2022

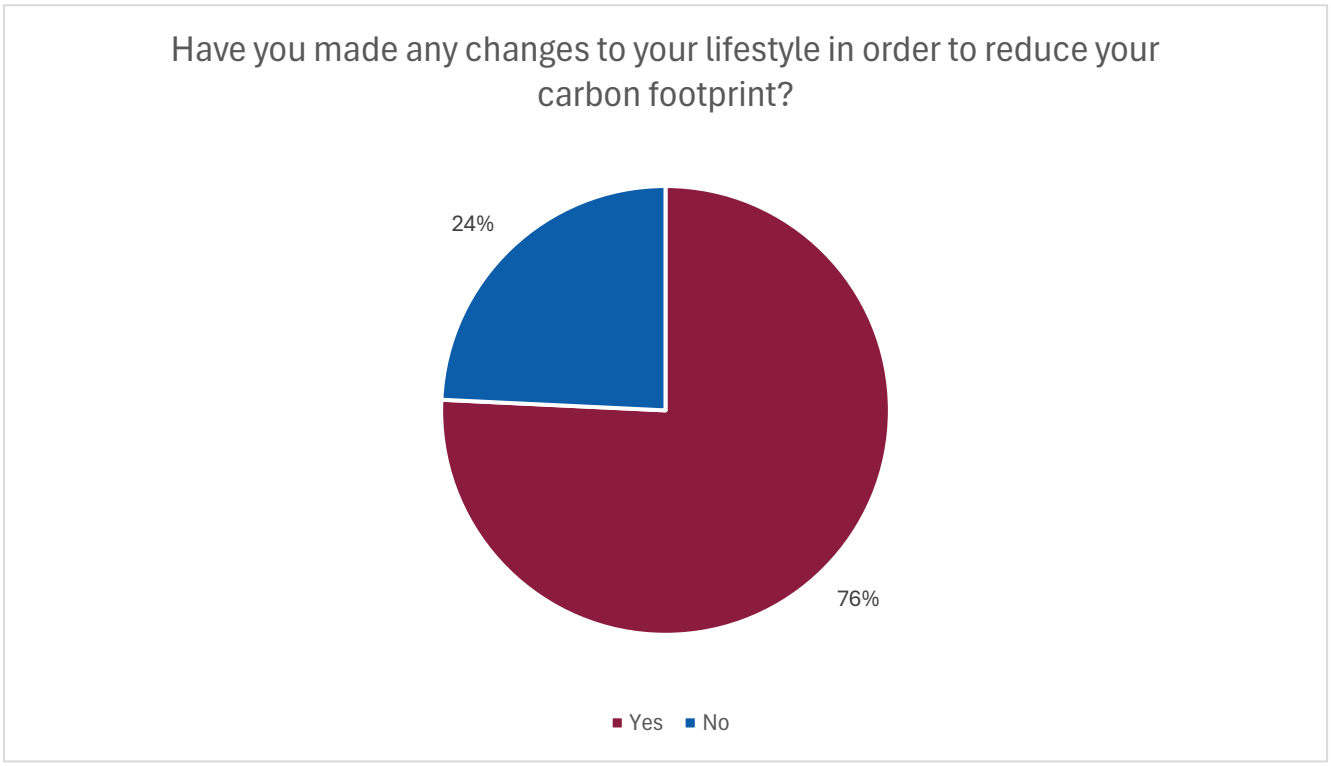

Figure 33: Lifestyle Changes to Reduce Carbon Footprint, TWBC, 2022

Appendix 1: Seventh Carbon Budget Policy Overview

Buildings

Topic	Proposal	Page
Heat pumps	By 2040, our Balanced Pathway sees around half of homes in the UK heated using a heat pump, compared to around 1% in 2023.	13
Home insulation	Cavity wall insulation is installed in 16% of homes with cavity walls, such that 87% of these homes have insulation by the mid-2030s. Additional loft insulation or top-up loft insulation is installed in 9% of homes with lofts, such that all these homes have insulation by the mid-2030s.	111
Energy efficiency measures	Most homes also receive small energy efficiency improvements (such as draught proofing), while big energy efficiency improvements are installed in 17% of homes.	162
Heating systems	Low-carbon heating is installed in all homes by 2050.	163
Heating systems	In the Balanced Pathway, the share of existing homes with low-carbon heating increases from 8% in 2023 to 68% by 2040.	163
Heat pump installations	In our pathway, annual heat pump installations in existing homes increase rapidly. 60,000 heat pumps were installed in 2023, and this rises to nearly 450,000 in 2030, reaching around 1.5 million by 2035.	164
Low carbon heat networks	Existing heat networks are converted to low-carbon heat sources from 2025, with 40% of existing heat networks converted by 2030 and all converted by 2040.	166
Heating systems	Direct electric heating supply chains are already well established, and annual installation rates reach 210,000 by 2035 in our pathway.	166
Electric household devices	Gas cooking appliances and petrol or diesel-powered garden machinery are phased out and replaced with electric equivalents from the mid-2030s	167

Transport

Topic	Proposal	Page
EV charging points	EV charging points pathway growing from 54,000 public charge points in 2023 to around 300,000 by 2030.	107
Car-kilometers travelled	By 2040, total car-kilometres driven per capita in the Balanced Pathway, including EVs as well as petrol and diesel vehicles, will see 7% of car kilometres shifted to public or active travel by 2035.	111
Electric vehicles	The share of buses that are zero-emission grows from 1% in 2023 to 18% by 2030 and 60% by 2040.	152
Electric vehicles	The share of motorcycles that are zero-emission grows from 2% in 2023 to 89% by 2040.	152
Active travel and public transport	Improvements to make buses and active travel more attractive, affordable, and accessible allow 7% of car demand to be switched to public transport and active travel by 2035, compared to the baseline.	152

Biodiversity and Environment

Topic	Proposal	Page
Green cover	By 2040, our Balanced Pathway sees more than 16% of the UK covered in woodland, an increase from 13% today, as new diverse woodlands deliver carbon sequestration in vegetation and soils. It is vital that tree planting rates more than double to 37,000 hectares per year, by 2030.	14
Restored land	In the Balanced Pathway, the total restored or near-natural area rises from the current 30% to 60% by 2040, with annual rewetting rates reaching 45,000 hectares between 2030 and 2050.	195
Restored peatlands	In the Balanced Pathway, the total restored or near-natural area of lowland peatland rises from the current 9% to reach 31% by 2040.	195
Agroforestry	By 2050, 10% of cropland and agricultural grassland is under agroforestry practices.	196
Hedgerow coverage	In the Balanced Pathway, the extent of hedgerows increases by 40% by 2050	196

Renewable Energy

Topic	Proposal	Page

Renewable energy generation	For onshore wind, the Balanced Pathway requires an average deployment rate of 0.8 GW per year, with deployment peaking at 1.9 GW in 2030. For solar, an average deployment rate of 3.4 GW per year is needed.	209

Waste and Resources

Topic	Proposal	Page
Meat consumption	Average meat consumption declines by 25% by 2040 and 35% by 2050 compared to 2019 levels, with a steeper reduction in red meat consumption (40% by 2050)	194
Recycling rates	Recycling rates for commercial and industrial waste, including municipal non-household waste, are expected to rise even higher, to 74%.	112
Horticultural products	10% of horticultural products are moved to indoor systems by 2050.	195
Recycling rates	Combined recycling rates across household and non-households will need to increase to 68% by 2035.	245
Recycling rates	This will require the UK household recycling rate to increase from the current 45% (2021) to 57% by 2035.	248
Food wastage	The proportion of food waste collected for anaerobic digestion increases from roughly 60% in 2024 to 90% in 2030, enabled by mandatory weekly household food waste collections in England due to be introduced from 2026.	248
Compost	Around 30% of composting sites are suitable for aeration, which is rolled out to all these sites by 2030.	249
Recycling rates	The recycling rate for non-household waste needs to increase from an estimated 49% in 2021 to 74% by 2035.	248
Food wastage	Our pathway sees a 39% reduction in total food waste per capita by 2030 and a 45% reduction by 2040, from 2021 levels.	248
Waste facilities	Advanced anaerobic digestion is rolled out to all plants by 2030. Membrane aerated biofilm reactors are rolled out from 2030 to 10% of sites by 2045.	249

Business and Community Engagement

Topic	Proposal	Page

Industrial electrification	By 2040, our Balanced Pathway sees electricity meet 61% of industrial energy demand, up from around 26% today. The major sources of heat in industry are replaced with electric options including electric boilers, electric ovens, electric furnaces in the glass sector, and, most significantly, electric heat pumps.	13
Heat pumps	Non-residential buildings will also install heat pumps, with 83% and 95% of heat in commercial and public sector buildings delivered by low-carbon technology by 2040.	107
Heat pumps	Most heating is delivered by efficient heat pumps, whether this be through a district heat network or individual systems. By 2040, 88% of non-residential heating is delivered by low-carbon sources, compared to 24% today.	254
Heat networks	Heat networks deliver 22% of heat demand in non-residential buildings by 2040 in the Balanced Pathway.	254
Electric equipment	For all types of catering equipment, replacements are electric by 2030 at the latest. By 2040, the vast majority of catering equipment in use is electric.	256
Public engagement	Around a third of the emissions reduction required to meet the Seventh Carbon Budget will come from households making low-carbon choices.	120