

Agenda

Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 27 January 2026

Time 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT

Membership:

Councillors Shelley Cheesman, Alex Eyre, James Hunt, Carole Jackson, Elliott Jayes (Vice-Chair), Peter Marchington, Claire Martin, Charlie Miller, Kieran Mishchuk, Pete Neal, Ashley Shiel, Paul Stephen, Sarah Stephen, Terry Thompson and Dolley Wooster (Chair).

Quorum = 5

Pages

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- (d) Anyone unable to use the stairs should make themselves known during this agenda item.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting held on 12 November 2025 (Minute Nos. 448 – 462) as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or friends.

The Chair will ask Members if they have any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) or disclosable non-pecuniary interests (DNPIs) to declare in respect of items on the agenda. Members with a DPI in an item must leave the room for that item and may not participate in the debate or vote.

Aside from disclosable interests, where a fair-minded and informed observer would think there was a real possibility that a Member might be biased or predetermined on an item, the Member should declare this and leave the room while that item is considered.

Members who are in any doubt about interests, bias or predetermination should contact the monitoring officer for advice prior to the meeting.

5. Matters Arising

Update from the Chair on any matters from the previous meeting or upcoming agenda items relating to this committee.

6. Chairs Briefing

Items for Noting

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|-------|
| 7. | Forward Decisions Plan | 5 - 6 |
|----|------------------------|-------|

Items for Decision by the Committee

- | | | |
|-----|--|----------|
| 8. | Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan Annual Report | 7 - 46 |
| 9. | Off-Street Parking Order Consultation Report | 47 - 74 |
| 10. | Annual Parking Report 2024-25 | 75 - 110 |

Issued on Monday, 19 January 2026

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in alternative formats. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, please contact democraticservices@swale.gov.uk. To find out more about the work of this meeting, please visit www.swale.gov.uk.

Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

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Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee – Forward Plan

Forward Plan

Report Title	Summary	Draft Recommendation / Intended Outcome
March 2026		
Coastal Engagement	This report was generated following the committee’s decision to not progress a change in the Shoreline Management Plan for Eastchurch but to direct resource into engaging with the community that will be impacted. The report updates on progress following planning sessions with the Environment Agency.	To note the contents of the draft Coastal Community Engagement Plan
Procurement of minor maintenance and cleansing of public conveniences – tender award	This report will give Cllrs the opportunity to review the evaluation process of the tender, see what has been offered and make a decision whether to award the contract or not.	To award the contract to company XXXXXXXX from 1 April 2026 for 5 years + 2 year option.
Kent Joint Municipal Waste Strategy – still to be confirmed	Kent Resource Partnership (the Boroughs, Districts and County Council) have refreshed the strategy and are wishing to bring it to Cllrs for endorsement.	To endorse the strategy.
Street Naming and Numbering Policy refresh	Legislation has been updated so this report will update Cllrs and recommend changes to the existing policy.	To approve the Street Naming and Numbering Policy.
Bartons Point Task and Finish Group - update	To report back to committee with the key considerations made in the T+F group and formally make recommendations for action.	TBC
June / July		
Waste and Street Cleansing Annual Report 2025-26	To summarise the achievements and challenges of the major contract over the last financial year.	For noting/discussion/scrutiny and any recommendations for what members want to see in future reports
TBC		
Draft Open Spaces Strategy for consultation	TBC	TBC
Litter Enforcement Contract Award	TBC	TBC
Stray Dog Policy	TBC	TBC

Stray Dog Kennels Contract	TBC	TBC
Memorial Scheme - review	TBC	TBC

Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee	
Meeting Date	27 January 2026
Report Title	Climate and Ecological Emergency Annual Progress Report
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Neighbourhoods and Regeneration
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Janet Hill, Climate Change Officer
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. For Committee to approve and to take to Council for noting.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 On June 26, 2019, the Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency, as well as setting ambitious net-zero targets.
- 1.2 The 2025 Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan set revised targets for a net-zero Swale by 2045.
- 1.3 The 2019 Declaration committed the Council to producing an Annual Report on the progress made towards becoming a net-zero Council and Borough.
- 1.4 This is the seventh Annual Report, and the first to be made on the revised Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan which was adopted in March 2025.

2 Background, Context and Proposals

- 2.1 In the revised Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan the Council set new net-zero targets.
- 2.2 This includes a 2045 Borough wide target, five years ahead of the legally binding 2050 national net-zero target.
- 2.3 Targets for Swale Council's own operations are disaggregated by scope, which can help to understand, target, and report on emissions. For Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, the Council will be net-zero by 2035, while a 2045 net-zero target is in place for scope 3.
- 2.4 The full report can be found in Appendix I

Progress Highlights

- 2.5 A Steering Group consisting of councillors and officers convenes quarterly to update on the top 10 priority actions.
- 2.6 A 294-panel solar array is to be installed on the roof of Swale House in Spring 2026, which will generate approximately 117,128 kWh, and offsetting 50% of the total electricity currently consumed by Swale House annually.
- 2.7 Works have begun on Sheerness Revival, with the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency commitments reflected in the redevelopment of Master's House, East Kent College, and the Healthy Living Centre. Master's House is being completed to BREEAM 'Good', and Air Source Heat Pumps and Solar PV are being installed. At East Kent College, building orientation has been considered to maximise daylight, shading, and natural ventilation, while the roof is being built to incorporate a bio-solar roof to provide renewable energy generation and benefits to biodiversity. Air Source Heat Pumps have been installed. The Reconfiguration of the Healthy Living Centre is being completed to BREEAM 'very good', with improvements made to the building's insulation, and the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps. All materials from demolition works are being recycled, with much crushed and used as substrates for new pathways.
- 2.8 The Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan went out for consultation at the start of October and received 87 responses. Work is now underway to collate and analyse these before adoption of the LCWIP.
- 2.9 Swale Cycle Recycle continued to expand, with 298 refurbished bikes being re-distributed back into community over the course of the year. Funding from the Consolidated Active Travel Fund is being used to begin recycling scooters and upskill workshop staff so the scheme can begin running Dr Bike sessions.
- 2.10 The Council's continued participation in Solar Together has resulted in 33 installations in Swale throughout 2025, with a further 26 households having paid deposits.
- 2.11 The Fuel and Water Advisory Service is continuing, with 685 fuel vouchers and 377 energy packs provided to residents across Swale. £43,065 of water debt has been cleared.
- 2.12 On Carbon Literacy Action Day 2025 six Swale Councillors completed their Carbon Literacy Training and achieved full accreditation. The first cohort of 120 students completed their Carbon Literacy in June 2025. A second cohort at the school has started training as of September, and work is now underway to rollout training at EKC Secondary in the next academic year.
- 2.13 The Council is working with Kent Wildlife Trust to create a pilot habitat bank at Queendown Warren Nature Reserve, helping to restore the landscape, provide long term protection, and satisfy Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements where

on-site offsetting is not feasible. A Biodiversity Net Gain grant from DEFRA is being used to identify further sites within Swale that may be suitable for habitat banks. A 20% BNG uplift is being sought through the Local Plan Review. The 3Cs project is now complete.

- 2.14 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) have been used to establish the Community Infrastructure Grant and Rural Swale Small Business Grant which has supported capital investment for community benefit in Swale. Projects have been prioritised based on investment which improves the environmental and financial sustainability of community facilities and amenities through carbon reduction measures. Successful projects have included the installation of solar battery storage at a sports club, the purchase and installation of LED lighting at a village hall, and a solar array for a charity.
- 2.15 During National Tree Week and Swale Tree Week, 210 free native whips were given out at markets across the Borough, and five planting events were held which saw 1600 whips planted across Swale. A further 20 standard trees were planted to support the rejuvenation of the Easthall Community Orchard. These have been attended by students from five local schools as well as volunteers.

Going Forward

- 2.16 In the next few years Kent will undergo Local Government Reform. This brings change, uncertainty, but also opportunity.
- 2.17 The years since the 2019 Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration has been marked by fiscal strain, the cost-of-living crisis, and Covid-19. Despite this, the Council has made positive progress, which has and will continue to bring tangible benefits for residents and the Council. If this resilience is anything to go on, then despite the challenges Swale Council will be able to continue to work effectively to reduce its operational emissions and see year-on-year cuts on borough wide emissions.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 1. For Committee to approve and to take to Council for noting.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 While there are no decisions required as the result of this report, an option could be to rescind the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration. This is not recommended as it would result in a slower decrease in emission reductions both for in the Council's operations and the wider Borough. Doing so would also result in reputational damage.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Members of the Climate and Ecological Steering Group have been involved in the writing of this report by providing information and updates from their service areas.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Delivering on the declarations and revised targets will enhance quality of life of residents, demonstrate good governance, and ensure well managed assets.
Financial, Resource and Property	The Annual Progress Report identifies where funding has been used. Where funding has been used, capital and revenue funding has been assessed on an individual project basis.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified at this stage
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The projects within the report support deliver a more a sustainable borough and council.
Health and Wellbeing	There are tangible benefits on the health and wellbeing of residents as the result of climate action.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage
Local Government Reorganisation	In the next few years Kent will undergo Local Government Reform. This brings change, uncertainty, but also opportunity.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: 2026 Climate and Ecological Emergency Progress Report

8 Background Papers

[2025 Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan](#)

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Annual Climate and Ecological Emergency Progress Report

January 2026

Page 13





2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

Foreword

In June 2019 Swale Borough Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency. Since then tackling this emergency has been at the heart of our operations both internally and externally.

We set some of the most ambitious net zero targets in the country and these targets drove the Council to begin working on projects which may have otherwise been delayed such as tree planting, LED roll out, establishment of car clubs, and building retrofits.

In March 2025 we adopted a new revised Action Plan to update the way in which we tackle the emergency taking into account the challenging economic and social landscapes.

This will be the seventh Annual Report, covering the activities undertaken in 2025 to address the emergency, and the first to report on progress against the revised Action Plan.

As shown in this report we have made positive progress in reducing emissions directly within our control and supporting the wider Borough in decarbonising.

In the next few of years all the authorities in Kent will be restructured and merged with neighbouring local authorities into unitary authorities, which will bring challenges, but equally opportunities.

Funds such as Pride in Place will provide £20 million to communities on East Sheppey over the next decade, while the Pride in Place Impact Fund will help residents across the wider Borough. Both present an opportunity for the Council to collaborate with communities to deliver sustainable regeneration that will benefit residents for generations to come.

I look forward to working with councillors, officers and residents to further our progress towards net zero.



Figure 1: Cllr Dolley Wooster, Chair Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

Background

In June 2019 Swale Borough Council, in common with many other local authorities, passed a motion to declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency.

The motion set some of the most ambitious targets in the United Kingdom, with the Council then seeking to achieve net- zero carbon across our operations by 2025 and Borough wide by 2030.

These targets drove the Council to begin working on projects which may have otherwise been delayed such as tree planting, LED roll out, establishment of car clubs, and building retrofits. Despite this, the time since the 2019 declaration has been challenging, and it became clear the Council could not achieve its targets.

Throughout 2024, officers completed a carbon audit to set a new emissions baseline and in March 2025 the Environment and Climate Change Committee (now the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee) adopted a revised Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

The 2019 motion also included the provision of an Annual Report in January of each year.

This will be the seventh Annual Report, covering the activities undertaken in 2025 to address the emergency, and the first to report on progress against the revised Action Plan.



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

2025 Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

The [2025 Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan](#) set revised targets for the Council to achieve net zero in our own operations, as well as across the wider Borough.

For the first time, targets have been disaggregated by scope.

The re-baselining exercise undertaken by the Council in 2024 showed varied levels of changes in the emissions of each scope, meaning there are different opportunities and challenges in achieving net-zero for each. Separating the targets also means it is clearer to see how the Council must act.



The revised targets include a 2035 net zero target for the Council's own scope 1 and scope 2 emissions, and a 2045 net zero target for both the Council's scope 3 emissions, and the Borough.

The revised action plan includes seven focus areas, under which actions are grouped.

This Annual Report covers the measures taken towards achieving the ambitions of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan, as well as any other interventions taken by the Council to deliver a net-zero Swale.



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

Establishing a baseline

To monitor progress against our targets, we need to understand the emissions of the Borough. Regional greenhouse gas statistics are published each year by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), although for the purpose of robust reporting these feature a two-year lag. This means the most available data is from the 2023 calendar year.

In Swale in 2023, 42.18% of CO₂ emissions came from the Industry Sector, while only 5.62% came from the Commercial Sector. Transport accounted for the next largest source of emissions, at 32.25%, followed by the Domestic Sector emissions from houses at 16.05%, Agricultural Sector emissions (3.68%), Public Sector emissions (1.82%), and waste management (<0%).

Land Use, Land Change and Forestry meant that 15.5 kt CO₂e was sequestered from the atmosphere. This can be attributed to carbon sequestration from forest and grassland in Swale.

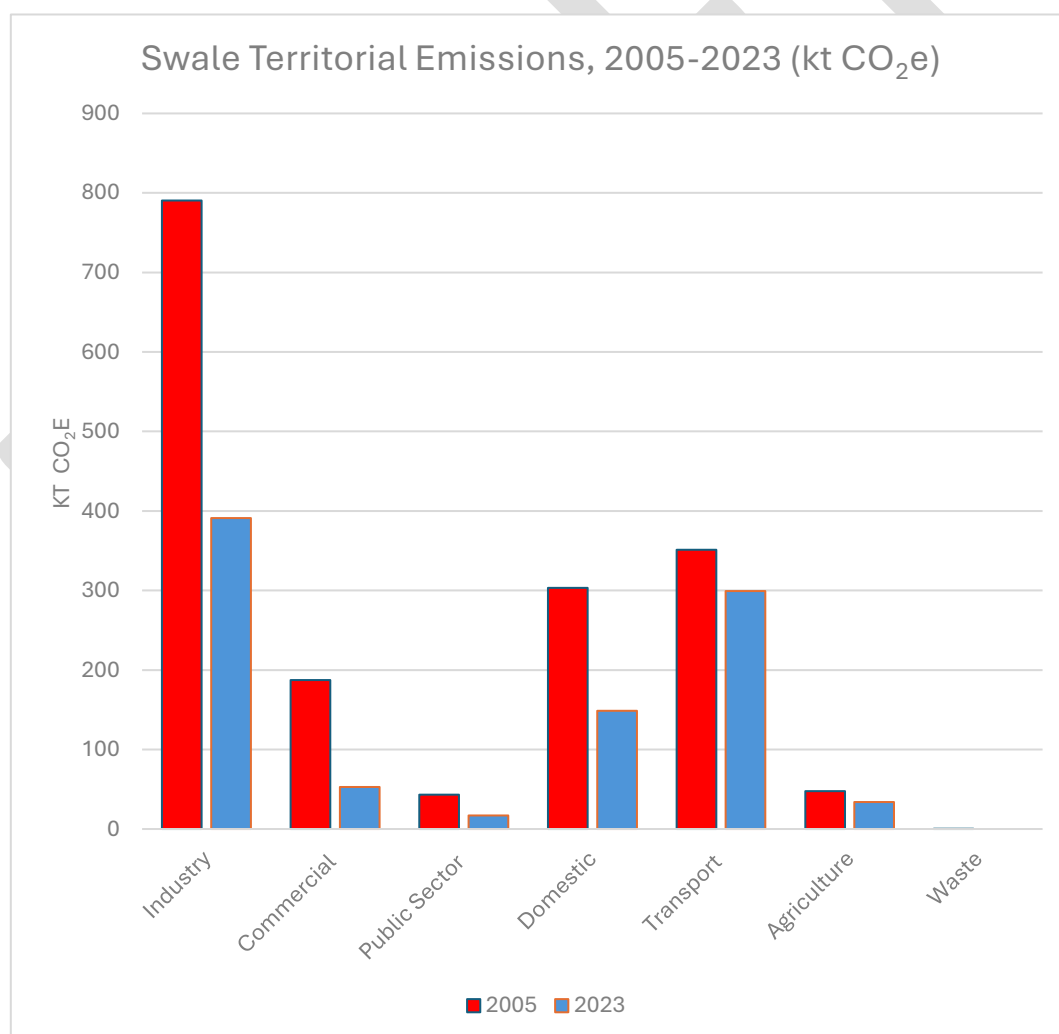


Figure 2: Source, DESNZ



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

The total carbon emissions from the borough have decreased by 45.79% since 2005, from 1710.5 kt CO₂e to 927.3 kt CO₂e in 2023.

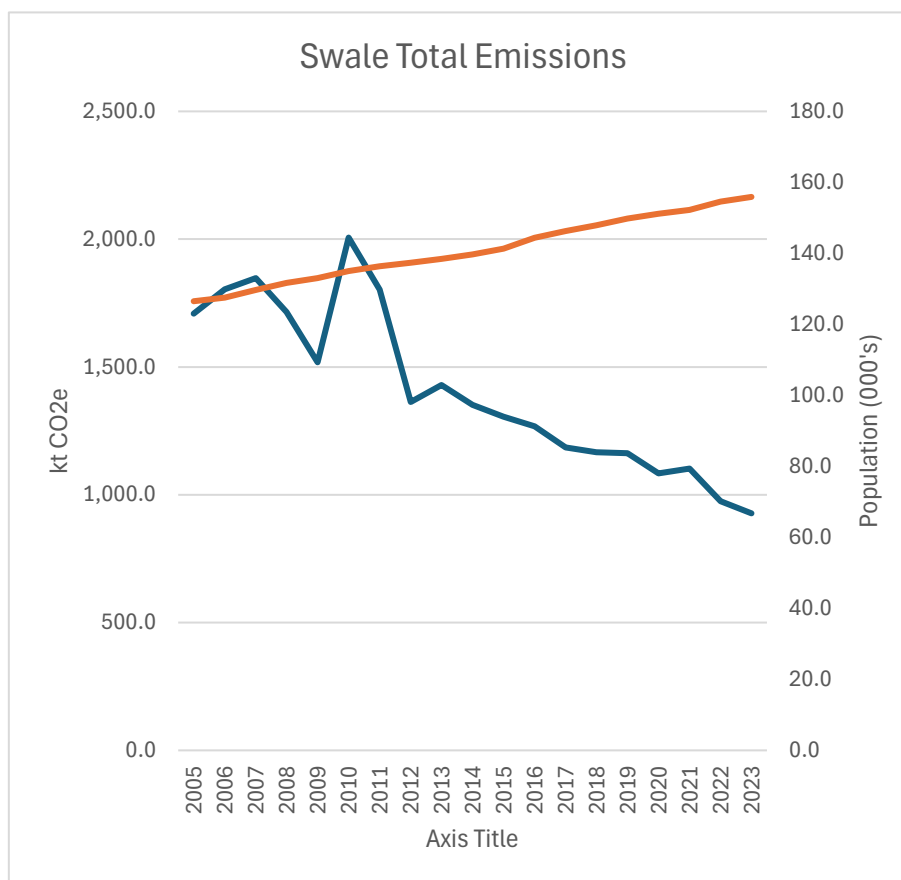


Figure 3: Source, DESNZ

Since Swale Borough Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019, the per capita emissions of Swale have fallen from 7.8 tCO₂e to 5.9 tCO₂e.

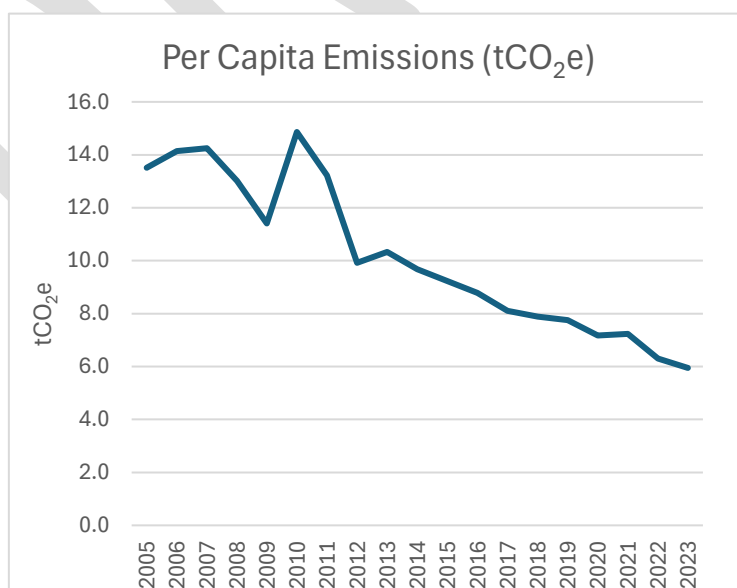


Figure 4: Source, DESNZ



Swale has a long industrial heritage and so emits much more from this sector than any other Kent authority, although work is underway to address this. In 2023, the industrial sector produced 391.1 kt CO₂e, accounting for 42.18% of the borough's total emissions. This is a 50.2% reduction from the 2005 baseline used in DESNZ reporting.

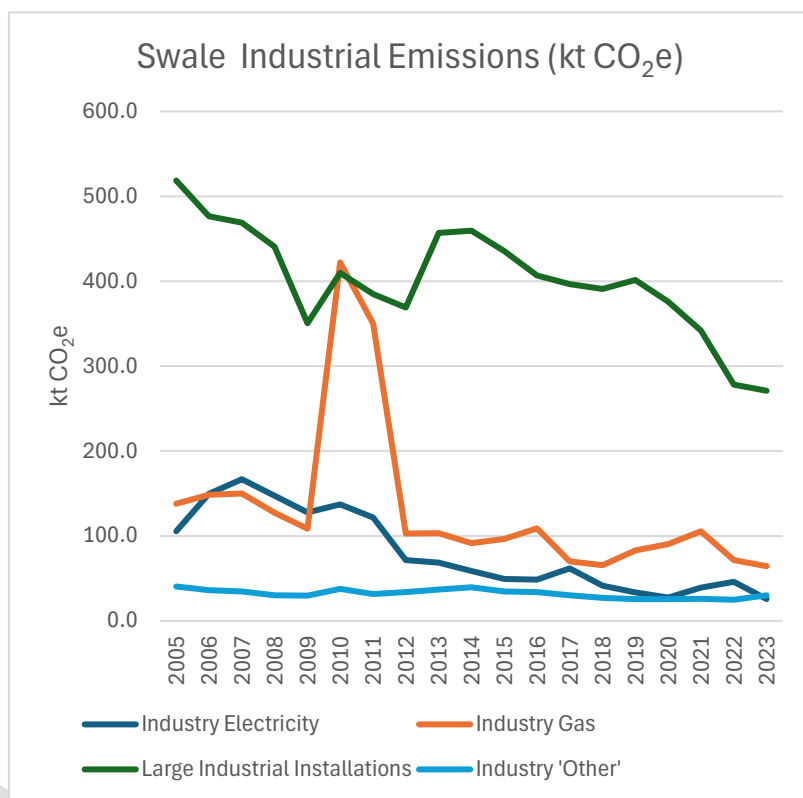


Figure 5: Source, DESNZ

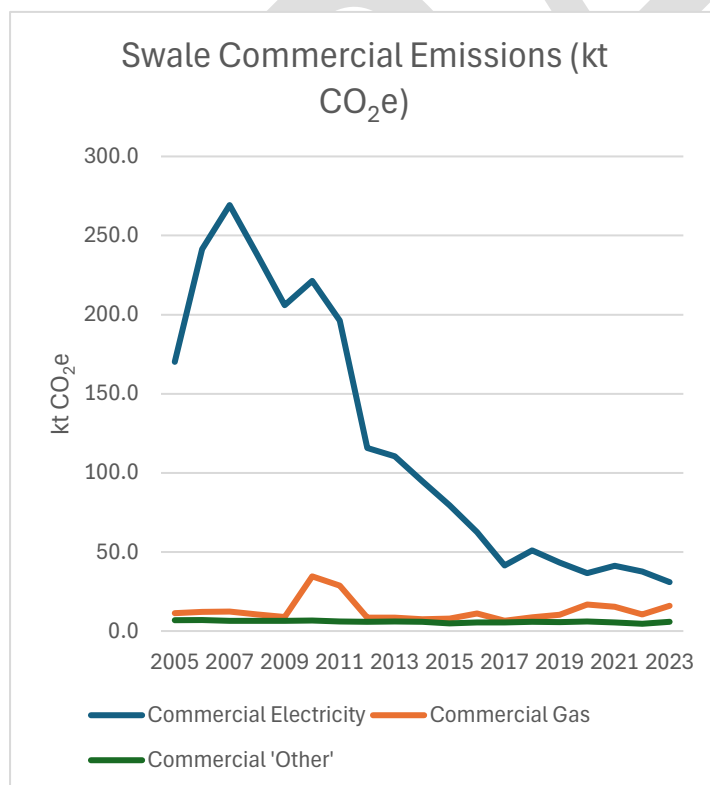


Figure 6: Source, DESNZ

In 2005, the commercial sector of Swale was responsible for emitting 187.5 kt CO₂e, a figure which has decreased by 71.89% to just 52.7 kt CO₂e in 2023. Much of this can be attributed to a significant drop in emissions arising from the use of electricity. The sector now accounts for 5.62% of the borough's total emissions.



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

The public sector has seen a 43% reduction in emissions since 2005, when the sector emitted 43 kt CO₂e. The latest data shows that this has dropped to just 16.9 kt CO₂e, representing 1.82% of the borough's total emissions.

In 2005, the sector emitted 303.4 kt CO₂e, a figure for which the use of electricity was predominantly responsible for. Despite a peak between 2010-2011 emissions in the sector have become stable and in 2023 emitted 148 kt CO₂e, a reduction of 50.96% from the 2005 baseline. This represents 16.05% of Swale's total emissions.

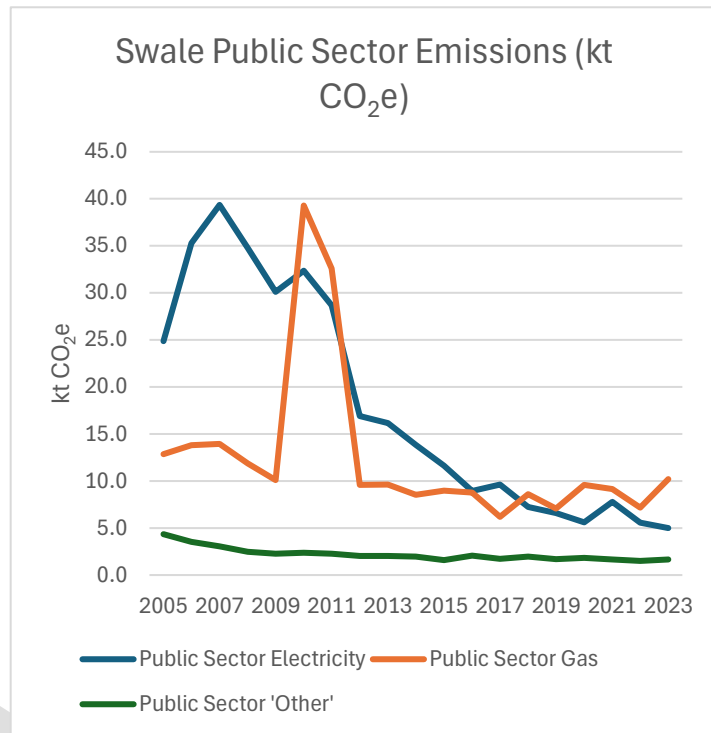


Figure 7: Source, DESNZ

The transport sector is Swale's second largest emitting sector before industry, representing 32.25% of the borough's total.

Unlike other sectors included within this report emissions derived from the transport sector cannot be entirely attributed to Swale. In 2023, 33.97% of transport emissions could be attributed to vehicles using the motorways that cross through the borough.

The sector saw a swift decrease in emissions because of the measures put into place during the COVID-19 emergency, and although emissions have since increased, they remain 11.4% below pre-covid levels. Since 2005, emissions from the sector have decreased by 14.85%, from 351.4 kt CO₂e to 299.1 kt CO₂e.

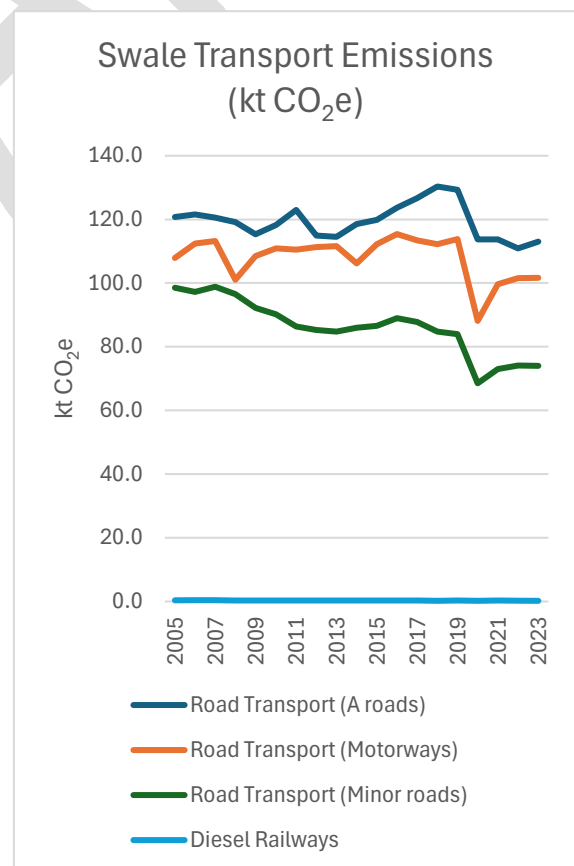


Figure 8: Source, DESNZ



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

The domestic sector emitted 148.8 kt CO₂e in 2023, accounting for 16.05% of the borough's total emissions. Since 2005, emissions from the sector have decreased by 35.32%.

Much of this decrease can be attributed by reductions in emissions arising from electricity, owing to the gradual decarbonisation of the national grid, as well as increased uptake of domestic photovoltaics.

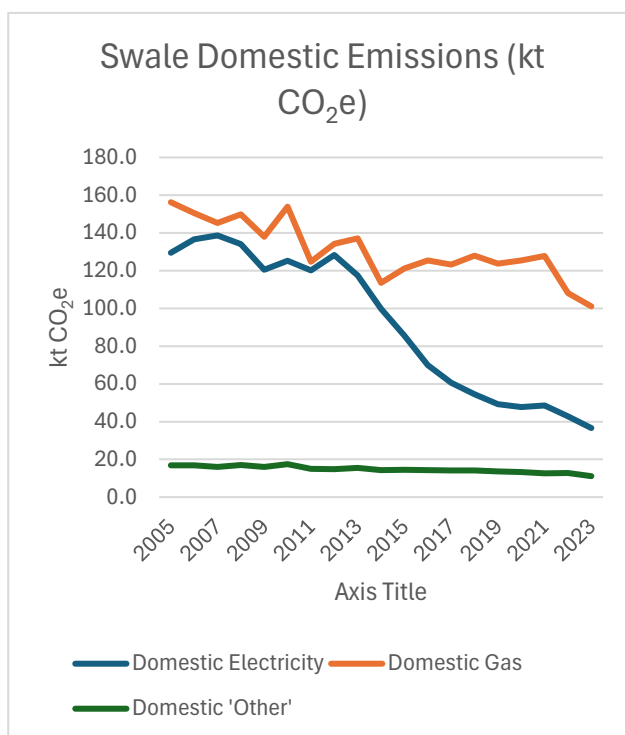


Figure 9: Source, DESNZ

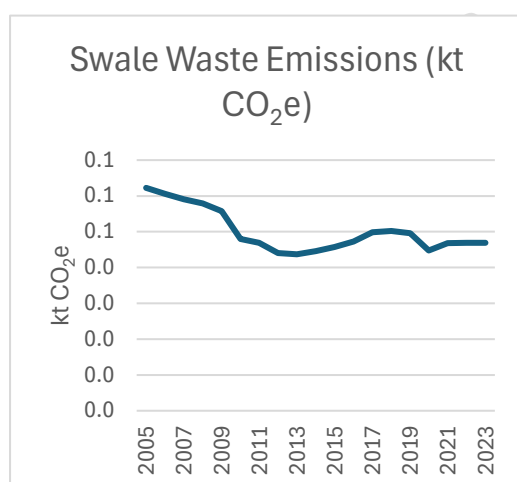


Figure 10: Source, DESNZ

Emissions from waste management have always accounted for a negligible proportion of the borough's total.

The Agricultural Sector emitted 34.1 kt CO₂e in 2023, a decrease of 28.36% from 2005 levels. The agricultural sector now accounts for 3.68% of the boroughs total emissions.

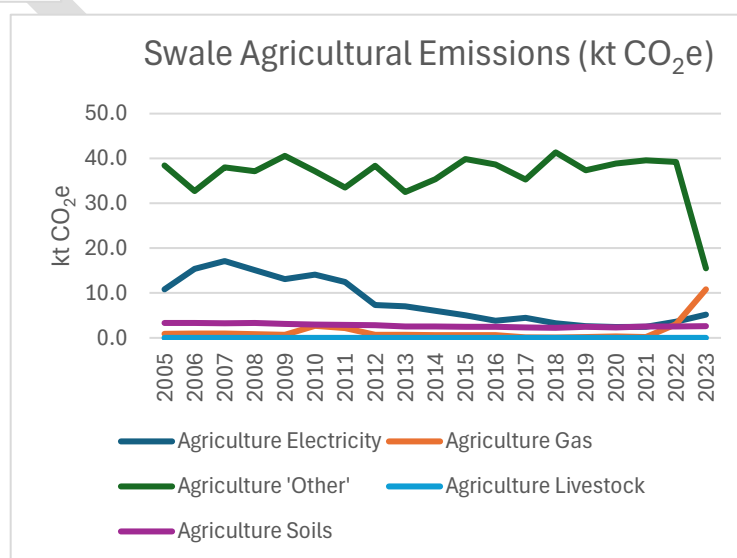


Figure 11: Source, DESNZ



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

Renewable Generation

At the end of 2023, there were 3136 installation sites producing renewable energy in Swale, an increase of 25.38% from the previous year. Of these, 99.39% were domestic photovoltaics.

The remaining sites include 13 onshore wind installations, three sites generating renewable energy from sewerage gas, landfill gas, or municipal solid waste, and one site generation energy from biomass.

The total generation of these is estimated to be 807.4 MW.

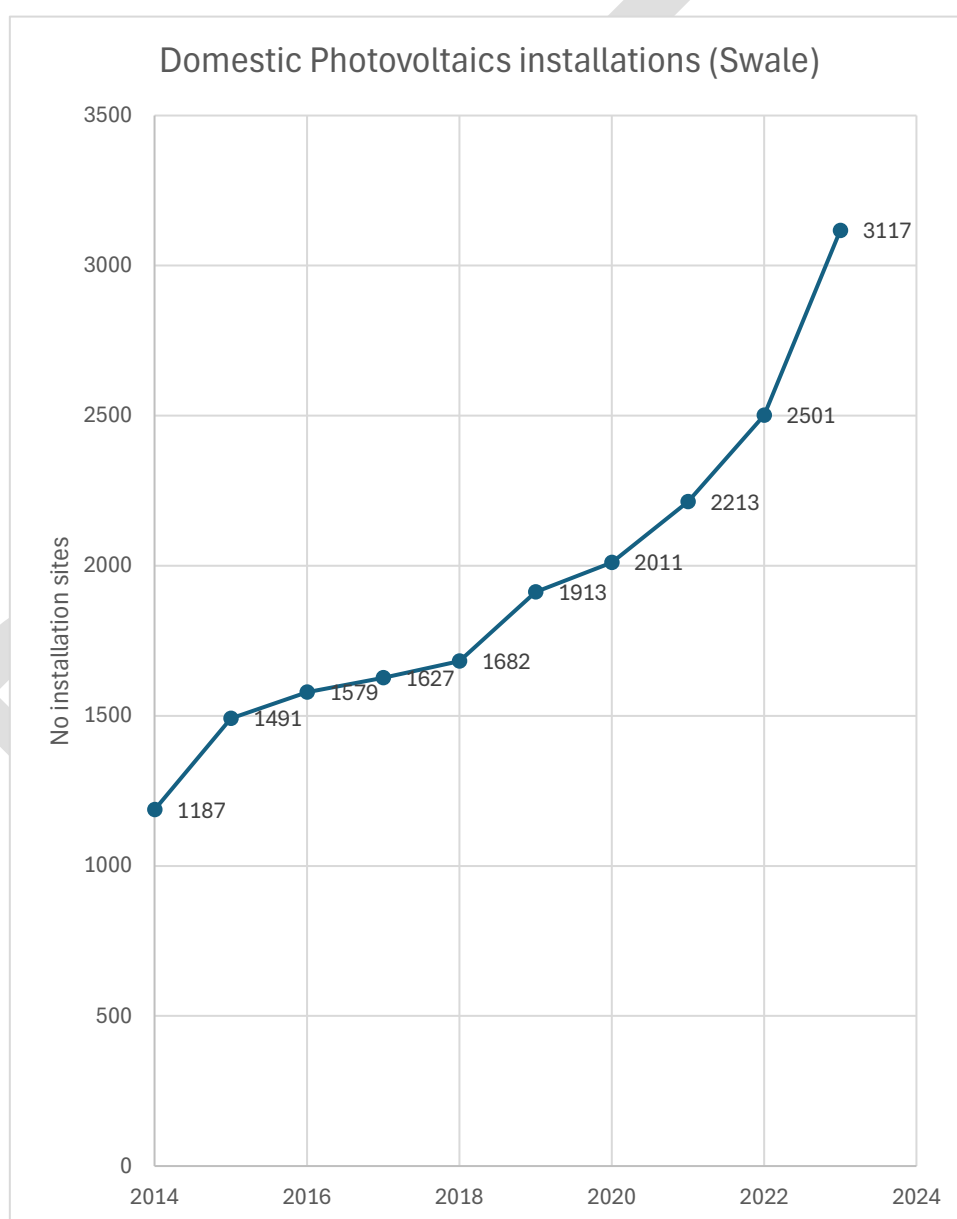


Figure 12: Source, DESNZ



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

Waste

As the waste collection authority Swale has targets to reduce the amount of residual waste collected and increase the proportion sent to recycling and composting.

From April 2024 to March 2025 the residual waste per household was 35,369.87 tonnes, equating to 42.5 tonnes per household. The overall recycling rate for Swale was 35.34%.

Category	Tonnes recycled
Household Recycling	8,802.73 tonnes
Food Waste	2,658.88 tonnes
Garden Waste	8,526.48 tonnes

Percentage of household waste recycled and composted (2024)	
Month	Recycled
January	25.23%
February	28.51%
March	31.15%
April	35.12%
May	37.40%
June	38.51%
July	36.59%
August	36.76%
September	38.41%



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

Action Progress

1. Council Operations

- 1.1. Action 1:** To bring forward business cases to retrofit Council assets where funding is available, and to identify grant and advocacy opportunities to support the retrofitting of tenanted premises.

Planning permission has been granted for a 294-panel solar array on the roof of Swale House. A contract is being drawn up, following which an application to the distribution network operator can be made. Installation expected around November. Once installed this is estimated to generate 117,128 kWh, offsetting ~50% of the total electricity currently consumed by Swale House annually. Installation of the array is planned to begin in January 2026.

The Council has engaged with the Greater Southeast Net-Zero Hub (GSENZH) to undertake desktop assessments on the suitability of rooftop solar PV and solar canopies over the car parks of both the Swallows Leisure Centre, Sheppey Leisure Complex, and Sheerness Pools.

- 1.2. Action 2:** to ensure that the Council's commitments are balanced in all plans, strategies, and decisions as far as practical.

In January 2023, the Council was awarded £20 million from the UK Government to undertake a regeneration project on the Isle of Sheppey. The resulting project – 'Sheerness Revival' will improve the health, leisure, education, and employment outcomes for the town of Sheerness.

Three sites; Master's House, East Kent College Sheppey, and Beachfields are in the process of retrofit and extension.

Consideration has been given to the Climate and Ecological Emergency in all instances.

The reconfiguration of the Healthy Living Centre at Beachfields is being completed to BREEAM 'Very Good,' with improvements made to the insulation of the building, an improved window and glass spec, and the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump.

All materials from the demolition works at the site are being recycled (except from asbestos), with much of it crushed and reused in the extension or as substrates for new pathways.



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

The extension of East Kent College has considered building orientation to maximise daylight, shading, natural ventilation, and low air permeability, while the roof will incorporate an extensive bio-solar roof system, providing not just renewable generation, but benefits to ecology. Air Source Heat Pumps have been installed, contributing to further carbon reductions. BREEAM “excellent” has been achieved.



Figure 13: Installation of the Biosolar roof at East Kent College

At Master’s House the garages are being converted into office space for young entrepreneurs. The conversion works are being completed to a BREEAM ‘Good,’ and Air Source Heat Pumps have been installed. The next phase of works will see the garages connected to the solar PV system.

1.3. Action 3: to produce a Sustainable Events Policy.

A Sustainable Events Policy is being drafted. This focuses on reducing the environmental impact caused as the result of outdoor events on Council land. The policy will mandate recycling at such events, restricts the use of single use plastics, lanterns and helium balloons, reduces damage to amenities such as grass lawns, flower beds, and vegetation, and will mean events promote wider awareness of energy efficiency and encourage active travel.

1.4. Action 4: To provide training for purchasing Officers on procurement and commissioning which includes considerations on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration.

Officers are exploring whether changes could be made to the Carbon Literacy Course to include tailored information on sustainable procurement.

Officers attend the Procurement sub-group of the Climate Change Network and are feeding into the development of a Sustainable Procurement Toolkit.

1.5. Action 5: To identify opportunities to reduce emissions from the Council’s largest contracts through formal and informal agreements.

Two new electric vehicles have been added into the service of the waste fleet. The Fiat eDucato Technicos are expected to make savings of 16 tCO₂ per annum in comparison to their diesel counterparts.



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

1.6. Other Related Items/Achievements

Carbon Literacy Training

In 2024 the Climate and Ecological Emergency Projects Officer undertook Carbon Literacy Training, with the view of providing training to members at Swale Borough Council.

Carbon Literacy Project



An initial taster session was held on Thursday 14 August 2025, which was attended by seven members. On October 7 and November 13 (Carbon Literacy Day), members attended full training, and six members earned accreditation.

Training has been offered to parish and town councils.

Carbon Literacy Training provides learners with an in-depth understanding of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities, and builds their capacity to act in a personal, community, or organisation context.

The project officer has recently undergone Water Literacy training and this will be offered alongside Carbon Literacy.

LED Lighting

171 lights have now been replaced with LEDs, representing just under 80% of the Council's stock. Many of the remaining lights are non-streetlights and include uplighters and strip lights.

The installation of LEDs has led to a significant reduction in energy consumption and a 76% reduction in costs, from £5606.92 in March – September 2024 to £1340.65 in March – September 2025.

Paper Use

The Staying Put team has digitalised their working with most paper forms being replaced by use of an iPad. This is estimated to reduce printing and paper use by over 4,500 pages a year. A single sheet of A4 paper has a carbon cost of approximately 5g CO₂, meaning the Council has reduced downstream emissions by approximately 22.5kg CO₂.



2025 Climate and Ecological Annual Report

2. Air Quality and Sustainable Transport

2.1. **Action:** Review the Electric Vehicle Strategy

A review of the [2022 Electric Vehicle Strategy](#) is currently underway.

2.2. **Action:** Create and implement a Swale wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

A Local Walking and Cycling Plan (LCWIP) is a strategic document which analyses local travel patterns to identify physical measures to increase local levels of Active Travel. While LCWIP's are not statutory, they are crucial in unlocking funding to improve active travel infrastructure.

The Swale LCWIP public consultation ran from 1st September 2025 to the 26th of October 2025. This was both on-line and in paper format at strategic hubs within the Borough. 25 walking routes and 22 cycling routes were detailed within the consultation and there was a total of 82 responses.

Each of the comments will be looked at to determine what actions are required on the LCWIP document following this feedback. The routes will then be prioritised based on Active Travel England criteria. The LCWIP will then be presented back to Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee for final sign off before it can be adopted into Swale Borough Council's Local Plan.

2.3. **Action:** Prioritise LCWIP routes that require infrastructure enhancements first.

All routes have undergone the first stage of design (feasibility stage) as this was part of the LCWIP documentation. These initial designs were completed by AECOM for the Sittingbourne routes and WSP for the Sheppey Town routes. Funding through the Consolidated Active Travel Fund was awarded in July for a feasibility study on the highway section of the Sheppey Light Railway Greenway route. Additional funding from Active Travel England also allowed SBC to be able to choose Fi routes to complete the next stage of design which is more detailed design work (all completed by WSP). These routes were:

- Kemsley to South Sittingbourne
- Iwade to Kemsley
- Grove Park to South Sittingbourne
- Brielle Way to Rushenden Road
- Minster Broadway



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Going forward, all routes will be scored against Active Travel England criteria to prioritise further routes for detailed design works. The scoring methodology used to prioritise routes will include forecast increases in trips through active travel, improvements in road safety, use groups (for instance students, or employees), and construction and maintenance costs.

2.4. Action: To work with KCC to deliver 20mph zones in urban centres across the Borough.

Funding was applied for in March to the Consolidated Active Travel Fund to introduce 20mph zones in Sittingbourne and Sheerness, but this was not successful. Further opportunities will be pursued as they arise.

2.5. Action: Support the delivery of measures outlined in the Air Quality Action Plan 2023 -2028.

The Council continues to follow the [Air Quality Action Plan \(2023-2028\)](#) to achieve a cleaner, healthier borough. An Air Quality Steering Group was formed in early 2022 to develop and deliver the strategic Air Quality Action Plan. The group meets quarterly, although there are task and finish sub-groups responsible for implementing and delivering specific measures. These groups meet more regularly, and report back to the steering group.

Measure one is to develop an Air Quality standard within the Local Plan. An updated Air Quality Policy is included in the Regulation 18 of the Local Plan Review, which is due for consultation in January 2026.

Measure five is to reduce emissions from activities with Environmental Permits. Monitoring of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) are continuing, with decreased levels of particulates at the St Pauls Street AQMA despite the site still exceeding. The Environmental Permits Team is consulting with the cleansing team to consider rezoning the street from a zone three to zone two, meaning additional cleaning and monitoring would take place to continue reducing particulates.

Measure seven is to improve and develop Electric Vehicle infrastructure across Swale. Officers from Swale have been working with Kent County Council to identify potential sites for the installation of on-street electric vehicle charge points through the Local Electric Vehicle Fund. A LEVI operator has now been appointed, and it is hoped that installations will begin in Spring 2026.

Measure nine is to continue anti-idling enforcement, signage, and educational campaigns. In September 2025 33 anti-idling signs were installed across Sheerness, Queenborough, and Faversham.



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2.6. **Action:** Investigate the potential to install cycle parking facilities in Council owned car parks.

The Council applied to ATEs Consolidated Active Travel Fund in March to install cycle storage facilities, but this was not successful. Further opportunities will be pursued as they arise.

2.7. **Other Related Items/Achievements**

Swale Cycle Recycle

The Swale Cycle Recycle project takes unwanted or damaged bikes and repairs them in the workshops of HMP Swaleside before they are distributed via charity partners to people who cannot afford bikes. This ensures that bikes are diverted from the waste stream, prisoners can learn new skills to improve their employability upon their release and economically vulnerable people can get access to bikes which may make travel to work or school more viable while also improving their health.



In June 2025, a new donation point opened at Faversham Household Waste and Recycling Centre.

Throughout 2025 the scheme has held six sale events alongside partners such as Faversham Town Council, Sheppey Matters, and the Community Railway Partnership, through which 198 bikes have been distributed back into the community.

Feedback from those who have received bikes has been overwhelmingly positive, with the bikes given a high-quality rating of 8.53/10.

55% of those who received a bike reported using it predominantly for leisure, 23% said they had used it to commute to work or school, and 23% said they were using it for exercise.

19% of recipients reported using their bike to replace a car journey within one week of purchase.

Comments about Swale Cycle Recycle have included:

“Great prices. I can now teach my son to ride a bike as I could not afford a bike before.”

“Helping me to buy a very affordable bike- I would not be able to afford a new one. Helping the wider community by supporting giving prisoners’ good skills for when they are released.”



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“This is an amazing scheme. It helps lower income families like myself to purchase a bike for their kids or for themselves. I know when my son out grows the bike I will be able to recycle it and replace it with another bike. Your scheme is a good send and I thank you and all the members within the prison who took the time to work on the bikes.”

“Fantastic to know that I have an affordable bike for my grandson which has been checked over and serviced.”

Promoting Low Carbon Travel Among Council employees

Swale Borough Council promotes various schemes to encourage its staff to use low-carbon transport. This includes the Cycle to Work Scheme, Tusker Car Benefits Scheme, and Octopus Electric Vehicles.

Throughout 2025 6 members of staff have participated in the Cycle to Work Scheme, while 2 members of staff have begun leasing electric cars through the Tusker or Octopus Schemes.

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3. Low Carbon Business and Industry

3.1. **Action:** to include a 'green thread' throughout the next Economic Development Plan

The Swale Economic Development Plan (2020-2023) is now obsolete, and consideration is being given to the development of a new plan.

3.2. **Action:** facilitate the sharing of best practice with publication of local case studies

A series of case studies on the positive measures achieved by local businesses are being prepared. These will be included in future publications of the Economic Development e-bulletin.

3.3. **Action:** to engage with businesses on a regular basis to understand how the Council can further support industry in the transition to net-zero

A series of surveys is being prepared to begin assessing the barriers that face businesses in transitioning to net-zero.

3.4. **Action:** encourage and support the largest emitters to develop carbon reduction strategies

Swale Borough Council continues to be a member of the advisory board of the North Kent Local Decarbonisation Project (LIDP).

In 2022 the Kemsley Industrial Cluster was successful in securing a portion of Innovate UK funding to support emissions reductions in pursuit of the UK's 2050 net zero target. In 2023, the cluster emitted 506,817 tCO₂, representing nearly the entire industrial sector emissions of the borough. The project aims to further the sharing of resources, materials, waste, and by-products for mutual benefit.

In November, officers attended a meeting of the Medway Carbon Capture Cluster at the Isle of Grain LNG. The project will see the separation of CO₂ from exhaust streams of large industrial installations in Swale and Medway, after which it will be liquified, condensed, and transported to the North Sea to be injected into depleted gas reservoirs.



Figure 14: The visit to Isle of Grain LNG



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3.5. Other Related Items/Achievements

Community Infrastructure Grants

For the 2025/2026 financial year Swale Borough Council was allocated funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). This has been distributed across the borough in the form of Community Infrastructure Grants and Rural Small Business Grants.

A total of 10 applications that aim to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions have been supported, with a total expenditure of £68,676.65. Projects supported include the installation of a 13.5kwh solar battery storage system at a sports club, the purchase and installation of LED lighting at a village hall, the purchase of an off grid educational yurt at a local nature reserve, and the purchase of solar panels for a charity.



Figure 15: PV Battery storage installed thanks to the CIG.



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4. Low Carbon Buildings and Energy Efficiency

4.1. **Action:** That the Council supports sustainable building practices and development.

The Planning Policy team is currently drafting a suite of sustainable design & construction policies based on the evidence base study (Bioregional) that has been undertaken for the Council. These policies will be included in the forthcoming Regulation 18 document, due for consultation in early 2026.

This will include new policies on:

- Sustainable design and adaptation principles
- Net-zero operational carbon in new build non-domestic development
- Embodies carbon and waste.
- Renewable energy development and infrastructure

4.2. **Action:** To understand how to deliver a borough wide net-zero energy system

A Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) is an evidenced, data-driven, and whole systems approach to planning an authority's decarbonisation. A LAEP provides a baseline of an existing energy system and built environment and produces a sequenced plan of interventions such as renewable installations, domestic and non-domestic retrofit, and identifies opportunities to use climate action to alleviate connected social and economic issues.

The Council have been working with Kent County Council and the other districts on a two phased approach to Local Energy Planning. This will involve initial data collection before the appointment of a consultant to develop a LAEP based on the boundaries of the new unitary authorities established through Local Government Reform.

4.3. **Action:** To investigate the feasibility of heat networks in Swale

A heat network removes waste heat from a central source and distributes it underground via insulated pipes to customers. This reduces reliance on individual fossil fuel heating systems and is envisioned as among the most cost-effective means of cutting emissions from heating.

In August 2025, the Council submitted an Expression of Interest to the Heat Networks Delivery Unit (Round 15), seeking funding of the cost of a feasibility study into a Sittingbourne district heat network. This was unsuccessful due to prioritisation of larger



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urban projects, however, the bid will be reviewed and updated for future rounds of funding.

4.4. Action: That the Council facilitates the creation of an approved list of renewable technology suppliers

Solar Together is a UK wide group buying scheme designed to make installing solar panels and battery storage more affordable to homeowners, landlords, and small businesses. Swale Borough Council has participated in the scheme since 2021, with a steady stream of installations throughout the years. Throughout 2025, 56 households have accepted participation in Solar Together, with 33 having been installed.

The installations throughout 2025 are estimated to of reduced emissions by 32,329 kg CO₂e.

The Council is exploring the potential for a similar scheme promoting the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps.

4.5. Action: To run a series of events targeting both landlords and owner occupiers promoting energy efficiency measures.

The Healthy Homes Project was launched in September 2024 in response to rising concerns about damp and mould within the private rented sector. Supported by funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (since renamed the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government), the project aims to strengthen local authority capacity, improve early identification of hazards, upskill partners and residents, and promote sustained behaviour change across the housing sector.

Officers are regularly attending community events such as the One Swale Road Shows and Keeping Warm days, enabling 1:1 conversation with residents to allow for the early identification of damp and mould risks. Community groups have become active partners in the project, extending the reach beyond traditional enforcement activity.

Much effort has been given to building rapport with agents and landlords, providing clear explanations of modern ventilation, insulation, and heating requirements, with agents given training to influence landlords into taking a more swift and informed approach to any issues identified.

To support these efforts, a single centrally managed landlord/agent data base now allows for targeted communications, newsletter, and event invitations.



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Winter Warmth Grants are also being issued. From April 2024 – March 2025 nine grants, all for boiler and heating upgrades, were completed. Since April 2025, 4 Winter Warmth Grants have been issued for the same purposes.

A Fuel and Water Advice Service continues to be made available to residents across the Borough. This year, the service has issued 685 fuel vouchers, provided 377 energy packs, and cleared a debt total of £43,065.

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5. Waste and Resource Consumption

5.1. **Action:** to promote overall reductions in waste through the promotion of reduced consumption and circular economy

The Council is working with Suez, through their social value goals, to organise a series of area-based road shows. On 26 November Suez partnered with Swale Cycle Recycle to hold a road show event at Milton Creek Country Park where 44kg of Waste, Electric, and Electrical (WEE) was collected for recycling. A further roadshow is being held on the 12 December at Bartons Point.

The Swale Cycle Recycle project continues to promote a circular economy and ensure bikes do not enter waste streams.

5.2. **Action:** reduce contamination of recycling that leads to rejected loads

Throughout 2025 composition studies have looked at the waste coming from residual bins and food bins. The main summary findings identified that 27% of waste in green bins are food waste, and that 86% of this food waste was avoidable, with almost half still packaged.

The studies found that 43.1% of residual waste could have been recycled at the kerbside. Food waste bins tended to have very little contamination, although 72% of the waste contained within them could have been avoided.

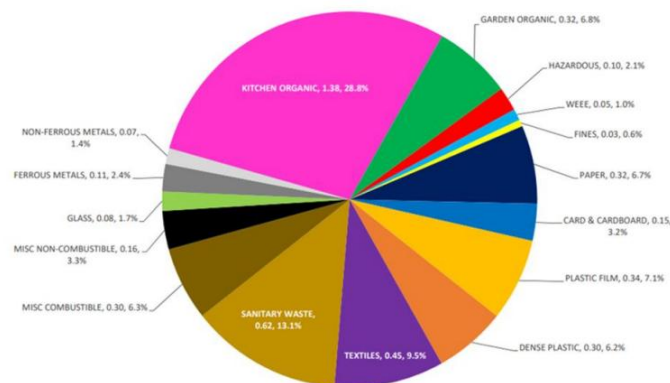


Figure 16: Pie chart showing the average Swale residual bin waste composition (Kg/HH and %)

Contamination remains a concern, and it is not uncommon for entire lorry loads to be re-categorised as 'residual waste'. This means that the materials are lost from the circular economy as it these loads are then sent for incineration (this also carries a higher cost



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than recycling). The most frequent contamination items include black bin bags, textiles, and used dirty nappies.

Officers are working with SUEZ to ensure recycling bins are checked at the point of emptying. If there is a significant level of contamination the bins are then left with a tag to advise residents of the reason it was not collected. The scale of these operations is to increase over the coming months to target specific, frequent contaminants.

5.3. **Action:** to promote the recycling of domestic and commercial waste.

In 2025 the Council successfully delivered a Borough wide food waste sticker campaign, with stickers placed on the green bin of residents who currently receive food waste collections. The stickers were to remind people to recycle food waste instead of placing food into the green bin. The project was delivered jointly between Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council and resulted in a 30% increase in food waste collections, an uplift that has been sustained. There are still some roads which do not receive food waste collections, and preparations are being made to ensure all households have access to the service by the end of March 2026.



Figure 17: stickers placed on green bins across Swale.

A key focus for food waste rollout has been at communal properties and holiday camps, which require more complex services to provide. Officers have been visiting every bin store to capture data on space and existing services. A project plan has been developed which will aim to see the roll out of recycling services to these premises to bring them in line with the rest of the borough in receiving alternate weekly collections (refuse and recycling) with weekly food.



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6. Resilient Communities and Engagement

6.1. **Action:** to develop a Climate Change Communications Plan

A business case for a stand-alone Facebook page has been made. We have used social media to promote Cycle Re Cycle sales and other events. A Communications Plan is in development.

6.2. **Action:** To include a dedicated page to the Climate and Ecological Emergency in future versions of Inside Swale

The Climate Emergency Team is planning a page spread in the upcoming Inside Swale focusing on energy efficiency. This will help to address both domestic emissions and cost of living crisis. It will be published in the February 2026 edition of Inside Swale.

6.3. **Action:** to support the development of local green skills

Officers have met with East Kent College to understand how the Council could promote Green Skills in Swale.

6.4. **Action:** expand the outreach of the Green Schools Forum

The Green Schools Forum provides an opportunity for resource and knowledge sharing between school staff and the Council. At current the Forum has 51 members, representing 38 schools in Swale out of 67.

[The Sustainability and Climate Change: a Strategy for the Education and Children's Service Systems \(2023\)](#) requires that by 2025 all education settings will have a nominated sustainability lead. Work is now underway to identify a sustainability lead from each Swale school and include them in the forum membership.

6.5. **Action:** to expand the outreach of the Green Grid Community Forum

The Green Grid helps coordinate work in our local environment, focusing on the relationship between our greenspaces and the communities they serve. In 2025 the mailing list continued to expand, and the forum now contains (insert final number).

In May the forum toured an award-winning regenerative farm in Kingsdown-upon-Lynsted, and in October met at the Sheerness Dockyard Church to share updates from the year.

The forum now has 218 members, comprising of residents, businesses, charities, and community groups. Posters have been placed in notice boards in Milton Creek Country Park and the Oare Gunpowder works promoting the Green Grid.



Figure 18: Forum members on a tour of a farm.



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6.6. Action: to support parish councils in measuring their emissions and developing carbon reduction strategies

The Climate Emergency Team presented at the Kent Association of Local Councils in June 2025 to outline how the Borough Council can support town and parish councils. Since this, Officers have begun working with both Minster Parish Council and Faversham Town Council to undertake carbon audits and develop carbon reduction strategies.

6.7. Action: to work with schools, community groups, and businesses to encourage low carbon travel

The Active Travel Officer is engaging with schools, alongside KCC, to increase the percentage of primary schools with Active Travel Plans.

Opportunities for funding for businesses have been promoted through the Economic Development e-bulletin, including the KCC Active Travel Business Grants.

Community groups and businesses can apply to the Community Infrastructure Grants to fund projects which will encourage low carbon travel through new or improved cycle storage facilities and electric vehicle charge points.

6.8. Action: Work in partnership with schools, businesses, and parish councils to identify land for tree planting.

A Schools Tree Planting Guidance has been issued, which sets out how the Council can support nurseries, secondary schools, and colleges in making their grounds more biodiverse. Support includes free site visits, bespoke advice on species suitability, funding support, and post-planting advice.

During National Tree Week the Council funded a supply of native trees from the Woodland Trust to be given out to residents for free at markets in Faversham,

Sittingbourne, and Sheerness. A total of 210 trees were passed out, including Rowan, Hazel, Silver Birch, Sessile Oak, Blackthorn, and Wild Cherry.



Figure 19: a free tree stall at Sittingbourne market



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6.9. Other Related Items/Achievements

Student Carbon Literacy Training

Carbon Literacy Training ensures that participants are aware of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities and can reduce emissions on an individual, community, and organisational basis. It is well known to influence positive behaviour around climate change.

The course includes a range of modules covering the science behind climate change, what the co-benefits of climate action are, and how we can act ourselves. The course is accredited, and those who complete it receive certification.

In the 2024/2025 academic year the Council undertook a pilot of Carbon Literacy Training alongside a local secondary school. Training was delivered to six science teachers, who have since worked to integrate Carbon Literacy into the existing curriculums. This has enabled the delivery of training to 155 year 9 students by the end of the 2024/2025 academic year, and a further 185 students have commenced training by the time of this report.

Officers are now working with East Kent College Secondary School to integrate Carbon Literacy Training into student's curriculum.

Some examples of student's pledges include:

"I pledge that I will increase in eating locally sourced (and in-season) foods, prioritizing in eating seasonal and locally grown produce, nothing that requires energy-intensive transportation (from distant countries) since it contribute to higher carbon emissions and increase of climate change from the release of CO₂ from the boat/other transport."

"Cutting down on usage of cars for trips and resorting to usage of things like bikes, buses, trains and walking if possible."

"One new action I pledge to doing is to replace two red meat meals a week with vegan alternatives. This will help to reduce the pollution of methane from cattle farming."



Volunteers and Engagement

Throughout 2025 the Council has supported 25 volunteer litter picks, including at Thistle Hill Community Woodland, Kingsborough Manor Community Woodland, Faversham Recreation Grounds, and the Teynham Community Hall.

Volunteers at the Country Parks have dedicated approximately 5844 hours of their time. This includes 1569 hours of volunteer hours at Oare Gunpowder Works, 3450 at Milton Creek Country Park, and 825 hours of working time at the Faversham Recreation Ground.



Figure 20: bagged tree guards outside Thistle Hill Community Woodland



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7. Biodiversity Net Gain and Ecology

7.1. **Action:** to support and align the Council to the Kent Biodiversity Strategy and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is an initiative established by the Environment Act 2021. It aims to identify where the creation or improvement of habitat is most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the environment, encourage landowners to take action to support nature recovery, and channel investment into local nature priorities.

Local authorities had until the 29 September to comment on the LNRS.

The LNRS was published on the 28 November 2025. A link to the strategy can be accessed [here](#).

7.2. **Action:** to make the most of BNG requirements to improve the state of nature in Swale.

Biodiversity Net Gain is now a statutory requirement, meaning development must result in a biodiversity uplift of 10%.

In 2025 the Council purchased the Mycelia software tool, allowing the Council to better track, plan, and collaborate on nature recovery projects throughout the pre-application, validation, determination, monitoring, and reporting stages.

The Council is seeking a 20% BNG uplift through the Local Plan Review.

7.3. **Action:** to investigate a pilot study for a Swale Habitat Bank.

A habitat bank is a site where land is set aside for long term habitat creation, restoration, and enhancement to generate biodiversity units. These units can then be purchased by developers who are seeking to satisfy Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements where on-site offsetting is not possible.

Swale Borough Council is undertaking the creation of a pilot habitat bank in partnership with Kent Wildlife Trust at Queendown Warren, a 76.5-hectare reserve managed by Kent Wildlife Trust. It consists of chalk grassland, open pasture, and woodland.

The habitat bank is to be made a replicable process for other sites, meaning the Council can in future ensure off-site BNG at sites which are strategically aligned to the Local Nature Recover Strategy (LNRS).



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The Council have now commissioned Adonis Blue (ABEC) to undertake further work to identify potential sites for more habitat banks using the Biodiversity Net Gain grant from DEFRA.

7.4. Action: to review opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow planting both on SBC and private land.

Throughout the 2024/2025 planting season the Council was able to plant 5700 whips and 150 standard trees. Funding was provided by the Local Authority Tree Fund, National Highways, and the Conservation Volunteers.

The Local Authority Tree Fund was discontinued in 2025, and this has meant tree planting to previous scale is increasingly difficult. Despite this the Council has been awarded smaller amounts of funding, allowing the Council to host it's first ever Swale Tree Week.

Five tree planting events were held, including at Bartons Point Coastal Park, Peregrine Drive (Sittingbourne), KGV The Mount, and Milton Recreation Ground. Three primary schools joined officers in planting up the sites. These events saw 1600 native whips planted.



Figure 21: newly planted whips at the Mount, Faversham.

On the 11 December Council staff participated in the rejuvenation of Easthall Community Orchard, where 20 heritage fruit trees were planted.

7.5. Other Related Items/Achievements

3C's Project

In 2021 Swale Council remains the local authority partner for Kent Wildlife Trusts' Wilder Carbon Project, which aimed to see a 22-acre site in Conyer restored as coastal grazing saltmarsh.



Figure 22: Scrapes on the restored saltmarsh.

Scrapes have now been completed, cattle are on site, and signage and fencing has been installed.

Monitoring is now underway to understand how the restoration of the site has impacted biodiversity.

It is also hoped the work will reduce the risk of flooding for the village of Conyer, which sits next the tidal Conyer Creek.



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Woodland Coppicing

Coppicing enhances biodiversity, allowing wildflowers and insects to thrive by allowing more light to reach the woodland floor. Throughout 2025 0.4 hectares of woodland have been coppiced across our woodlands.

Pesticide Use

A requirement for a reduction in the use of pesticides and weedkillers is written into the ground's maintenance contract. Use of both is only undertaken as spot treatment on hard services, and contractors have switched to the use of Roundup Pro Active, which contains a lower rate of the active ingredient. In 2021, 160 litres of weedkiller was used, and in 2025 this had fallen to 120 litres.

Green Flag Awards

The Green Flag award is an international quality mark for parks and greenspaces, and to be awarded one the space must meet the highest standards in cleanliness, community engagement, conservation, safety, and inclusivity.

In 2025 three of Swale Greenspaces received Green Flag awards; Faversham Recreational Ground, Milton Creek Country Park, and Oare Gunpowder Works Country Park.



Figure 23: The Green Flag at Milton Creek Country Park



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8. Going Forward

The years since 2019 have been challenging, and like most local authorities Swale Borough Council has experienced fiscal strain, endured the Covid-19 Emergency, and increased demand on services as the result of the cost-of-living crisis. Despite this, the Council has made positive progress in reducing emissions directly within its controls and supporting the wider Borough in decarbonising.

In the next few years Kent will undergo Local Government Reform, something that will bring both challenges and opportunities.

Funds such as Pride in Place will provide £20 million to communities on East Sheppey over the next decade, while the Pride in Place Impact Fund will help residents across the wider Borough. Both present an opportunity for the Council to collaborate with communities to deliver sustainable regeneration that will benefit residents for generations to come.

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Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee Meeting	
Meeting Date	27 January 2026
Report Title	Off-Street Parking Order Consultation report
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director and Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. Approve the changes suggested at 2.13 to the Off-Street Parking Order and delegate officers to proceed to 'Has Made Order' for variation no.10.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following extensive discussion on the likely impacts of implementing charges at free car parks, the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee resolved that six car parks would have standard tariffs applied from 1 April 2026 and that the off-street parking order consultation should proceed.
- 1.2 This report summarises the responses to the off-street order consultation and asks Members to consider the responses and action to be taken.
- 1.3 This report does not revisit the policy decision to charge for parking.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council operates 57 car parks across the Borough. 29 are free to use (six in Sittingbourne, 6 in Faversham and 17 in Sheppey). 28 are pay and display car parks where fees are charged. 40 are managed by parking services and 17 are operated by the greenspaces team, based at recreation grounds, open spaces and country parks. Some are in key town centre locations, others are in rural and lower footfall areas.
- 2.2 Following the decision to implement charging at six currently free car parks across the Borough from 1 April 2026 (below), the necessary off-street order consultation was undertaken (variation no.10). The consultation was advertised via posters in each of the car parks and local newspapers from 5 December with the closing date for comments, support or objection by Monday 5th January.
 - a) Little Oyster, Minster on Sea
 - b) Park Road, Queenborough

- c) Library car park, Queenborough
- d) Front Brents, Faversham
- e) Grafton Road, Sittingbourne
- f) Minster Road, Halfway

2.3 A second off-street order consultation (variation no.9) was undertaken in relation to the general increase in hourly rate across all car parks, removal of the 30-minute tariff and the introduction of a fixed evening rate, set out in the Council's Fees and Charges document at Policy and resources Committee on 26 November 2025, which was approved to go out for consultation.

2.4 A number of petitions have been received as set out below;

Number	Main Petition Objection	Number of Signatories
Petition 1	Relating generally to 'Introduction of Charges at the car parks'	2816
Petition 2	Relating to 'Introduction of Charges at Queenborough, Park Road'	328
Petition 3	Relating to 'Introduction of Charges at Queenborough Library (Castle Connections)'	49
Petition 4	Relating generally to 'Introduction of Charges'	124
Petition 5	Relating generally to 'Introduction of Charges'	505
Petition 6	Relating to 'Introduction of Charges at Queenborough'	107
	TOTAL	3,929

2.5 Outside of these petitions a total of 79 responses were received. None were in support, 9 were general comments and 70 were objections. Every response was recorded and acknowledged.

2.6 Appendix I summarises the responses received, whether they were in support or objected to the order and also gives more location specific detail.

2.7 We also received comments from local town and parish councils (Minster PC, Queenborough Town Council, Sheerness Town Council) which can be seen at appendix II.

2.8 Table 1 below identifies the general themes raised in the objections received across each of the car parks, with the Council's response next to it.

	Summary of comment/objection	Comments
1	Displacement – vehicles onto highway	Concerns about the impact on 'residents parking' covered several issues including the loss of overnight parking, where off-street locations are currently used to provide relief from congested on-street locations coupled with the financial impact of residents having to pay for it. The initial report on 12 November recognised this as a potential short-term risk. The Council has the ability to mitigate this through use of on-street restrictions at pinch points where safety maybe a concern. This issue has been seen across the Borough over the years where new charges have been introduced and generally settles pretty quickly. The Council does operate resident parking scheme arrangements in some car parks across the Borough, but these have generally been historic and when changes were made to highways directly outside houses that had on-street parking. Members could decide in any of the 6 locations that resident schemes could be offered but this is likely to cause further objections, as where do you draw the line of what properties are included or not and of course would likely reduce the income generated to support operation of the car parks.
2	School safety	Congestion at school times, particularly at Halfway Car Park on Minster Road. We received objection from the primary school that backs onto the car park, setting out the impact it would have on parents. This is not a problem which is unique to Halfway. All schools in the Borough (and indeed county) suffer from congested roads at peak times of drop-off and pick up. However, it is recognised that this car park has played a supporting role over the years, albeit unlikely satisfying all demand due to its small size. Members therefore could consider amending the off-street order in relation to Halfway car park to have no charges between 8.30 and 9.30am and 2.30 to 3.30pm.
3	Economic impact - businesses	The main argument was an impact on businesses where residents 'pop in', for example takeaways or to pick up an order from a retail shop. As is the case for most of the points raised in objection to the charging proposal, this point is not unique to Sheppey or any of the free car parks in Faversham or Sittingbourne and the vast majority of residents pay to park to access shops and take away restaurants. No reasons were given as to why the businesses in Sheppey would be more affected than those

		in Faversham or Sittingbourne, where charging has occurred for many years. It is not fair that the people who park in Sittingbourne and Faversham are in effect subsidising the cost of free parking to benefit the businesses in Sheppey. Furthermore, employers were concerned that staff are used to free parking. All employers have to consider what benefits and terms and conditions they can offer employees. There should be no expectation of free parking where they do not control the car park. Season tickets are available that are heavily discounted based on daily tariffs.
4	Economic impact - tourism	This was particularly raised for Queenborough and Little Oyster, Minster car parks. As was discussed at the last committee it is very unusual for seafront car parks to be free of charge and the other seafront car parks on the Island at Sheerness and Leysdown are already pay and display. At Minster there is a large amount of free on-street parking at the Leas as an alternative and some overflow parking for the summer season opposite the Shingle bank. Those wishing to park right at the seafront can choose to do so via pay and display as in other areas. The proposed charges are on the whole lower than other coastal resorts. Members could debate the merits of seasonal charges at these coastal locations e.g. March to October.
5	Financial viability - Local government reorganisation	A number of comments suggested that the costs of implementation would not be realised from income received, ahead of pending local government reorganisation plans and therefore any decisions should be deferred. Regardless of the structure of local government moving forward, the assets will be owned by a publicly funded organisation. Decisions taken now will benefit whichever organisation is in charge. Income taken from 1 April 2026 would allow maintenance and inspection of the assets the Council (or future entity) has responsibility for.
6	Legalities - Sec 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act	Many of the objections referred to this section of the Road Traffic Regulation Act legislation, which describes how income from on-street parking and the enforcement income of on and off-street parking must be spent. Off-street car park income is not considered in this section of the act.
7	Legalities – Queenborough Charter	One objection suggests that the Council is bound by a historic charter. The Queenborough Borough Charter was effectively repealed as a result of a combination of steps. Queenborough was reviewed by the 1876 Royal Commission and identified for reform. The Borough did not

		renew it's (Royal) Borough Charter but rather was reformed as a Municipal Borough under the Municipal Corporations Acts. It remained a Municipal Borough until the Local Government reorganisation in 1974. As such, the original Borough Charter is of historical interest but has no bearing on the current situation.
8	Equalities – particularly the elderly and disabled	Our car parks already provide free parking for blue badge holders who are also eligible for on-street parking in most on-street circumstances. The argument for the elderly could be replicated across the Borough, with elderly residents in other locations already being charged. There was no information given as to why older people should pay to park in Faversham and Sittingbourne car parks and not in the free car parks in Sheppey, Faversham or Sittingbourne. Members would need to be clear on the rationale for this if they wish to accept this reason. There are two car parks (Front Brents and Grafton Road) suggested for cashless payment that could be considered a barrier. These were selected only due to the small number of spaces making investment in a full machine not cost effective and the more remote location at Front Brents (concerns of vandalism). As per the Parking Policy, it is our intention to offer all payment methods wherever possible. However, payment via our cashless parking provider RingGo is not only reliant on a 'smart phone'. A telephone line is also available whereby customers can pay by a debit or credit card over the phone like we all do for other transactions. Furthermore, there are alternative car park options nearby that do offer the full range of payment method.
9	Lack of transparency on costs of implementation and income assumptions	The cost of implementing signage, lines and machines is estimated at £8k per car park, subject to individual site inspection. Enforcement levels will remain the same, so will not immediately add additional cost, but the costs can then be spread over a larger number of car parks. Over time each car park will require maintenance and resurfacing and therefore income is pooled to fund future costs. The expenditure on car parks across the Borough is not broken down by each location in our accounts, as not all cost is directly attributable e.g. the cost of staffing to inspect, enforcement changes from month to month - however we estimate that each car park will cost between £4,500 and

		£6,500 a year. Some of that cost is existing due to usage e.g. repairs/electricity for lighting some will be new e.g. machine maintenance and cash collection. The income was an estimate based on other similar sized car parks and based on predicted lower than average usage in year one. Clearly there will be location differences and so this is purely an estimate, and budgets will be amended accordingly as we get more data on usage.
10	Length of consultation – holiday period	The minimum required consultation period is 21 days. The consultation officially lasted 32 days from the date of advert in the local newspapers but signs were placed in car parks earlier that week and we accepted submissions that were received late as well. The order was publicised well across social media and therefore we feel there was adequate time to make objections known.

- 2.9 There is clearly a large amount of opposition to the implementation of charges at the six currently free car parks, although the majority of this opposition is in relation to the four car parks on the Isle of Sheppey. Many of the arguments above were indeed discussed and debated by Members of the committee when the decision was taken. Other areas of the Borough have charges in place at car parks next to schools or libraries or retail/food outlets. Not all residents own vehicles and the principle of those using the facility should pay is fair.
- 2.10 The key point is that, whilst being free to use, these car parks do incur expenditure through the requirement for regular inspection by Council staff, the need for enforcement staff to visit to deal with contraventions to the car park rules and for periodic repair and maintenance. Failing to charge will result in users of the other council car parks subsidising those who park for free and this is not fair or equitable.
- 2.11 Charging for use of these car parks will help contribute to the maintenance and inspection of the car parks. Although each car park does not need resurfacing annually, the costs of a car park resurface are high (and increasing) and so annual income over a longer time period helps to contribute to these one-off costs by protecting reserves that can be spent on other Council services. An example in some objections was that of the recently resurfaced car park at Ship on Shore. The cost of the resurfacing was £63,307 which should have a life expectancy of about 10-15 years. With an annual average of about £7,000 a year in income, the principle of charging at that car park will not only make a contribution to future repair costs, but it also resolved a long-standing issue of poor visual amenity and nuisance vehicles.
- 2.12 There is also general opposition to the increase in charges. The outcome of variation 9 responses will be included within the Policy and resources report on the budget.

2.13 Following the feedback received, Members need to decide if any amendments should be made to the Off-Street Order. Officers recommend the following changes;

- a) Remove charges for the period 8.30am – 9.30am and 2.30 – 3.30pm at Halfway car park, Minster Road to help alleviate school safety concerns.
- b) Implement seasonal charges at Little Oyster and Queenborough, Park Road car park operating from 1 March to 30 September each year to ensure that peak season availability is controlled, but the car park is available for resident use through the quieter periods of the year.

3 Proposals

3.1 Approve the changes suggested at 2.13 to the Off-Street Parking Order and delegate officers to proceed to 'Has Made Order' for variation no.10.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Implement the charges without any amendment. This is not recommended as the changes were based on comments or recommendations from the consultation.
- 4.2 As the decision to start charging at these six locations was taken at the 12 November 2025 Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee, this report is only about amendments to the terms of the Off-Street Parking Order and therefore it is not an option to overrule the original decision.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The whole report details the consultation taken on this matter.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Community – Complete the Parking Policy Review Running the Council – maximising income
Financial, Resource and Property	Maintaining free car parks is a cost to the council that could be mitigated by transferring to town or parish councils or by the introduction of charges. The draft budget proposal predicts circa £35,000 per year would be generated at the car parks proposed in year one. Operational costs are estimated at around £4,500 - £6,500 per car park per year.

	The Council spends circa £1.4m a year managing 'off-street' car parks across the Borough. Staffing costs are circa £265,000 a year. The one-off cost of installing payment machines, lining and signage in the locations (predicted about £8k per car park) would be covered by the Civil Enforcement Fund reserve which currently stands at £87,703.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Off-street parking is controlled through the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Traffic Management Act 2004. Following the Off-Street Order Consultation, the Order needs to proceed to 'Has Made' prior to implementation in April 2026.
Crime and Disorder	Free car parks have fewer restrictions on them and vehicles can therefore be left abandoned. This costs the council through enforcement and removal. Charging at car parks may displace vehicles into unsuitable parking locations. This will need to be controlled using the powers available to the Council.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	There is an argument that in order to encourage fewer private journeys, favouring active travel and support the climate emergency, that no car parks should be free.
Health and Wellbeing	Not applicable to this report
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	Not applicable to this report
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The Council needs income to enable the required repairs and maintenance to be made to our car parks. Free car parks are currently subsidised by pay and display car parks, however, receive less investment than them, with the minimum spent in order to meet basic health and safety standards.
Equality and Diversity	Undefined, free car parks may reduce access for disabled users. Blue badge holders benefit from free parking in our car parks.
Privacy and Data Protection	Not applicable to this report

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Summary of Consultation responses
- Appendix II: Copy of Parish/Town Council submissions

8 Background Papers

- 8.1 A link to the [Council's Parking Policy](#).
- 8.2 Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee report – [A review of free car parks](#) 12 November 2025.
- 8.3 [Draft Budget 2026/27 Report](#) – Policy and resources Committee 27 November 2025.

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**THE BOROUGH OF SWALE
(OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES)
(VARIATION No. 10) ORDER 2026**

**Objections Received During the Consultation for changes to the Variation 10
from 5th December 2025 until 5th January 2026**

During the consultation period we received, 70 objections plus 6 Petitions with a total of 3,929 and 9 comments in total, there were no indications of Support.

These have been broken down into individual schemes where possible and cover the Proposal to change the use of the Little Oyster Minster on Sea, Halfway Car Park, Park Road and Library Car Park, Queenborough, Grafton Road Car Park, Sittingbourne and Front Brents Car Park, Faversham to a Pay and Display & or Pay by Phone parking facility and introduce parking Charges.

37 objections from individuals/organisations were received, with a further 3 objections via petition (totalling 3,445 signatories) and 3 Comments were received to the Introduction of Charges

The objections covered a broad range of topics but key themes raised were:

Impact on Residents

Concerns about the impact on residents parking covered several issues including the loss of overnight parking, where off-street locations are currently used to provide relief from congested on-street locations. Additionally, there were concerns about the additional financial strain for residents having to pay to park near their homes.

Impact on Local Economy

Another core issue raised was the impact to local businesses and the wider local economy, with the proposals being perceived as a short-term measure to generate revenue which risks creating long-term harm to local economic vitality, undermining small businesses and community hubs. One objection recommended allowing 1 hour of free parking in all proposed car parks to reduce the impact on businesses that rely on 'quick-stop' customers.

Financial Viability

Several objections questioned the financial viability of the scheme and a perceived lack of transparency. Objections suggest that the Council won't be able to break even in the first one to three years and question whether there is any point making such changes now as Local Government Reorganisation may make long-term revenue generating schemes obsolete.

Congestion and Highway Safety

Highway congestion and reduced highway safety, particularly at peak times and surrounding schools were prevalent in objections raised. Objections state that motorists will choose not to pay for parking which will increase levels of on-street congestion and create unsafe conditions for both motorists and pedestrians.

Equalities

Disproportionate impact on certain social groups was also raised, particularly with reference to two groups, the elderly and disabled motorists. Objections suggest that the proposals will cause disproportionate harm to these two groups by reducing their ability to access key services.

Ship-on-Shore

Further comments included comparisons to Ship-on-Shore, with objections believing that recent changes made there were unsuccessful and only led to increased congestion due to an increase in motorists choosing to park on the highway rather than pay to park off-street.

Previous Consultation Results

Objections also mentioned that a consultation for this proposal had been carried out recently and was unsuccessful and that the Council reintroducing the same proposal undermines public consultation.

Challenges to the Legal Basis for Implementing Parking Charges

Challenges to the legality of the proposals have also been made, with several references made to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the restrictions it imposes on Council's for the conditions where charges for parking can be introduced and what the funds must be used for.

We also received comments as detailed below:

1. Petition 1: "Formal Objection – THE BOROUGH OF SWALE (OFF STREET PARKING PLACES) (VARIATION NO. 10) ORDER 2026 PROPOSAL"
2. "Increased traffic congestion and gridlock - the proposal will inevitably push more drivers to seek free on-street parking, significantly increasing congestion - especially around school drop off and pick up times. These areas already struggle with heavy traffic, and further displacement from car parks will worsen the situation."
3. "Loss of business for local traders. Introducing or increasing charges will deter people from visiting local shops, takeaways, restaurants and essential services. Reduced footfall will directly harm small businesses that are already under pressure."
4. "Higher costs for residents, workers and visitors. These charges will make everyday activities - shopping, picking up food, meeting friends, or going to work - more expensive. This is particularly unfair during a cost of living crisis when many families are already struggling."
5. "Lack of transparency around income, costs and financial assumptions. There is insufficient clarity regarding projected gross income, estimated costs and expected losses. Current evidence indicates that set-up costs for each car park are around £8000, significantly higher than the forecast revenue in the first year. Furthermore, by year 3 - when the scheme claimed to be financially viable - Swale Borough Council will no longer exist, making the rationale for his investment unclear."

6. "Increased road safety risks. One of the affected car parks is located close to a school. Additional traffic movements, reduced visibility and pressure for alternative parking increase the risk of accidents involving children."
7. "Strong public opposition. A petition containing over 2800 signatures objecting to these charges has been submitted. This demonstrates significant local concern and a clear lack of public support for the proposal."

19 objections, 4 Comments and 3 petitions with a total of 484 signatories were received in relation to proposed changes in Queenborough on the grounds of:

Impact on Local Economy

If proposals go ahead, the impact on local businesses is perceived as negative overall, with objections concerned about a decrease in footfall and tourism due to the introduction of charges.

Specific reference was made to certain local businesses already planning on addressing the impact of introducing parking fees by having to increase their costs, leading to an overall increased cost to the local community wanting to support local businesses.

Impact on Resident Parking

Concerns about the availability of parking for residents were also raised, with objections stating that parking is already at a premium in residential areas. Additionally, the impact on residents safety is perceived as negative due to objections anticipating an increase in motorists attempting to park on already narrow and congested streets leading to more unsafe conditions for motorists and pedestrians.

It was highlighted that the current free car parks are used heavily by residents, with one objection specifying that there are 27 houses in the High Street alone that have double yellow lines outside their properties. Parking was also identified as being limited on North Road and Railway Terrace, with one objection suggesting that removing the free car parks will force residents to compete for already oversubscribed on-street space and "increase the... [existing] parking conflicts between residents".

Leisure and Wellbeing / Equalities

The car parks are also seen as being vital to leisure and wellbeing, with particular mention being made Queenborough Library. Objections also included reference to limiting the ability of local residents, particularly those with protected characteristics of accessing key services.

Objections specifically highlight the local community centre which supports the "elderly and lonely with lunches and hosts classes for both adults and children", suggesting that implementing charges will make it harder for people to access these services, particularly those who are just picking up/dropping off.

Objections once again raised the financial viability of the scheme and a perceived lack of transparency. Objections suggest that the Council won't be able to break even in the first one to three years and question whether there is any point making

such changes now as Local Government Reorganisation may make long-term revenue generating schemes obsolete.

We also received comments as detailed below:

1. Petition 2: "Petition to Stop Parking Charges at Castle Connections

We, the undersigned, call upon the relevant local authorities and management of Castle Connections to immediately halt the introduction of parking charges at the Castle Connections site.

Castle Connections is a vital community hub that provides essential services, activities and social opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. Introducing parking fees would:

- Place an unfair financial burden on vulnerable individuals, including elderly residents. Carers, and families on low incomes.
- Discourage attendance at community events, clubs and support sessions.
- Negatively impact the local economy and social cohesion by reducing footfall and community engagement.

Free and accessible parking has always been a key part of what makes Castle Connections welcoming and inclusive. Charging for parking risks undermining this spirit of community and could lead to isolation for those who rely on the centre most.

We therefore urge decision-makers to keep parking free at Castle Connections and protect the accessibility and community spirit that the centre stands for."

2. "This will cause problems for refuse collections emergency vehicles and delivery vehicles"

3. "Even worse than what you are already doing is the effect of your parking proposals on the normal day to day lives of the residents of Queenborough. The current free car parks are mostly used by actual residents who live there to park. There are 27 houses in the High St alone that have double yellow lines outside. Parking is also limited on North Road and Railway terrace. Every day there are constant battles for residents to find a space to park near their home - the car parks provide a last resort, but sadly are used every night by residents who cannot find space. No resident should have to be buying parking tickets to simply come home and park their car, this will increase the already parking conflicts between residents, make life much harder and worsen the effects of the cost of living crisis."

7 objections and 1 Comment were received in relation to proposed changes in Halfway on the grounds of:

Local Economy

Many objections refer to the potential negative impact on local small businesses heavily reliant on 'quick-stop' or 'pop-in' visits (such as collecting prescriptions or quick purchases). They outline that if a minimum paid stay is required at Halfway car

park, customers may avoid using these businesses, subsequently eroding both footfall and revenue.

One objection refers to the Halfway car park as a “hub for local residents and all the surrounding businesses, and their employees”, echoing concerns that the introduction of parking charges will have a severe negative impact on local businesses and their employees. The objection suggests that “the damage to the local business community will far outweigh any revenue from car park charges”.

Furthermore, objections suggested that this negative impact will also apply to local tourism, with the “incentive of a free day out at the seaside” being taken away.

Other objections also highlighted that if businesses are forced to close due to the impact of introducing parking charges, then the Council will receive less in business rates, potentially working out at a net loss to the Council.

Specific concerns were made by businesses who offer free parking to their staff in Halfway Car Park and would either have to take on the additional financial cost or pass the cost on to employees if they want to continue providing staff parking if charges are introduced.

School Safety

School safety and congestion around schools was raised as a core issue, particularly surrounding Halfway Houses Primary School. The introduction of charges is expected to push drop-offs and pick-ups onto Minster Road and side streets, as well as causing further congestion and access issues on the school premises. Objections believe that this will subsequently lead to unsafe highway conditions around children.

It was highlighted that the school has over 500 pupils and with parents alighting at peak times, removal of the free car park will cause serious disruption, particularly as the school only has a one-car access drive on a three-school site.

Highway Safety

Further issues around highway safety, particularly in Minster Road, were raised with one objection highlighting that in the last 3 years there have been 6 reports of vehicle damage, with 1 being written off and one requiring the front of the vehicle being replaced.

Cost of Living

Cost of living was raised as a core issue, with several objections referencing existing cost of living issues in the local area being negatively compounded by the addition of further charges for them to park their vehicles.

Equalities

Concerns about a disproportionately negative impact on motorists with certain protected characteristics were also raised, with concerns that proposed changes would have particularly negative impacts on accessibility for disabled and elderly motorists and residents.

Financial Viability

Objections once again raised the financial viability of the scheme and a perceived lack of transparency. Objections suggest that the Council won't be able to break even in the first one to three years and question whether there is any point making such changes now as Local Government Reorganisation may make long-term revenue generating schemes obsolete.

Legal Restriction on Implementing Parking Charges

There was also an objection raising a preexisting legal agreement between Queenborough Borough Council and Sheppey District Council. It's suggested that "in January 1978 when Swale District Council took the Borough status from Queenborough to become Swale Borough Council, it still had to abide by the same legally binding local authority amalgamation agreement of not being able to introduce parking restrictions or fees to those Sheppey car parks".

We also received comments as detailed below:

1. "when Queenborough Borough Council and Sheppey District Council were amalgamated and taken over by Swale District Council in April 1974, part of the many legally binding local authority amalgamation agreements and legislations were that Swale District Council cannot under any circumstances introduce car parking restrictions or fees at several currently free car parks on Sheppey.

In January 1978 when Swale District Council took the Borough status from Queenborough to become Swale Borough Council, it still had to abide by the same legally binding local authority amalgamation agreement of not being able to introduce parking restrictions or fees to those Sheppey car parks."

2. "What did it cost for the ship on shore car park to set up and what returns have you made could you please make this figure available please."
3. "We barely make enough money to live due to rising costs, we can't afford to pay to park our cars too because of people parking their cars outside of our property to avoid your fees."
4. "Charging this carpark will force more people to park outside of the school disrupting traffic and local residents and force more people on to [the Halfway Houses Primary School] site which is already bursting at the seams"
5. "At times, it has been so busy in our car park with... [non-customer] cars, that our own ... [customers] have been forced to park in the public car park or further afield. Last week, we had a very elderly lady with heart issues and COPD, arrive extremely breathless, having had to walk some long way because our own parking spaces were all taken"
6. "The four-way junction at the Halfway traffic lights right next to this car park is arguably the busiest on the Isle of Sheppey. It would be utter madness to force all of the above-mentioned vehicles into Minster Road and the surrounding side streets, which are already jam-packed with parked vehicles."
7. "The Halfway car park is adjacent to one of the entrances to the Halfway Houses Primary School. This car park is used by hundreds of parents every

day to take or collect their children from school. Minster Road between Banner Way and the car park (including Banner Way itself) is already clogged with parents' cars twice a day. What the proposal to introduce charges will do is to simply force even more parents' cars into Minster Road and surrounding streets."

1 objections and 1 Comment were received in relation to proposed changes in Grafton Road on the grounds of:

Local Economy

The objection highlighted concerns that the implementation of parking charges will severely impact local businesses, particularly in relation to businesses offering delivery services who rely on the free car park, especially in the evenings when there are restrictions on the High Street.

Resident Parking Availability

A comment was also received outlining concerns about the availability of parking for residents and whether any special concessions will be made to facilitate resident parking.

1 objection was received in relation to proposed changes in Front Brents on the grounds of:

Highway Safety

Vehicles regularly park at the head of the car park, making the corner difficult to navigate which provides a serious risk for emergency services trying to access the location. The objection proposes addressing this issue through appropriate waiting restrictions such as double yellow lines.

Highway Congestion

Concerns about residents being displaced were also raised, suggesting that displaced drivers may park on Front Brents and Upper Brents, subsequently preventing residents from parking outside their homes and reducing their quality of living.

Legal Requirements under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010

The objection also raised concerns that an increase in on-street parking caused by the introduction of charges will obstruct access for the Environment Agency and whether this increases the risks associated with deploying flood defences. They ask whether the Environment Agency have been consulted (a requirement under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010) or any mitigations have been proposed.

Local Economy

The car park was also highlighted as being a key community asset acting as a 'hub' for accessing local community services and businesses. It was suggested that introducing charges will deter use and undermine community activities having an overall negative impact on the local economy and leisure offerings.

Industrial Estate Access

Industrial Estate access was raised as an issue, with suggestions that overcrowded on-street parking already prevent articulated lorries from using the Brents industrial estate safely which has resulted in missed refuse collections. The objection highlights that displaced parking caused by introduction of the charges may further exacerbate these issues and cause an unsafe environment.

Nursery/Child Safety

The objection also highlights that the car park provides a safe environment for parents to load/unload their children for the local nursery, and that by introducing charges which will be payable by parents twice a day, they will be encouraged to load/unload their children on Upper Brents, creating a safety hazard.

Insufficient Parking Enforcement

Finally, the objection raises a lack of parking enforcement on Front Brents with frequent obstructions of double yellow lines and double parking suggested as being a common occurrence. The objection suggests that the introduction of charges will only lead to further vehicle parked in contravention of parking restrictions unless a suitable enforcement strategy is also proposed.

We also received the following questions as part of the objection:

1. Will local residents be eligible for a parking permit or exemption, as provided in other parts of Faversham for a small fee?
2. What is the proposed timescale for implementation?

Recommendation:

1. There is clear opposition to the change of use at the three free car parks proposed for charging as well as operational and legal issues that may require further investigation. This has been provided through consultation responses and the relevant petitions. Members of the Committee therefore need to consider if to proceed with the recommendation in the committee report.

Appendix II

Parish / Town Council Objections to Variation 10

Minster-on-Sea Parish Council

Dear Swale Borough Council

I am writing on behalf of Minster on Sea Parish Council to express our strong objection to the proposed introduction of parking charges across car parks in Swale, including The Little Oyster car park within our parish.

The Parish Council has significant concerns regarding the negative impact these charges would have on both residents and visitors. The Little Oyster car park serves as an important access point to our beach and seafront. Introducing parking charges will act as a deterrent to visitors at a time when we are actively encouraging responsible use of our coastline and promoting local tourism.

In light of the recently declared mental health crisis in Swale, we feel it is especially important to highlight the role that natural spaces and accessible beauty spots play in supporting residents' wellbeing. The beach and surrounding coastal areas offer vital respite, particularly for individuals and families who may be struggling. Imposing parking charges risks reducing access to these important spaces, disproportionately affecting those who rely on free, local outdoor environments to support their mental health.

The Parish Council also wishes to place on record that Minster on Sea Parish Council previously requested to take over management of The Little Oyster car park. At no point were we informed that this option was no longer being considered, and we are disappointed that this change in position has not been communicated to us. We request clarification on why this opportunity is no longer available and whether further discussions may still be possible.

We are particularly concerned that charging for parking will inevitably push vehicles into surrounding residential roads. These roads are already under pressure during peak periods, and any additional parking displacement will exacerbate congestion, create safety issues, and reduce accessibility for residents, pedestrians, and emergency services.

Furthermore, increased on street parking is likely to lead to greater frustration within the community and will undermine efforts to maintain safe, accessible, and welcoming public spaces.

For these reasons, Minster on Sea Parish Council strongly urges Swale Borough Council to reconsider the proposed charges and to work with local councils to

explore alternative approaches that support both financial sustainability and community wellbeing.

We would welcome further discussion on this matter and look forward to being kept informed of any developments.

Sheerness Town Council

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Proposed Parking Charges at Little Oyster (Minster), Park Road (Queensborough), Queenborough Library, Front Brents (Faversham), Grafton Road (Sittingbourne) and Halfway Road Car Parks

I am writing on behalf of Sheerness Town Council. At the Council meeting held on Monday 15th December 2025, Members resolved to object to the proposed parking tariffs across Swale.

Although these car parks are not located within the Town of Sheerness, the proposals will directly affect Sheerness residents who regularly use these facilities and access services across the island. Members are of the view that the introduction of charges will have a significant negative impact on both residents and visitors.

Little Oyster is a key access point for beach users, and the introduction of a parking tariff is likely to deter visitors or displace parking onto The Leas Road, which would adversely affect local tourism and increase pressure on surrounding roads.

The proposed parking charges at Halfway Road car park would have a particularly detrimental impact on local businesses in the immediate vicinity. It is anticipated that charges would result in vehicles being displaced onto nearby residential roads, which are already heavily used at peak times. The existing road infrastructure already experiences daily congestion, and these proposals would further exacerbate the situation.

Members also expressed concern that the cost of implementing the parking charges, including the installation and ongoing maintenance of ticket machines, is likely to outweigh the revenue generated from these car parks. A similar situation has already occurred at the Ship on Shore car park, which is largely underused, with residents instead parking on surrounding roads. This has resulted in increased congestions and additional traffic problems in the area.

For the reasons outlined above, Sheerness Town Council formally objects to the proposed parking tariffs.

Queenborough Town Council

Dear Parking Services Manager,

Re: The Borough of Swale (off-street parking places) (Variation No. 10) Order 2026.

Queenborough Town Council write with strong objection against the proposed car parking Orders, to change the use of the Queenborough Library and Park Road Car Parks to a Pay and display parking facility and introduce parking charges.

Queenborough Town Councillor's have continued to listen to the residents, visitors and Queenborough businesses and there remains strong objection to the introduction of these parking charge proposals. The Town Council writes and objects for the following reasons to the Car Park charges, along with questions, in this comprehensive letter of objection. Please note that many of these questions are a repeat to the Town Council questions, raised in the letter of objection sent to the same address as this letter's addressee on the 23rd February 2024. In the letter of February 2024, the Town Council objected to the same proposals from Swale Borough Council for the introduction of these charges but under a different order namely The Borough of Swale (off-street parking places) Variation No. 6) Order 2024, to which the Town Council have never to date received a reply to that letter, to those questions raised.

Swale Borough Council has again, failed to consider relevant parties, should Queensborough Town Council as landowners, of part of the Castle Site Library Car Park have not been consulted prior to any planning to introduce parking charges to this Car Park where made. Copy title plans submitted to the Borough Council in February 2024. Swale Borough Council also failed to consult local businesses and local organisations prior to any planning to introduce charging, by omitting to do this, the authority that has not safeguarded the needs and requirements of residents, visitors and businesses in Queenborough.

These proposed orders do not lay out a clear method for members of the public; they are not open and transparent. Where will the responses be published and shared with the public? Where and when will the proposed orders be voted upon by Swale Borough Councillor's and how the public can attend and have their say at these meetings?

Swale Borough Council predicted budget income from the borough's car parks form part of the council's overall income and contributes to the authority's budget allowing the authority to deliver all services, factored into this is projected income from car parking spaces that Swale Borough Council does not own. There is confusion over the ratification of this budget with the fact that Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 as amended states local authorities in England and Wales can only primarily fund transport-related services and not general spending.

Vehicle parking should consider the availability of local public transport, with an adequate level of car parking within the town to ensure that viability is not compromised, there are limited buses to Queenborough, there is no train from other areas of the Isle of Sheppey apart from Sheerness to Queensborough. People from Rushenden, Leysdown, Eastchurch, Minster on Sea, Halfway, Warden, Elmley, Harty must drive here, there is no infrastructure for connecting cycle paths and in some places no connecting footpaths to reach Queensborough from these areas and certainly there is no infrastructure of this kind connecting coming onto the Isle of Sheppey to visit Queensborough. These free car parks satisfy the reasonable needs of visitor parking because of the varying occupancy patterns across the day, they should not have to pay to visit Queensborough.

On street parking will be caused by introducing charges at these car parks and will lead to indiscriminate street parking i.e. blocking carriageways, footway parking, blocking the streets themselves and poor visibility on the highway. Overspill parking on surrounding streets, where the public realm should be attractive and safely encourage walking and cycling, the car should not but will dominate the public realm if they are parking in the narrow width Queenborough highways in this historic town.

There is no place in Queensborough for defined on street parking bays, houses are of a terrace nature in the vicinity of both car parks with width historic high density terraced housing. Negative parking behaviours in residential side streets mean people will choose not to visit Queensborough and this parking will block up every single street in Queensborough. The properties do not have driveways or parking spaces; the frontage width of these houses is less than that of a parking standard space. Swale Brough Council only must look at the double yellow lines already in place along these neighbouring Queensborough streets to see how difficult parking already is in this community.

If parking charges are imposed this will often be higher than the charges agreed by Swale Borough Council with parking machines not giving change, realistic costs to consumers will be higher, than those agreed.

Park Road Car Park

This Car Park is used by visitors and residents visiting local businesses and enjoying the seafront, harbour and Park.

Proposed charges to this car park will have a negative impact on companies operating Charters and Ferries from Queensborough with day-trippers having to pay for a day's parking on top of the fee for the ferry. Charging this Car Park will drive tourism out. Visiting the All Tide Landing, using the harbour and seafront, moorings and other boating facilities will also be impacted by any proposed charges.

Volunteers cleaning up the seafront and beaches, use this car park; they will not come and pay to clean up the beach. Memorial benches supplied by Swale Borough Council in Queensborough Park, will people really have to pay to visit these

benches? Dog walkers, walkers, runners who cannot afford gym membership can come here without cost to enjoy the open space without being charged to do so. Local families with little in this deprived area, take their children to the beach without cost, it should remain free for them to use these outside areas.

This car park is used by visitors to Admirals Arm, Bosun, Old House at Home, Flying Dutchman all serving food, local authorities need to support these small business, bringing people into Queensborough.

Park Road falls in the conservation area of Queensborough requiring planning permission from the conservation officer, has the Conservation Officer been consulted for any changes to these Queensborough Car Parks? If so, please could the Town Council see a copy of the Conservation officer's report as this Car Park is fenced by bollards and chains in keeping with the historic character of the area.

New parking meters are made of unsympathetic modern materials which would look out of place being detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area and historic town. The bays are without time restriction or charge, these bays reduce resident and visitor parking in the streets by providing free car parking, as reported above on the width of the properties with on street parking already limited in this area.

The top layer of gravel at this car park makes relining impossible in remarking the bays as reported by Swale Borough Council, a few years ago. Would this mean the whole cost of resurfacing the car park would be required at cost to the Borough Council? If the authority were to charge here, please could you advise.

The Town Council ask if it not biased to propose to allow Swale Brough Council Staff a No limit, No Charge Parking Permit when Kent County Council and Queenborough Town Council staff also use this Car Park whilst on official duties, especially with the Town Council working closely with the Community. Unsubstantiated but other Swal and Town Parish Council's may also have officers using this car park for official duties, could this proposal not be for all local government staff collaborating with these communities.

Queensborough Library Car Park

This Car Park is used by the following and others, to which the usage is briefly described.

The Community Centre housed in the historic Old School Building, a vital asset to Queensborough and Rushenden, offering support groups, bereavement counselling etc. The centre is run by staff and volunteers, staff earning minimum wage and unpaid volunteers in one of the most deprived areas in the United Kingdom, these people will not be able to afford parking charges that will take a big part of their wages or pay to volunteer at the centre. The centre also, provides meals at a reduced cost, to those who are sometimes lonely and only get out to meet people

once a week, do not discourage this by introducing parking charges, it would not be looking after Queensborough's interests, this is a Non-profit charity, which could close if these parking charges are introduced. All highway boundaries of the building are surrounded by double yellow lines.

The Hop Yard a small centre supporting vulnerable adults. Adults with learning difficulties, they cannot be dropped off and picked up outside the Hop Yard at Well Road, due to double yellow lines outside the building, disabled wheelchairs must sometimes be unloaded from minibuses, ambulances and cars and it is safe to conduct this in the library car park. This should remain available without charge ensuring this takes place safely and legally away from the highway.

The Queensborough Library offering social events in the community and free books, in a deprived area where some local children may not otherwise have access to books, within families being unable to afford to purchase books as a luxury item.

Small business shops including a chemist and dentist along Railway Terrace. People visiting the takeaways along these shops would have to pay £1.60 for a five minute food collection, do not drive these shops out of Queensborough by introducing these proposed charges.

Town Councillors object to the introduction of these charges at Halfway Car Park along Minster Road for the same reason the proposed implemented cost to pick up and drop off children to Halfway School and for a food collection at a proposed £1.60. This would then cost parents £3.20 as a round cost for using this car park on the daily school run. There again is limited on street parking in this already highly congested area along Minster Road at school pick up and drop off times.

The Queen Phillipa Hotel provides accommodation, a bar and restaurant bringing visitors into Historic Queensborough, who sometimes use this Car Park.

Commuters using the Queensborough Train Station, some travelling all over the United Kingdom, parking sometimes twelve hours or more, how will this affect the residents when commuters will not pay to park but park in neighbouring streets.

Visitors to the Castle Site open space and play park in making this car park pay and display will bring kerbside parking, on a short street which will create visibility problems to traffic with the zebra crossing in place. Residential streets like Castle Street will become thronged with those seeking to not pay for parking. As mentioned previously there are double yellow lines at every highway perimeter of the Castle site.

The Library Car Park is on the Gatehouse site to the Queensborough Castle and falls within the scheduled monument and conservation area of Queensborough, wiring required for parking meters will surely require Historic England consent due to the digging. Again, parking meters made of unsympathetic modern materials would be

out of place, again, being detrimental to the character and appearance of the Castle Site and require planning permission from the Conservation Officer.

Also, emphasizing and repeated from above for this Car Park regarding the proposed Swale Borough Council Staff a No limit, No Charge Parking Permit at this Car Park.

Tourism

Queensborough is dependent on seasonal tourism and marine leisure, and local organisations work extremely hard on bringing tourism into the town.

Queensborough is not a large town but a small town trying to improve local tourism, which should not have to compete with bigger towns to bring visitors to see the historical grade II listed buildings and use local businesses, to keep Queensborough public houses and local stores in operation.

Unlike many towns who have seen public houses closing these parking charges if introduced will affect their business with a negative outcome, please this about the car parking strategically or it will be an erosion of the town's viability and lead to the underutilisation of the town's assets including Queensborough Church Guildhall Museum and Queensborough Guildhall the latter two properties both owned by Swale Borough Council. The town will become less attractive to residents, customers and businesses, footfall declines and spend declines because they cannot afford the parking charges.

Please meet the best interest of road users, communities and businesses, overzealous enforcement and high parking charges which will drive people out of Queensborough, push up the cost of living and harm local shops, organisations, public houses and make it harder for people to park responsibly and go about their everyday lives.

Could Queensborough Town Council suggest that in the future Swale Borough Council look at developing the Queensborough Railway station waste land that lies alongside the Station, this could be a car park for fifty plus cars for commuters, inviting them to travel from Queensborough.

Queensborough has the status of Royal Borough following the granting of its charter in 1368. This Charter guarantees Queensborough amongst other things exemptions from taxation, which, guarantees the town free parking forever.

Queensborough Town Council ask that Swale Borough Council consider the points raised in this letter and reconsider not introducing the proposed charges to Park Road and the Library Car Park, considering the Town Council's and public concerns about the damage use charges could do to business leisure, tourism and resident sectors in Queensborough.

Please find attached further petitions' handed into the Town Council.

Once again, Queensborough Town Council finish by saying how nice would it be to say welcome to Queensborough, free parking provided by Swale Borough Council, rather than charging people to visit and live in this small historical town.

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Community Committee Meeting	
Meeting Date	27 January 2026
Report Title	Annual Parking Report 2024-25
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. To discuss the contents and approve publication of the report on the Council's website.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This is the third annual parking report covering the period of the 2024-25 financial year and highlights the key elements of the parking services operation in Swale.
- 1.2 It details the principles we follow, provides financial and performance statistics and explains a number of projects we have undertaken.

2 Background

- 2.1 The parking service can be split into two discrete areas covering on-street parking and off-street parking.
- 2.2 On Street parking restrictions are placed at key locations throughout the borough of Swale to specifically ensure the free flow of traffic and to maintain highway safety for both drivers and pedestrians.
- 2.3 Kent County Council as the highway authority are ultimately responsible for this matter, but in the two-tier county of Kent, this has been delegated to District and Borough Councils, through a memorandum of understanding. We are bound by the Road Traffic Act 1991 which was implemented to de-criminalise illegal parking activity to allow the Police to deal with more serious matters and to free up the magistrate courts that were becoming overwhelmed with parking related issues.
- 2.4 Off-street parking is essential in preventing overcrowding on-street and Councils can operate with greater autonomy in these car parks.
- 2.5 The report highlights the Council's key parking principles and discusses what improvements have occurred throughout the year.

- 2.6 It explains why Civil Parking Enforcement is required and how it operates.
- 2.7 A range of appendices in the annual report show financial and performance statistics.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 To discuss the contents and approve publication of the report on the Council's website.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Do nothing – we are not statutorily obliged to produce an annual report, only to provide certain transparency information, which we have already done so on our website.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	A well-balanced parking service provides support to a range of the Council's existing Corporate Plan priorities with a focus on economic development - support for our businesses, residents and visitors, plus reducing the Council's reliance on government-controlled funding sources.
Financial, Resource and Property	The financial figures are contained within the main appendix 'Annual Parking Services Report 2024-25'. Staff resource is spread across on and off-street parking. It focusses on administration, financial reconciliation, repairs and maintenance and ensuring our parking is safe.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The main legislation relating to this report is the Road Traffic Act 1991, Road Traffic and Regulation Act 1984 and Traffic Management Act 2004.
Crime and Disorder	Inappropriate parking is anti-social and can cause issues in the community. The use of our enforcement officers mean we are well positioned to report elements of crime and disorder.

Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	Maintaining a regular flow of moving traffic is known to reduce emissions. The annual report details the projects we have worked on including installation and operation of EV charging units and supporting some active travel projects.
Health and Wellbeing	Ensuring a clear flow of traffic helps to reduce down air pollution.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	Parking enforcement helps to protect young people such as those in and around schools from pavement parking etc.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Staff are required to regularly inspect our facilities and produce risk assessments to help protect the public.
Equality and Diversity	All members of the community of Swale have a right to expect access to parking. We provide free parking for disabled customers. Our pricing is regularly reviewed against other local areas.
Privacy and Data Protection	None applicable.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Annual Parking Services Report 2024-25

8 Background Papers

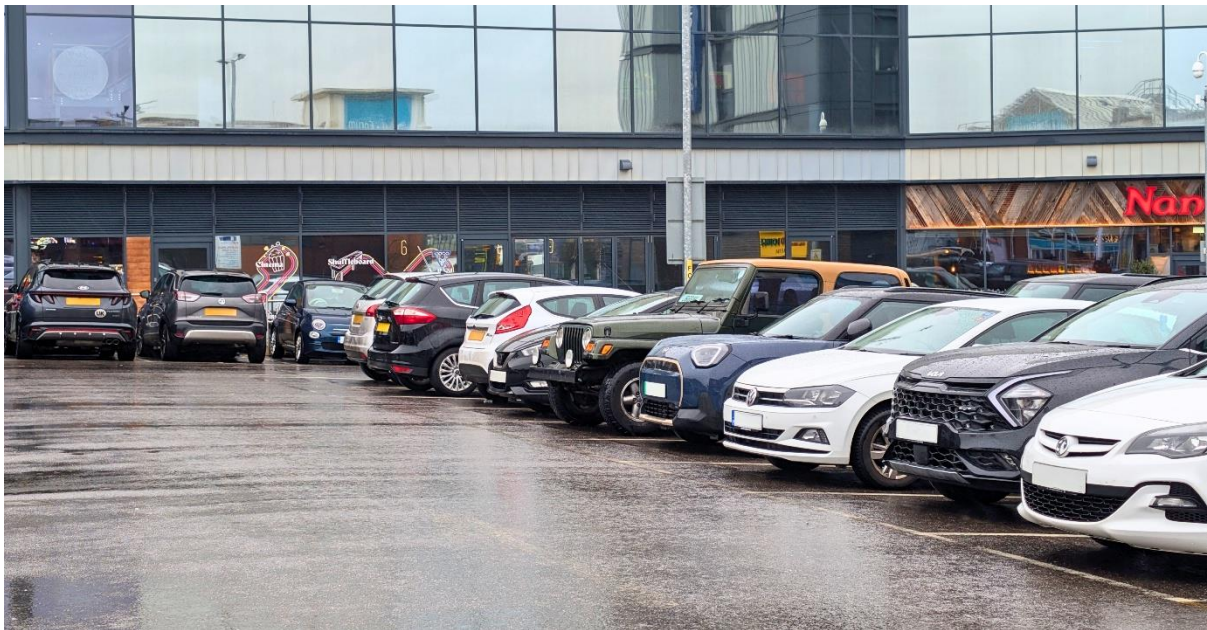
None.

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Swale Borough Council

Parking Services

Annual Report 2024-25



This is my first year overseeing parking across the Borough in my role of Chair of the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee.

The aim of the report is to summarise what services the Parking department provides and give an overview as to why Civil Parking Enforcement is required within Swale, how we operate and how well we are performing.

Reporting is an important part of our accountability. The transparency given by regular and consistent reporting should help the public gain a better understanding of Civil Parking Enforcement.

We know enforcement is not always a popular activity, however making sure that residents can move about our streets safely is our primary concern. Blockages in the roads can lead to struggles for the emergency service or prevent us from collecting wheelie bins.

We understand that rises in prices for our car parks can impact some people. They are necessary so we can keep operating them safely, guarding against the rising costs of repairs and maintenance. The income is also used to support other Council services that may not be possible to be funded by other income streams.

Monitoring also provides the Council with management information for performance evaluation and helps to identify where improvements are needed.

I hope that you will find the contents of this report helpful and informative and I am always open to comments on how we can improve this report or the services we offer.

Councillor Dolley Wooster
Chair of the Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee

Should you have any further enquiries please contact Parking Services at:

Swale Borough Council
Parking Services Department
Swale House
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 3HT

parking@swale.gov.uk

On-street

Number of resident permits	3,153
Number of traffic regulation order projects this year	Sealed: 5 Drafted: 4
Number of PCNs issued	10,338
Number of NHS permits	173
Number on-street parking spaces*	2,070*

* On-street parking spaces are estimated only as individual bays are not marked out.

Off-Street

Number of pay and display car parks	28
Number of free car parks (inc open spaces)	29
Number off-street (marked) parking spaces	3,232
Total parking transactions 	1,314,285
Number of PCNs issued 	12,430
EV charging 	15,020 transactions Carbon savings = 107,171 kg
Cashless transactions 	74.4% of all transactions are made without cash, of which; ○ RingGo makes up 79.6% of cashless transactions (59.2% of total transactions) ○ Card Payments make up 18.8% of contactless transactions (14% of total transactions) ○ Pod Point makes up 1.5% of contactless transactions (1.1% of total transactions)



Means an increase on the previous year

Enforcement

15,000 patrol hours a year

80% of enforcement time is spent on-street and 20% off-street

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used within this report;

CEO	Civil Enforcement Officer
CPE	Civil Parking Enforcement
DfT	Department for Transport
SBC	Swale Borough Council
P&D	Pay & Display
PCN	Penalty Charge Notice
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
TPT	Traffic Penalty Tribunal

Background to Parking in the Borough of Swale

Parking restrictions are placed at key locations throughout the borough of Swale to specifically ensure the free flow of traffic and to maintain highway safety for both drivers and pedestrians.

The Road Traffic Act 1984 empowered local authorities to implement Traffic Regulation Orders in order to control traffic movements and parking provision. Responsibility at this time for enforcing observed contraventions came under the Police via on-street traffic wardens.

However, the Police service soon became increasingly unable to deal with the ever-escalating volume of parking offences and the subsequent cost of funding the traffic warden service.

Consequently, the Road Traffic Act 1991 was implemented which de-criminalised illegal parking activity to allow the Police to deal with more serious matters and to free up the magistrate courts that were becoming overwhelmed with parking related issues.

This change in legislation (and later amendments) allowed local authorities to manage illegal parking through Civil Parking Enforcement agreements which enabled Civil Enforcement Officers to enforce parking restrictions under Section 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004, in accordance with the relevant TRO.

Kent County Council as the highway authority are ultimately responsible for this matter, but in the two-tier county of Kent, this has been delegated to District and Borough Councils, through a memorandum of understanding.

All existing TROs in Swale may be viewed online at [TRO Library - Traffic Penalty Tribunal](#).

Parking Principles

The Council has always adhered to national guidance and legislation. In accordance with the DfT's "*Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans*" the Council principles are aimed at tackling congestion and changing travel behaviour. The Council has a formal [Parking Policy](#) which sets out more detail. In setting the principles, the Council has taken account of:

- providing an efficient parking service which continually seeks to improve,
- being fair, consistent and transparent,
- improving safety for road users and assist in the smooth flow of traffic to reduce congestion,
- balancing demand and supply for parking spaces across the borough
- encouraging the use of sustainable methods of transport,
- safeguarding the needs and requirements of residents, businesses and visitors,
- consulting appropriately on any substantial changes to parking permits and prices,
- enforcing the Traffic Management Act 2004 fairly and in accordance with the regulations,
- improving accessibility to the town centre for all members of the public
- reducing the impact of antisocial parking,
- reducing peak time congestion in town centres.

We will do this by;

- Regulating the use of vehicles in the busiest and most congested areas.
- Regulating parking, both on street and off street, and provide adequate Pay & Display facilities.
- Encouraging the use of public transport.
- Safeguarding the needs and requirements of local residents, visitors and businesses

The Parking Partnership

Swale Borough Council has formulated a Parking Partnership with Maidstone Borough Council. Whilst retaining individual policies and principles, the authorities benefit from shared staff, joint contracts and sharing innovation. This model brings additional expertise that may not be possible with individual Councils and financial economies of scale.

Civil Parking Enforcement

The Partnership has contracted the Civil Parking Enforcement operation to an external agent, *APCOA Parking*. They are a market leader in civil enforcement and a Contract Manager, Supervisor and 11 Civil Enforcement Officers are employed under this contract. They provide 15,000 hours of patrol time across the year.

The civil enforcement team patrol the borough on a daily basis to improve driver compliance to the regulations and reduce inconsiderate parking. Officers have the power to issue PCNs to any vehicles observed parked in contravention of an active parking restriction.

It is a common misconception that the CPE operation is purely a revenue making scheme and that the officers work to targets; this is incorrect. All members of staff under this contract are salaried and not in receipt of a commission-based rate of pay or any other performance related incentives. The role of a Civil Enforcement Officer can often be a difficult and unpopular one and is often the subject of many 'myths' and stereotypes. Unfortunately, the common misconceptions about the role, can influence the public's view of Officers.

Through membership of the British Parking Association, Swale Borough Council are also committed to the Positive Parking Agenda which promotes the positive outcomes from parking management. More information can be found at: [PowerPoint Presentation \(britishparking.co.uk\)](http://britishparking.co.uk)

The information below may help to dispel some of the most common parking myths;

- All our Officers are salaried and receive no commission,
- Income generated by parking management is used to cover the cost of enforcement, with any surplus being reinvested into key highway/ transportation services by the Council,
- Officers are not 'incentivised' to issue PCNs; Notices can only be issued where a vehicle is observed parked in contravention,
- Officers routinely carry out late or early shifts to enforce 24-hour restrictions to maintain highway safety,
- Our Officers are here to help and often assist visitors to the Borough by providing information and directions,
- All Officers wear hi-visibility uniform to ensure they are visible to the public (winter coats are issued for the colder months!),
- Officers don't wait in car parks; in fact over 80% of enforcement is carried out on-street working on keeping traffic moving.

All Officers also act as the eyes and the ears of the Borough, reporting any faulty street furniture and greeting visitors to the Borough who require information or directions.

Body Worn Cameras

- In 2016 APCOA, in partnership with Swale Borough Council, introduced body-worn cameras for all CEOs.
- Body-worn cameras ensure the health and safety of the officers by acting as a deterrent to verbally and physically abusive members of the public, as well as providing sufficient evidence to prosecute when required. They also allow Officers to detect and identify crime and antisocial behaviour.
- The cameras record for a full shift (all deployed hours) in 720p HD image quality with full colour and audio recording. All cameras are tamperproof by the officer.
- Cameras also allow Parking Services to investigate complaints made by members of the public, providing an impartial 'third witness'. However, footage cannot be used as supporting evidence when challenging a Penalty Charge Notice.
- Unfortunately, despite this safety measure our staff still suffer from verbal and physical threats every day. This resulted in **8 code red** incidents which involved physical assault (1 down on last year) and **18 code yellow** incidents that involved high level threats of physical attack (2 down on last year). We also recorded **1,183 incidents of verbal abuse** during 2024/25 (204 more than last year).

In accordance with the relevant TRO, the CEOs can legally enforce:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Single and double yellow lines | • Taxi bays |
| • Loading restrictions | • Motorcycle bays |
| • Loading bays | • School keep clear markings |
| • Disabled bays | • Crossing zig zag restrictions |
| • Limited waiting bays | • Resident parking bays |
| • Off-street P&D car parks | |

Yellow line restrictions are enforceable from the centre of the road to the nearest property boundary. Where a vehicle is parked partially or fully blocking the footway, CEOs are able to issue a PCN, not against the obstruction but against the yellow line contravention. Where a vehicle is observed as parked blocking the footway but where no yellow line restrictions apply, CEOs are unable to deal with the obstruction; Kent Police have retained the delegated authority to deal with such offences under highway obstruction powers.

CEOs are fully carbon neutral using either foot patrols, bicycles and fully electric vehicles.

Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs)

Where illegal parking is observed, the CEO on patrol has a responsibility to record the relevant contravention and issue a PCN accordingly.

With effect 31 May 2008, the Secretary of State decided that PCNs would be issued at two different tiers, £70.00 or £50.00, depending on the relevant parking contravention. Prior to this date, PCNs were issued at £60.00 irrespective of the seriousness of the offence, of which many recipients deemed as unfair.

- The higher level charge would be applicable if parking is observed in places where it is prohibited e.g. on yellow lines during prescribed hours of enforcement or in a disabled bay without displaying a valid blue badge.
- The lower level charge would be applicable where parking is permitted but a less serious contravention has occurred e.g. failing to display a valid Pay & Display ticket or parked outside the remit of a marked bay.

PCNs continue to be reduced by 50% if paid within 14 days of issue.

A CEO will serve a PCN by either attaching it to the vehicle or placing it under the windscreen wiper, should the notice be issued during inclement weather. The PCN will specify the contravention that has been observed, amount payable and the methods available for the recipient to informally challenge the notice.

Penalty Charge Notices are issued to vehicles observed parked in contravention; the link below shows the contravention codes used on both on-street and off-street by Swale Borough Council. <https://www.patrol-uk.info/contravention-codes/>

Although discretion cannot not be considered by a CEO upon an observation of illegal parking, any mitigating circumstances relevant to the motorist at the time of receiving a PCN, remain a consideration of the Parking Services appeals officer as part of the statutory appeals process. Information on the appeals process and all applicable parking contraventions can be viewed online at [Homepage - PATROL](#)

There is also then a nationwide, statutory appeals process for motorists who feel they have valid mitigation for parking in contravention, but their initial challenge has been rejected.

Every appeal is exceptional and has no bearing on the outcome of any other cases. Appeals are considered on statutory ground and in accordance with the mitigation submitted as part of the legal process.

Cases appealed through the nationwide legal process include the opportunity for a case review at an independent Traffic Penalty Tribunal in instances where the Local Authority and the Appellant fail to reach an agreed outcome. More information can be found at: <https://www.trafficpenaltytribunal.gov.uk/>

Schools Patrols

We undertake schools patrols every weekday during term time. The main aim of our visits is to keep the traffic moving and improve safety around the schools to protect our children.

We obviously cannot be at every school at every drop-off and pick up as problems persist at many locations at the same time each day, however patrols are deployed to priority school locations and rotated to ensure that inconsiderate parking is reduced and that drivers comply to the regulations that are in place to ensure the safety of others.

The Environmental Health Team have worked alongside parking services, installing a number of 'No idling' signs around school locations. This is proving effective in raising the agenda.

Parking Provision and Services

Car parks

SBC currently provides 57 off-street car parks, 28 of which are pay and display and generate income that is used to counterbalance the Council's associated costs in general maintenance. This is a change from last years numbers as we have now included the car parks based at

Any surplus off-street parking income forms part of the Council's overall income budget, which is used to support the provision of other key public services that the Council delivers. This surplus on the parking account reduces the net budget requirement for the Council and therefore the level of Council Tax charged.

Our car parks accept cash, telephone/app and card transactions, with Season Tickets being available for all long-stay car parks. It remains our key principle that the majority of car parks provide cash as an option. There are a few sites where this is not possible due to the remote location or small number of spaces not justifying having a machine.

Parking machines offer payment via debit or credit card / or Google and Apple pay.

Additionally, a cashless option is also available through our partner RingGo <https://myringgo.co.uk/>. This cashless alternative to pay for parking, allows users to pay via telephone, SMS or using a smartphone app.

SBC's P&D machines operate on a pre-paid payment basis; accepting 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1 and £2 coins.

There are a total of 3232 marked controlled off-street parking spaces and approximately 2,070 controlled on-street parking spaces in the borough.

Information on car park locations and existing tariffs is available online at [Swale Borough Council - Parking and Streets](#)

Bourne Place Multi-storey car park

The MSCP provides secure parking at a 24/7 monitored car park, close to the town centre, leisure park and train station. There are 308 spaces in the car park, with special places for disabled drivers, parent and toddlers and electric vehicles. There is lift access to all floors. It was built to service the new leisure park at Bourne Place. As part of the Bourne Place development some of the businesses (cinema and hotel) provide concessionary parking at the MSCP.

Unlike our other car parks, this operates on a barrier entry and exit system. Residents do not need to pay when they arrive, they can simply take a ticket at the entrance, park up and go off to their activity. When they return, they place the ticket on the pay on foot machine and it charges you for the time used.

Permits and Season tickets

Parking Services administer all resident, visitor & business permit applications in addition to season ticket requests.

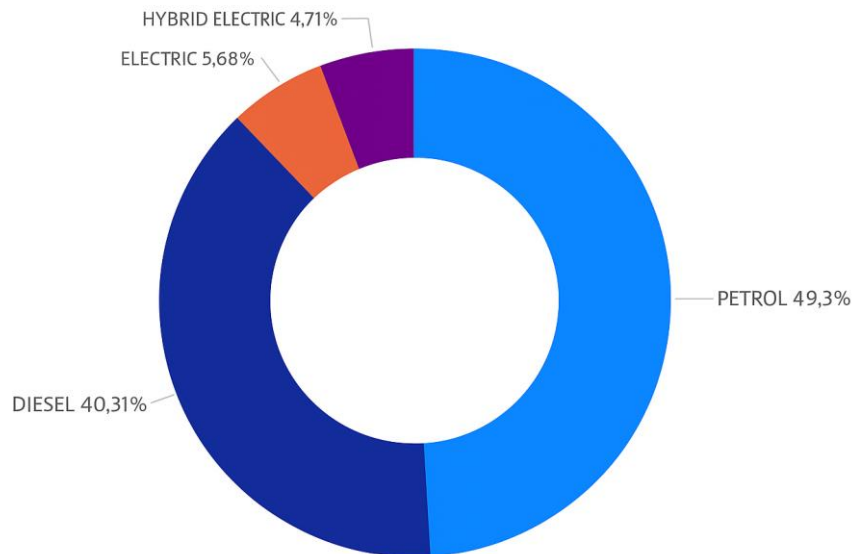
Information on existing permit and season ticket prices is available online at <http://www.swale.gov.uk/Parking-Permits/>

Electric Vehicle chargers in car parks

As at the end of 31st March 2025, the Borough has a total of 18 electric chargers in our car parks equating to 35 EV charging bays. EV charging equated to carbon savings of 107,171 kg when compared to fossil fuel powered cars.

Through use of RingGo data we can estimate the percentage of vehicles that use our car parks by type e.g. Fossil fuel/hybrid or fully electric. This still shows that the majority of cars that use our car parks are fossil fuel vehicles. We will continue to monitor this statistic to ensure we respond to increasing demand for electric charging but at the moment, the current level of charging units is enough to meet the demand.

The pie chart below shows that the use of electric vehicles has increased from 2.65% in 2023-24 to 5.68% in 2024-25. Hybrid usage has also increased which has seen a reduction in both petrol and diesel percentages.



Resident Parking Scheme

Due to the huge increase of vehicle ownership in the past two decades, as well as the effects of commuter parking on local residents situated close to town centres, the council operate a number of Resident Parking Schemes (RPS). The schemes aim to reduce the effects of antisocial and commuter parking on residents as well as maintaining the free flow of traffic on the public highway. Contrary to popular belief (and the title!), a scheme is not there to provide a guaranteed space for residents to park outside of their house of an evening. They are generally set to protect parking in the daytime.

Swale Borough Council have adopted runs of bays as opposed to individual marked bays; individual bays must adhere to sizing restrictions which would reduce the amount of available on-street parking.

Each individual RPS has its own rules including times of operation which are set out when the traffic regulation order is implemented. These are following lots of public consultation.

Over 80% of enforcement is carried out on-street, reducing hazardous vehicle obstructions and maintaining the free flow of traffic, which is essential for the emergency services and some of our own services like refuse and recycling collection.

Key Parking and Traffic Regulation Order projects

In 2024-25 we consulted on a proposal to implement overnight parking charges at two locations on the Isle of Sheppey. Shellness in Leysdown and the Shingle

Bank in Minster on Sea had suffered from a large volume of overnight parking. Whilst many visitors treated the locations well, a minority caused disturbance through noise, fires and littering, including the discharge of human waste.

The public consultation overwhelmingly supported the Council's proposal to begin charging. Works were under way to implement during 2024-25 in order to have it ready for summer 2025. More detail will be included in next year's report.

We have also done a surfacing upgrade to Shortlands car park in Sittingbourne.

All on-street waiting restrictions in the borough are included in one overarching Consolidated Traffic Regulation Order. When changes are made to any waiting restrictions, including introducing new restrictions, a legal Traffic Regulation Order Amendment must be completed. This is an extensive process which will generally take at least 12 months to complete due to legislation which includes consultation procedures.

Once a proposed Order is drafted, it must be advertised on site and in local newspapers for a minimum period of 21 days, to allow anyone the opportunity to submit a formal objection, or indeed an indication of support. Formal comments received are then submitted in a report to the Swale Joint Transportation Board to consider and for Members to make a recommendation as to whether the proposals should proceed, be amended or be abandoned. This recommendation is then endorsed by the appropriate committee.

In cases where the proposals are complex, deemed contentious or where several options are available, an informal consultation will be undertaken with residents to gauge views prior to drafting the Traffic Regulation Order. The results of the informal consultation are reported to the Swale JTB for consideration prior to progressing to a Traffic Order.

Once progressed, the Traffic Regulation Order is 'Sealed' by Kent County Council and is once again advertised in local newspapers and on our website stating the date in which the new Order will be effective.

A large proportion of our Traffic Orders cover disabled persons' parking bays, either formalising existing or removing redundant bays. Some other amendments which we have undertaken recently are listed below:-

- *County Member Funded Traffic Orders for New Restrictions for Highway Safety*
- *Amendments within existing Residents' Parking Schemes*
- *Extension of Residents' Parking Schemes to cover additional roads following petitions from residents*
- *Proposed Double Yellow Lines on Council owned Industrial Estate on behalf of Property Services*

We have completed a number of Traffic Regulation Orders where we have included new double yellow lines to improve highway safety and traffic movements, working with Kent County Council.

Civil Parking Enforcement Finance

Under section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, the council are required to keep an account of income and expenditure relating to on-street parking places; as well as income from and expenditure relating to our functions as enforcement authority.

This includes all income and expenditure related to on-street parking and income from Penalty Charge Notices in respect of off-street parking places, but not income from ordinary car park charges nor any other expenditure in car parks.

Section 55(4) outlines the purposes for which any surplus in the parking account can be used. It also provides for the making good of any deficit in the parking account from the general fund, and for surpluses to be used to repay the general fund for any charges to that fund in the previous four years or may be carried forward.

Local authorities may under the powers of section 35 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, impose charges for parking in car parks provided under section 32 or 33(4) of that Act; and under sections 45 and 46 of the 1984 Act, charge for parking at on-street parking places. Full details of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 Section 55 can be found at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/section/55>

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 sets out under section 55 how any collective surplus can be used:

- Make good the Parking CPE fund of any amount charged to that fund in the 4 years immediately preceding the financial year in question;
- Meeting all or any part of the cost of the provision by the local authority of off-street car parks (e.g. resurfacing, relining, lighting etc).

If it appears to the local authority that the provision in their area of further off-street car parks parking is unnecessary or undesirable, any surplus may be used for the following purposes:

- Meeting costs incurred, whether by the local authority or by some other person, in the provision or operation of, or of facilities for, public passenger transport services
- The purposes of a highway or road improvement project in the local authority's area.

Off Street Income	2021-22	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Pay & Display income	(1,508,481)	(2,242,051)	(2,325,880)	(2,551,022)
Season Ticket income	(25,936)	(28,036)	(28,532)	(35,959)
Off-Street Penalty Charge Notice income	(271,918)	(280,447)	(281,967)	(298,263)
EV charging income	(4,550)	(17,026)	(48,555)	(47,669)
Wayleaves/Rents/licences income	(325)	(325)	(2,774,753)	(325)
Total income	(1,811,210)	(2,567,886)	(2,685,259)	(2,942,962)
Total Expenditure	1,579,902	1,349,194	1,337,493	1,390,018
On Street Income	2021-22	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024-2025
Pay & Display income	<i>*No on-street Pay & Display provision in Swale</i>			
Parking permit income	(138,441)	(132,468)	(96,084)	(97,706)
On-Street Penalty Charge Notice income	(260,858)	(247,391)	(281,457)	(323,297)
Visitor parking voucher income	(2,319)	(8,233)	(51,992)	(53,152)
Suspended parking income	(9,477)	(398,205)	(8,303)	(11,505)
Total income	(411,054)	(398,205)	(437,841)	(485,661)
Total Expenditure	395,384	449,014	447,100	486,607

* These figures are not the Civil Enforcement account calculation and items in the table would need to be moved in order to make that calculation. These also do not include SBC staffing costs.

*

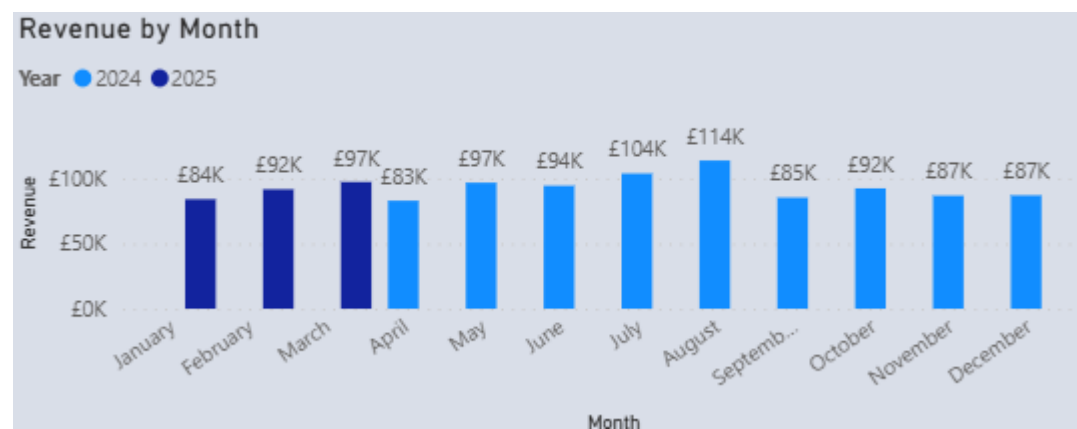
Statistical Information

	2022 – 2023			2023 – 2024			2024-25		
	On Street	Off Street	Total	On Street	Off Street	Total	On Street	Off Street	Total
No. of High level PCNs	4885	444	5329	5582	437	6019	6831	462	7293
No. of Low level PCNs	2934	12181	15115	3228	11083	14311	3507	11968	15475
Total number of PCNs	7819	12625	20444	8810	11520	20330	10338	12430	22766
Number of PCNs paid at discounted rate	4578	7078	11656	5126	6908	12034	5831	7264	13095
Number of PCNs paid at non-discounted rate	1179	1432	2611	1462	1555	3017	1618	1526	3144
Total number of PCNs paid	5757	8510	14267	6588	8463	15051	7449	8790	16239
Total number of appeals received	5252			5296			5950		
Total number of PCNs registered with Traffic Enforcement Centre	1045	1092	2137	1310	1008	2318	1347	1857	3204
Number of cases referred to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal	5	18	23	14	10	24	10	5	15
Number of cases rejected by the Traffic Penalty Tribunal	0	8	8	9	8	17	3	3	6

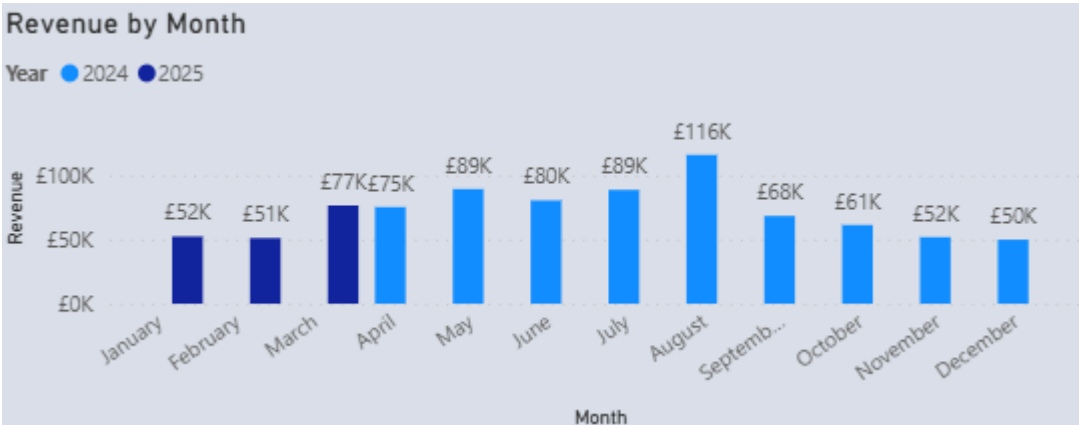
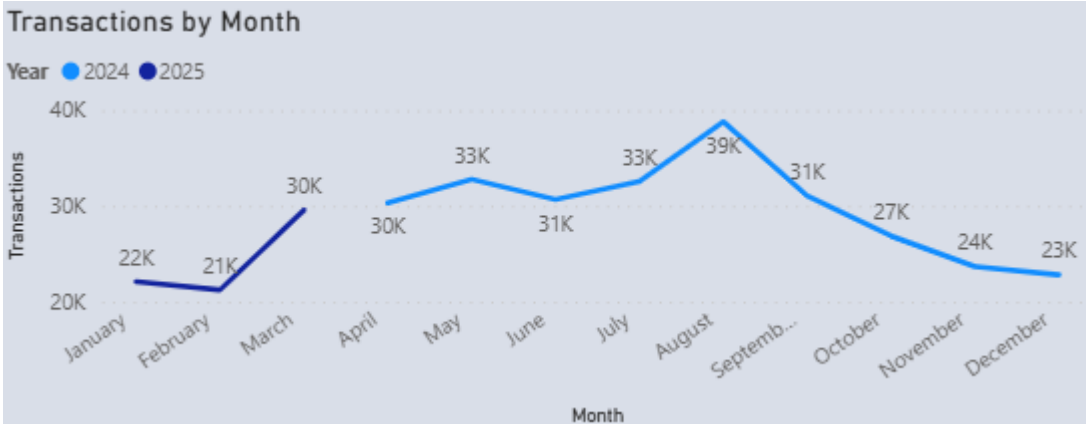
	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024	2024-2025
Total number of resident permits issued	2875	2174	2241
Total number of visitor permits issued	4255	4726	4832
Total number of season tickets issued	84	151	91
Total number of business permits issued	116	97	113
No. of school patrols	1226	1147	1227
No. of PCNs at School visits	180	183	166
No. of vehicles moved during School visits	2590	2480	3226
Total number of abuse incidents towards CEOs	678	1002	1209

Appendix 1 - Transactions and income by town

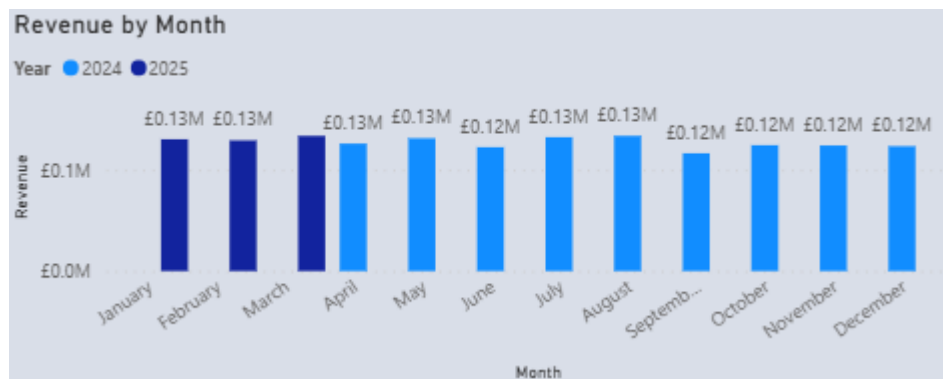
Faversham



Sheppey

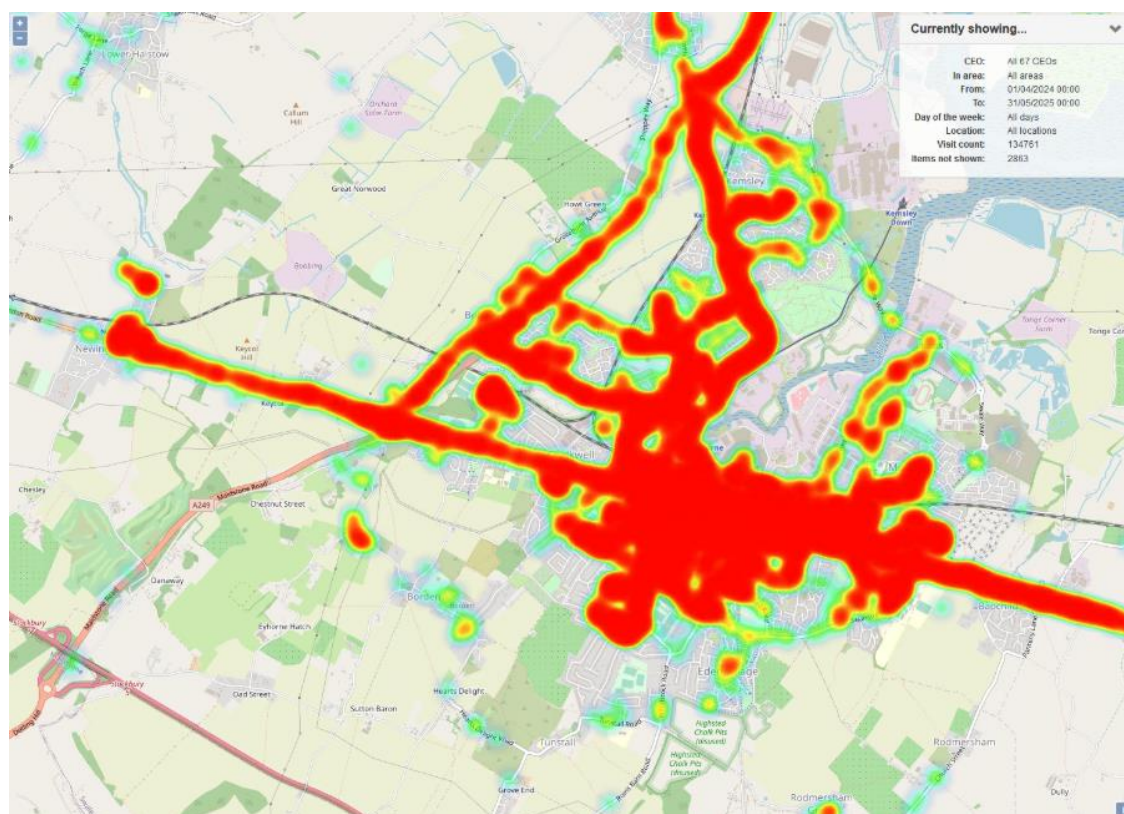


Sittingbourne

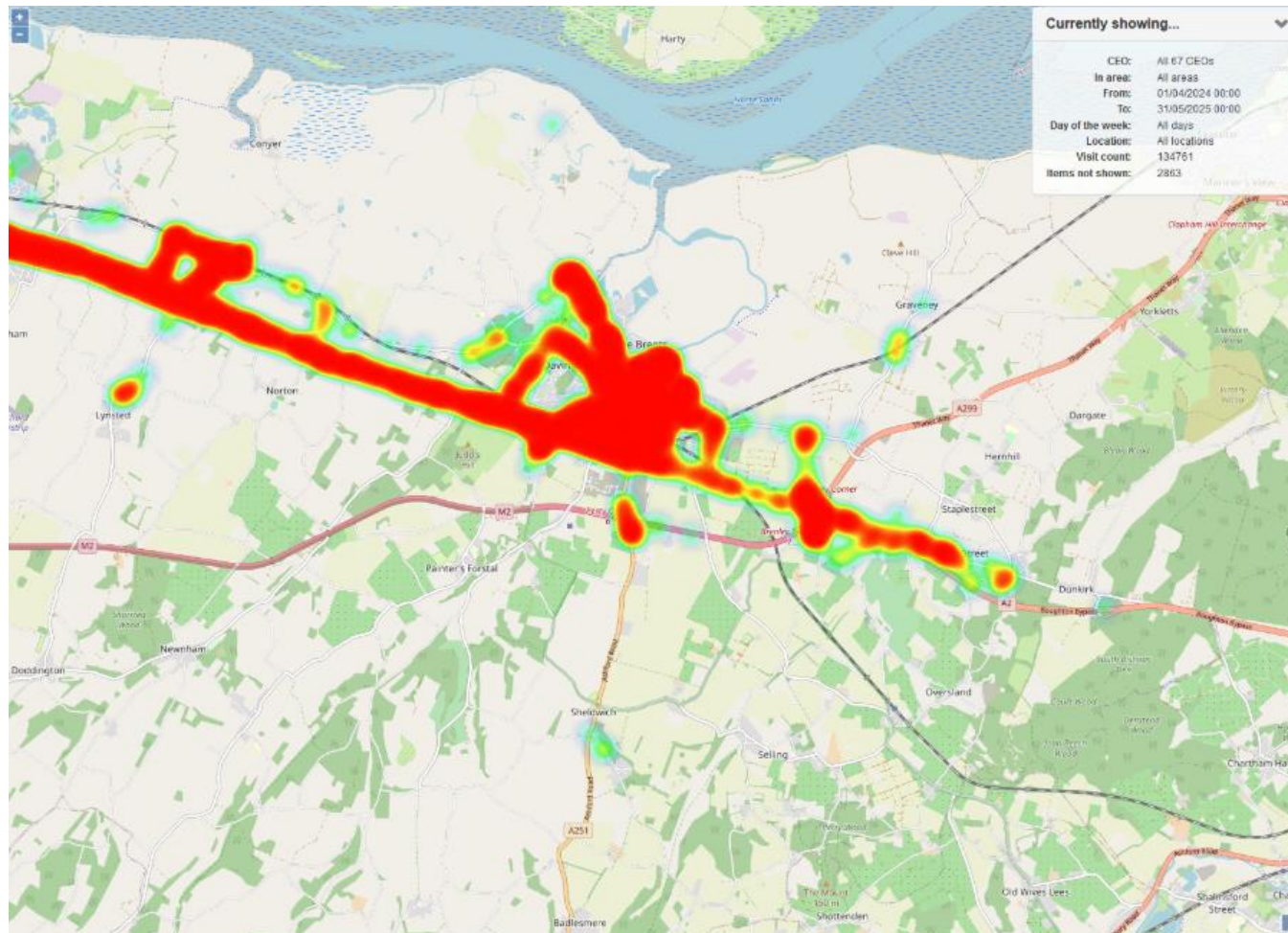


Appendix 2 - Heat maps of PCNs by location and enforcement hours deployed

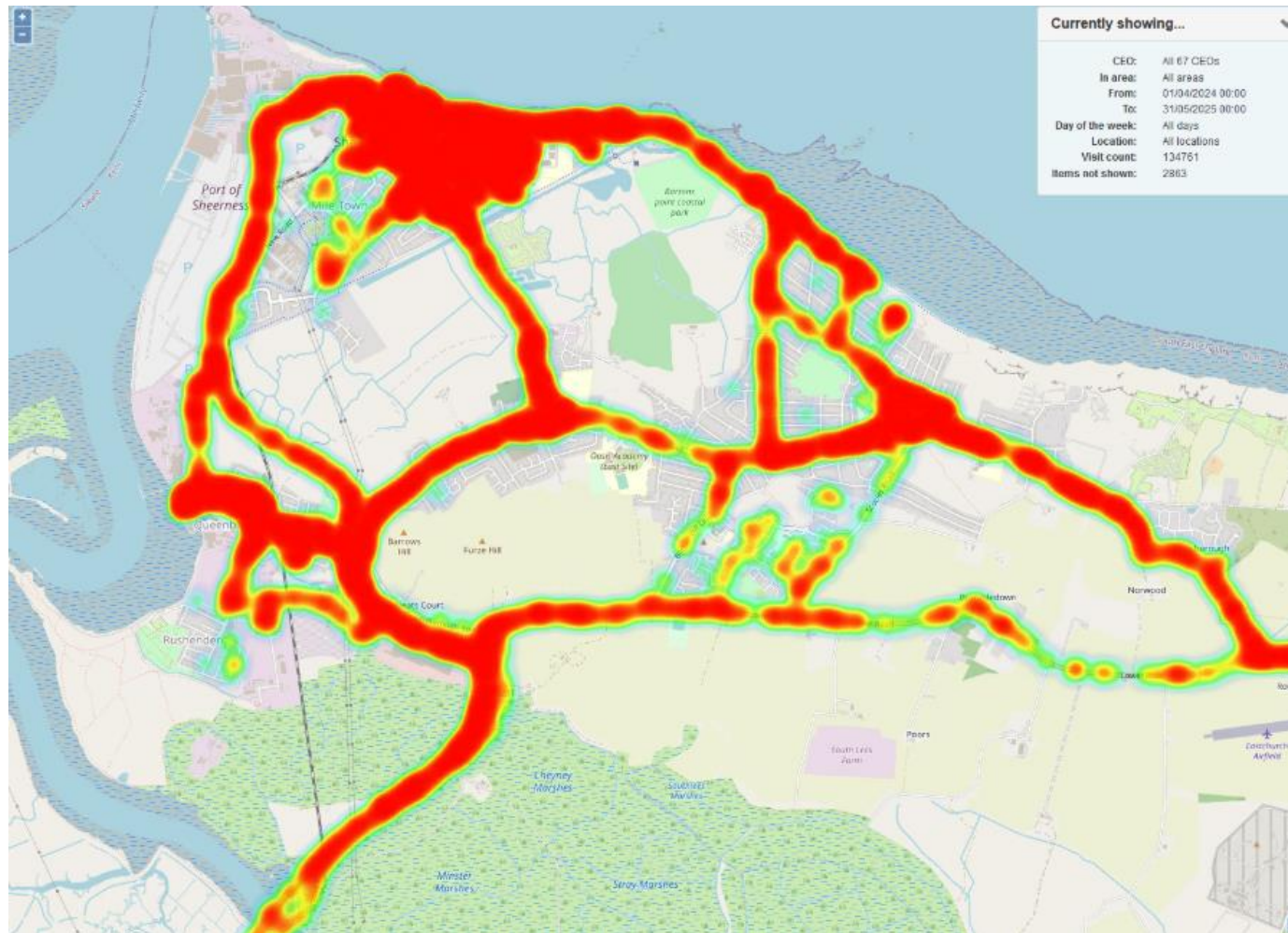
SWALE DEPLOYMENT MAPS – Sittingbourne



SWALE DEPLOYMENT MAPS - Faversham & Teynham



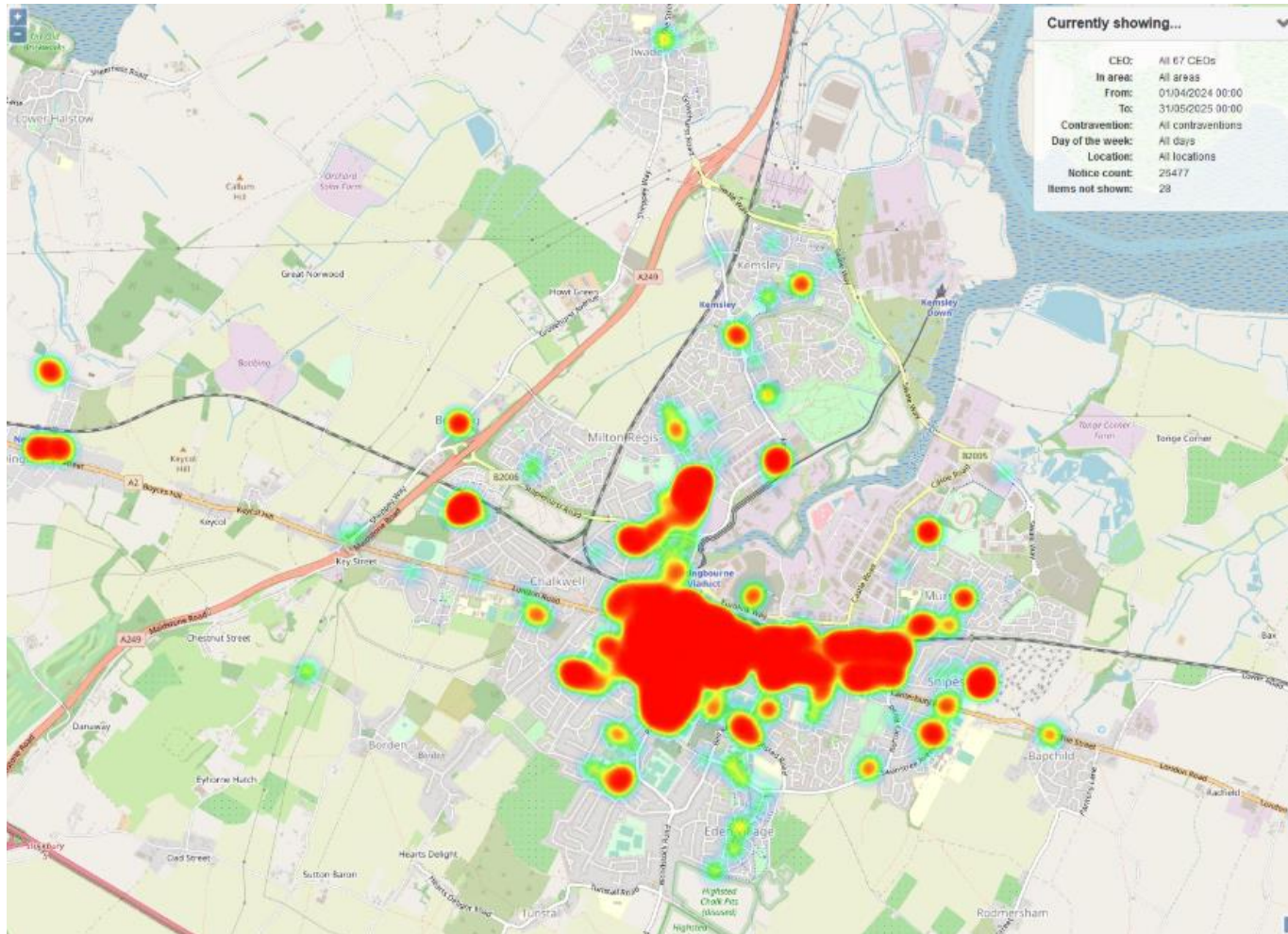
SWALE DEPLOYMENT MAPS – Sheerness



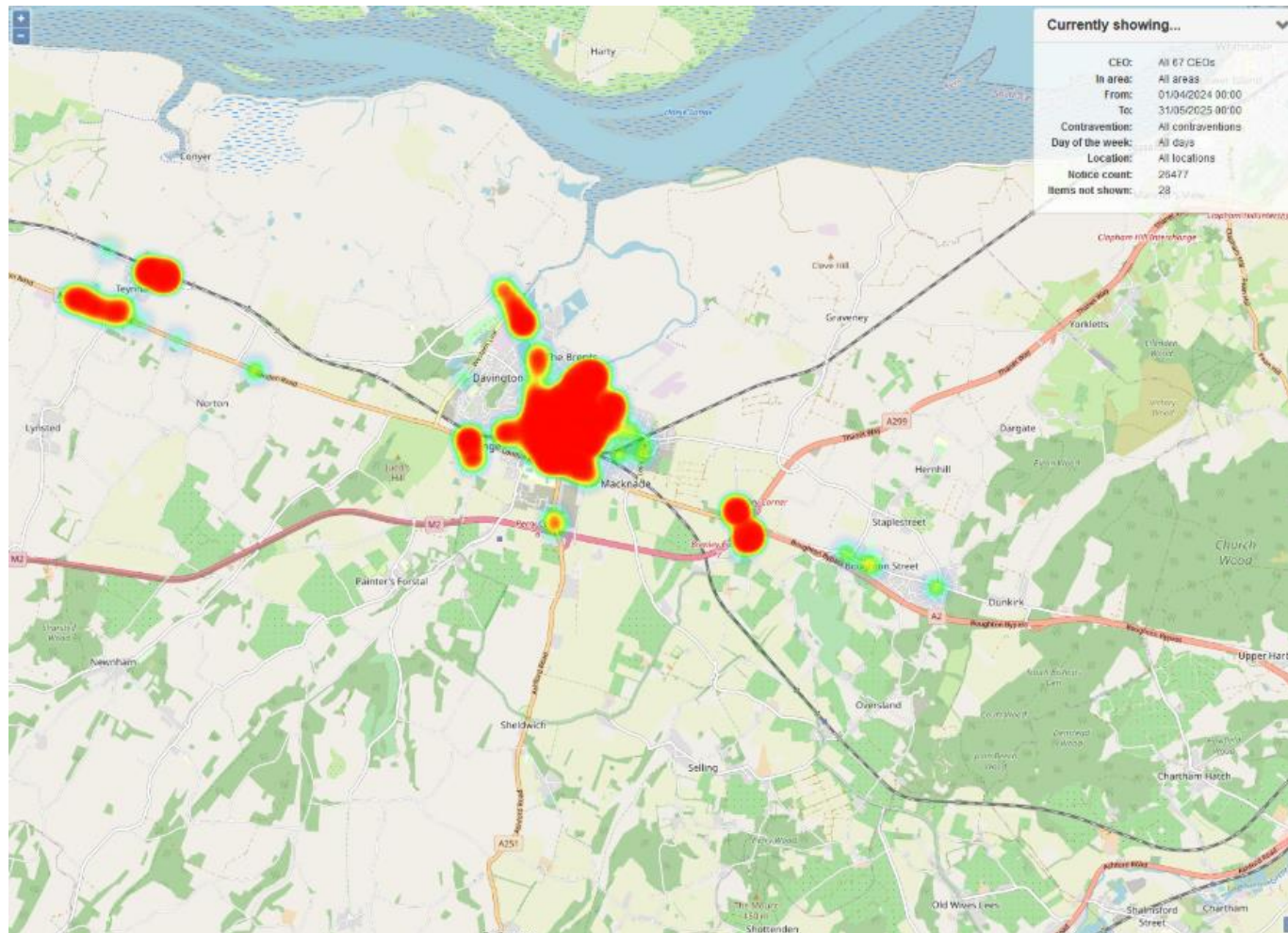
SWALE DEPLOYMENT MAPS – Leysdown & Eastchurch



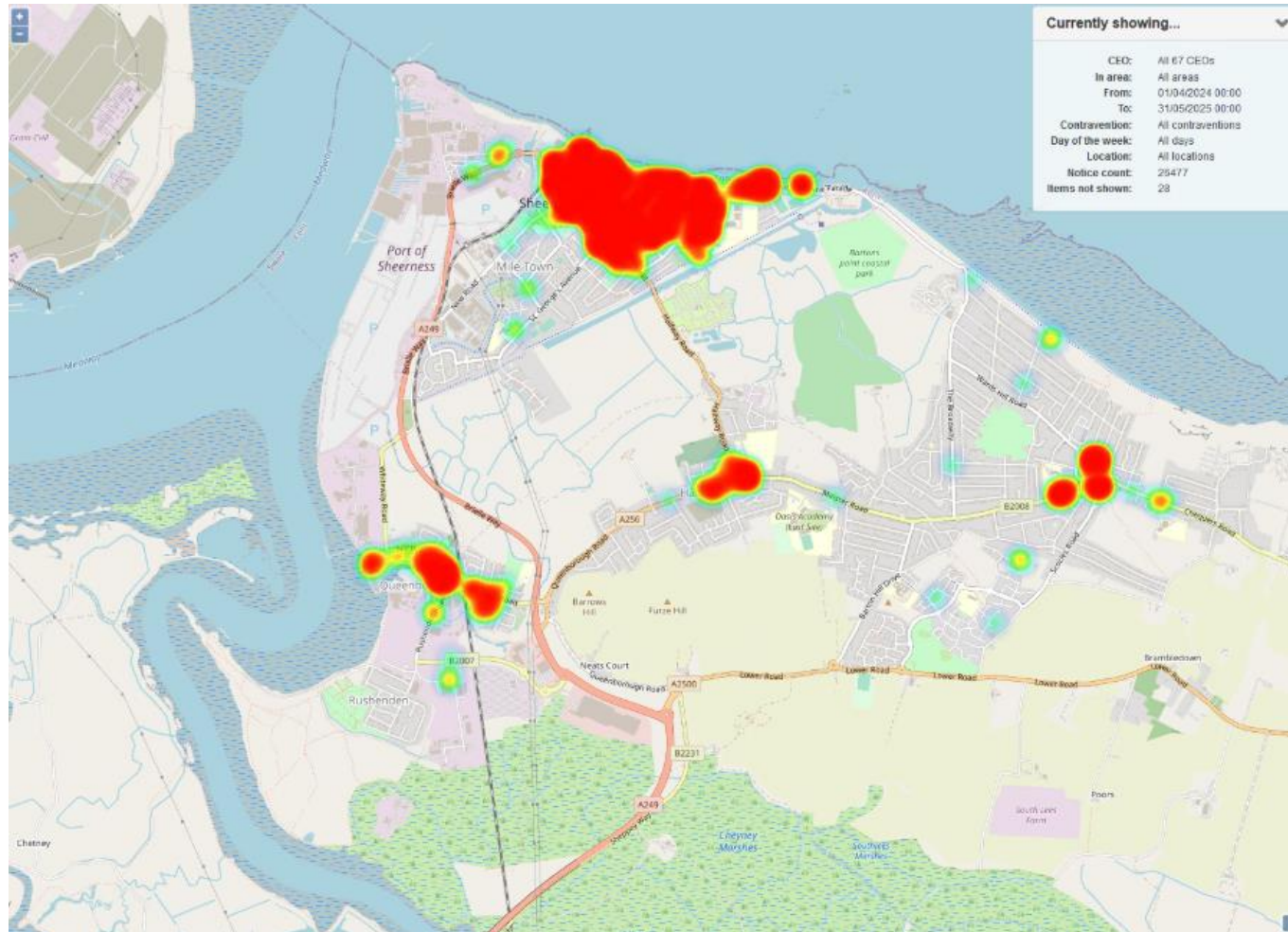
SWALE PCN MAPS – Sittingbourne



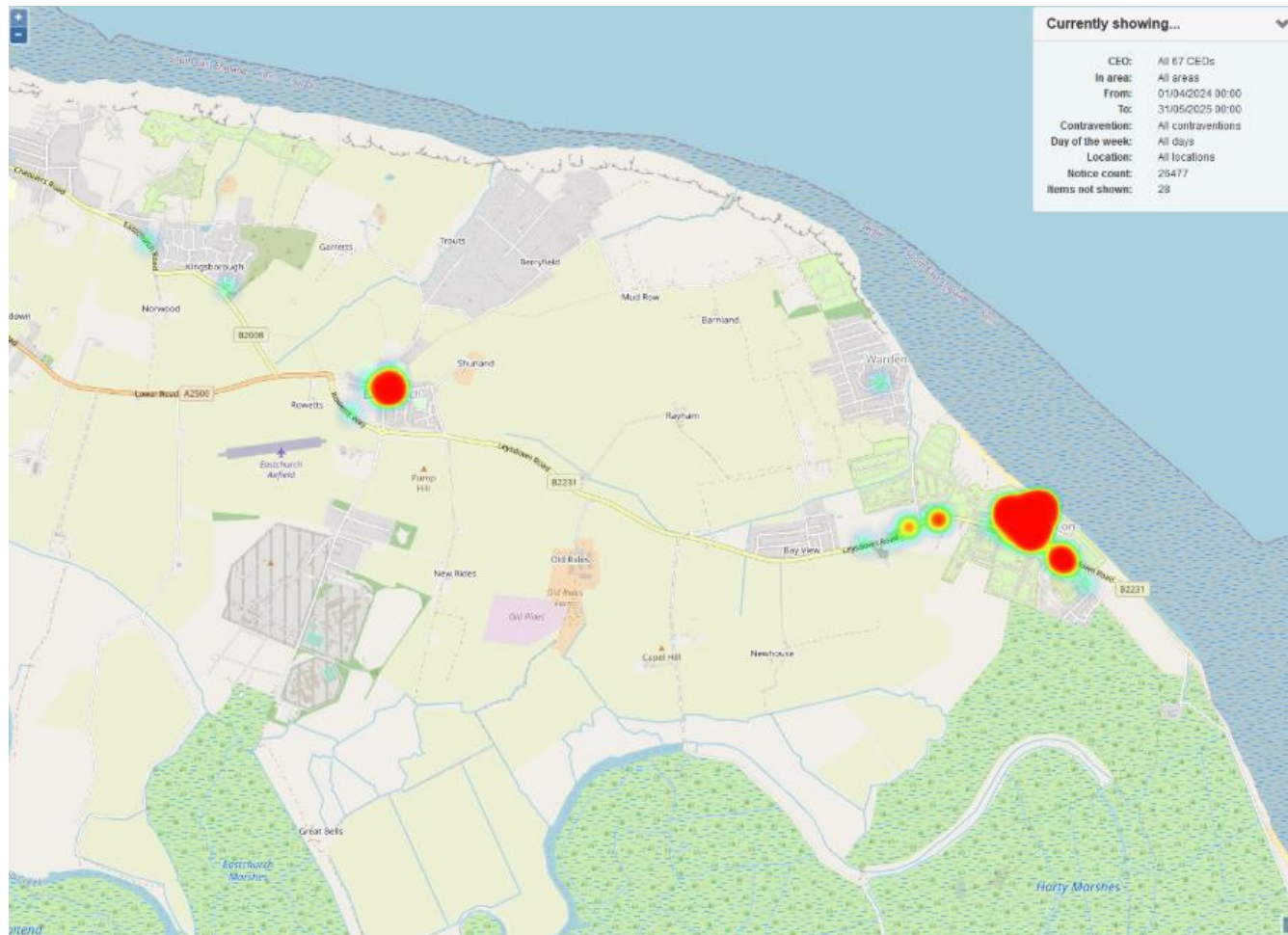
SWALE PCN MAPS - Faversham & Teynham



SWALE PCN MAPS – Sheerness



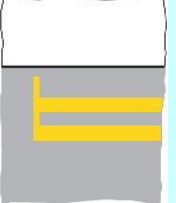
SWALE PCN MAPS – Leysdown & Eastchurch

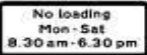
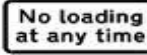
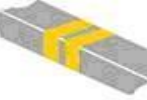


Appendix 3 - Car parks with highest EV patronage



Appendix 4 – Handy guide on who can enforce what?

Picture	Parking Offence Descriptions	Police	Parking Services
	Parking obstructions – parking where the vehicle is causing an obstruction to either other road users or pedestrians i.e. parking too close to a junction where there are no active yellow line restrictions.	✓	
	Blocking access to the highway from a private driveway Vehicles that are parked across a private driveway of a property that prevents the motorist of the property from gaining access to the highway where there are no active yellow line restrictions.	✓	
	Pavement parking – parking on or part on the footway where there are no active yellow lines in the road (this includes unmarked roads and all other restrictions i.e. bus stops, zigzag lines etc.)	✓	
	Pavement parking – parking on or part on the footway where there ARE active yellow lines where the vehicle is parked.		✓
	White zigzag lines by pedestrian crossings	✓	✓
	Double Yellow Lines – along the edge of the road mean no waiting at any time. However, you may stop to allow passengers to board or alight. Loading and unloading is also allowed, unless there are loading restrictions in place. No signs are needed for a permanent restriction of this kind.		✓
	Single Yellow Lines – along the edge of the road mean you can't wait during the times shown on the adjacent sign. However, you may stop to allow passengers to board or alight. Loading and unloading is also allowed, unless there are loading restrictions in place.		✓

 	Limited Waiting Bays – are shown by bay markings and signs that indicate the maximum amount of time that you may park in the bay. The signs also state a 'No Return' period, which is the length of time during which you are not permitted to return to the parking bay.		✓
Picture	Parking Offence Descriptions	Police	Parking Services
	Taxi Ranks – You must not park in a Taxi Rank during its period of operation. The period of operation will be shown on the adjoining signage. An accompanying sign will also indicate the number of taxis that may park on the rank.		✓
 	Goods Vehicles Loading Bays – are white 'bays' marked with the words 'Loading only' and a sign with the white on blue 'trolley' symbol. An adjacent sign will show the times when the bay is in operation. If no times are indicated the bay is in operation at all times. Vehicles may not park here if they are not loading or unloading.		✓
   	Loading Restrictions – are shown by yellow lines on the kerb or at the edge of the carriageway. Double yellow lines on the kerb mean no loading or unloading at any time. Single yellow lines on the kerb mean no loading during the times shown on the adjacent sign.		✓
	Bus Stop Clearways – you must not stop in a bus stop clearway during its period of operation. The period of operation will be shown on the adjoining signage. Buses must only use stops to allow passengers to board and alight vehicles. Bus Stands are provided for buses to park for longer than the period taken for boarding and alighting, to maintain a timetable or to change crews. No other vehicle should park within the Bus Stand during its period of operation.		✓

	Pay & Display Bays - To use these bays you must purchase a ticket and display it clearly in the windscreen of the vehicle or pay using the RingGo App. Disabled badge holders may park free of charge in most car parks (check local signage)		✓
	Parking Bays for Specific Use – you must not park in parking spaces reserved for specific users, such as Blue Badge holders, unless you are entitled to do so. Signs will indicate who is allowed to park and when the restrictions are in operation.		✓
	Permit Only Zones – parking for permit holders only in the street or streets beyond this sign, during the times shown.		✓
	School Keep Clear Markings – These can mainly be found outside of schools, to ensure that children can see and be seen clearly when crossing the road. The markings indicate the length of road where you should not stop, not even to pick up or set down children or other passengers. Where there is an upright sign, there is a mandatory prohibition of stopping during the times shown.		✓

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Council/Committee/SMT/Other Meeting	
Meeting Date	27th January 2026
Report Title	Provision of Minor Maintenance and Cleansing of Public Conveniences Contract – delegated authority to award contract
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Alistair Andrews – Environment Services Manager
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. The Environment Services and Climate Change Committee delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal to award the contract to the winning bid. This is a 5+1 year contract.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress of the public convenience contract and to request that authority be delegated to the Section 151 officer and Head of Legal to award the contract to the winning bid as determined by the tender scoring process.
- 1.2 By allowing the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal to award the contract it will enable a longer period for mobilisation should there be a change in service providers. The current contract expires on 31st March 2026.

2 Background

- 2.1 Reports on Public Conveniences were discussed at the Environment Services and Climate Change committee in July 2025 and November 2025. These reports considered options and Members agreed to re-tender for a service provider at the end of the current contract. This followed a comprehensive public consultation that asked residents and Cllrs about the service they wanted.
- 2.2 In November 2025 the Environment Services and Climate Change committee agreed to close three public convenience facilities and to pursue the transfer for a number of others. Officers consequently drafted a revised specification, using the consultation feedback and Member discussions, to advertise the opportunity for an external company to provide the services at the end of the current contract. The advert was published on the procurement portal on 13th January 2026 and it will close on 12th February 2026.

- 2.3 In parallel with the opportunity being advertised, officers have continued discussions with other organisations such as Town and Parish Councils, to consider possible asset transfers. These facilities were identified in the previous reports as:
- 1.Oare Gunpowder Works Visitors Centre
 - 2.Central Car Park, Faversham
 - 3.Rose Street, Sheerness
 - 4.Beachfields, Sheerness
 - 5.Leysdown Beach Services
 - 6.The Spinney, Leysdown
 - 7.Queenborough Park
- 2.4 At the time of writing this report, discussions are ongoing with other organisations to transfer any assets. The advertised contract is therefore split into 'lots' and does include options on removing from the contract/closing some of these facilities proposed for transfer, should this be agreed by Members at future meetings. One lot is for toilet facilities not proposed for closure and would be for 5+1 years and a second lot allows the Council to remove the remaining facilities at shorter notice. Until such a time, the intention is for the new service provider to continue servicing all facilities, apart from the three agreed for closure.
- 2.5 Once the contract submission closing date has passed, submissions will be reviewed and scored by a panel of three officers as is normal through our Commissioning and Procurement Strategy. Accepted bids will be scored using the standard process based upon 60% price and 40% quality. This will result in a single winning bid based upon pre-agreed criteria. Award of the contract to the winning bidder is usually undertaken at committee simply due to the value of the contract.
- 2.6 The current service provision contract expires on 31/03/26. The new contract is planned to start on 01/04/26.
- 2.7 After a preliminary market engagement exercise at the end of last year where interested companies give their views on our service specification, it was decided that the new service will merge two previous contracts. One contract was for the opening & closing and the provision of minor maintenance and the cleansing of public conveniences and the other contract was for delivering a hygiene service at these facilities (this involved tasks such as emptying nappy and sanitary bins). The majority of industry responses suggested to merge the two areas of work into one as this would offer best value.
- 2.8 A summary of the contract facilities and opening times are as follows:

Table 1 to show opening/closing times of public conveniences

Public Convenience	Attendance	Opening times/ Days and Deep Cleans
--------------------	------------	-------------------------------------

Central Avenue at Sittingbourne, ME10 4BX	Partial (3 hrs a day)	07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Saturday and 09.00 – 18.00 on Sunday and Bank Hols – deep clean every six months
Milton Creek Country Park, Sittingbourne, ME10 2DE	Unattended	07.00 and 16:00 Mon - Sunday between 1 st October and 31st March. 07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Sunday from 1 April - 30 September - deep clean annually.
King George V Playing fields toilet, Sittingbourne ME10 1QX	Unattended	07.00 and 16:00 Mon - Sunday between 1st October and 31st March. 07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Sunday from 1 April - 30 September. Deep Clean annually.
Park Road, Faversham, ME13 8ES	Unattended	07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Sunday. Deep Clean annually.
Faversham Recreation ground Sports Changing Facilities (ME13 8ES) including overnight clean ready for Sunday play. Descaling shower heads/ taps (quarterly). WC, Urinals, showers, sinks, changing rooms, and community room, kitchen and toilet.	Unattended	Sept – April (inclusive) subject to extension if required by extended season. Weekends - Sat and Sun and Bank Holidays usage 9am – 5.30 pm. Clean after each event (day). Annual deep clean prior to start of season. The Community room, kitchen and toilet require cleansing twice weekly all year round (days to be agreed with Authority's Contract Manager). Changing rooms to be checked weekly and cleansed if required from May – August.
Bartons Point, Isle of Sheppey ME12 2BX. This includes the toilets, showers and the sluice room. Descaling shower heads/ taps (quarterly).	Unattended	07.00 and 16:00 Mon - Sunday between 1 st October and 31st March. 07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Sun from 1 April - 30 September. Deep Clean June and late August.
Minster Leas public toilet ME12 2NL	Partial – 3 hours a day during KCC school summer holidays. Also 3 hours a day at weekends and Bank Holidays from 1 st June to the last Sunday in September.	07.00 and 16:30 Mon - Sunday between 1 st October and 31st March. 07.00 and 20.00 1 April - 30 September. Deep Clean annually.
Rose Street at Sheerness, ME12 1UA	Partial (5.5 hrs a day)	07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Saturday and 09.00 - 18.00 on Sunday and Bank Hols. Deep Clean every six months

Leysdown Beach Services, Grove Avenue, ME12 4QE	Partial (6.25 hours a day)	09.00 to 18.00 from Good Friday until the last Sunday in September and Saturdays and Sundays throughout the remainder of September and October (the external toilet at Leysdown Beach is to be open from 18.00 until 09.00 during July and August. The Contractor is required to cleanse this toilet each day that it is open for public use. The whole facility is to have a deep clean once in June and once in early September).
Beachfields, Sheerness, ME12 1RE	Unattended	07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Sunday (including Bank Holidays). Deep Clean annually.
Central Car Park at Faversham, ME13 8PN	Partial (6 hrs a day)	07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Saturday and 09.00 – 18.00 on Sunday and Bank Hols. Deep Clean every six months.
The Spinney, Leysdown, ME12 4QX	Unattended	07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Sunday (including Bank Holidays). Deep clean annually.
Queenborough Park, Queenborough, ME11 5AG	Unattended	07.00 and 19.00 Mon – Sunday (including Bank Holidays). To include quarterly descaling of the shower.
Oare Gunpowder Works Visitor Centre, Oare. ME13 7UD	Unattended	Mid-March to Mid-November - Sat, Sun & Bank Holidays 9.30am to 16.30pm (exact dates to be agreed but likely to be middle weekend of month, inclusive). Deep clean July.

NB – The advertised contract also specifies some hygiene duties at Swale Borough Council offices and civic buildings such as Swale House.

- 2.9 The award of contract is followed by a mandatory 8 working day ‘standstill’ period. This allows unsuccessful bidders time to review and possibly challenge decisions prior to contract signing.
- 2.10 In a potential situation where the service provider changes after contract award, there will need to be a transfer of existing staff under TUPE legislation. This will take time for service providers to complete in a sensitive manner. Allowing the section 151 officer and Head of Legal to award the contract will allow a longer period for service providers to undertake that process as sensitively as possible.
- 2.11 Gaining the delegation does not mean the officers have the ability to make unusual decisions. The tender process follows a technical formula and officers will only be able to select the winning bidder or not proceed with award of contract, as would be the case if a committee report was provided for Members.

Furthermore, this is only possible within existing budgets. Any deviation from this would need sign off from Policy and Resources committee and Full Council.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Environment Services and Climate Change Committee delegate authority to the Section 151 officer (Director of Resources) and Head of Legal to award the contract to the winning bid.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 To use the existing meeting schedules for Environment Services and Climate Change Committee and award the contract at committee on 17/03/26. This option leaves less time for contract mobilisation after the standstill period as the current contract expires at the end of March 2026 and would potentially impact the service if not completed. The winning bid is determined through a pre-defined scoring process. As members have already agreed to re-tender for this service then the award of contract is an administrative task which could be completed by officers if Members support the recommendation.
- 4.2 To arrange an extra-ordinary committee meeting to award the contract. This process still requires scheduling and planning and the writing of reports and minutes. The time spent on this process could be better used by contractors to mobilise the contract after the standstill period. The winning bid is determined through a pre-defined scoring process. As members have already agreed to re-tender for this service then the award of contract is an administrative task which could be completed by officers. The benefits achieved from the new contract, such as social value can be reported to committee later in the process.
- 4.3 Do Nothing – this will result in a failure to award the contract and either the continued operation of a service without a contract in place; or the closure of public convenience facilities as there is no operator to run them as the contract has ended.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 There has been public consultations and discussions at various forums as part of the overall ongoing review of public conveniences. This is well detailed in the previous committee report on 12/11/25.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The proposed way forward will support several Corporate Plan objectives. These include 'Running the Council' by working within our resources and delivering in a transparent and efficient way.

Financial, Resource and Property	At Full Council in February 2025, Members agreed to reduce public conveniences budgets by £100K. In November 2025, Members voted to close three facilities to help bridge the gap between costs and available budget. However, future contract bid prices are unknown as yet. External factors such as inflation, minimum wage increases and the changes to National Insurance payments will likely impact prices. Service costs will be clearer after 13/02/26. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 as amended ("TUPE") do apply to this contract and the implications of this have been addressed in the procurement process.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide public conveniences. The contract will be drawn up using the Council's current standard Terms and Conditions. The Council will also need to be assured that the outgoing and incoming service providers have complied with their consultation obligations under TUPE where this is relevant.
Crime and Disorder	Public conveniences are partly attended where there is a higher risk of crime / vandalism if unattended. Future investment needs to 'design out' problems. Evidence of this can be seen in recent new build toilet provision.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The closure of several public conveniences reduces the impact of water wastage and emissions from Council and Contractor operations. Any investment plans should look at reducing emissions from carbon reduction mechanisms such as LED lighting, timed lighting, reduced water usage etc. The future contract requires the use of environmentally friendly products and a focus on environmental improvements.
Health and Wellbeing	The provision of public conveniences can bring health and wellbeing benefits to members of the public. Residents with health issues may rely on public toilets when making decisions to visit local areas.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	Toilet provision is important to some vulnerable residents. Public conveniences may be particularly beneficial for older people, those with disabilities, pregnant women and children.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	If the winning bid is over budget, then there will need to be further discussions with the relevant Member committees. The current contract expires on 31st March 2026 with no further extension clauses. Allowing the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal to award the contract, it will enable longer for handover and mobilisation to

	undertake sensitive issues such as TUPE (should a new contractor be appointed).
Equality and Diversity	None
Privacy and Data Protection	None
Local Government reorganisation	Part of the discussions with Members at previous committees has been about transferring these key community assets to local town and parish councils. This will potentially safeguard the facilities in the future with local decision makers better understanding the needs of the community the facility serves.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

None

8 Background Papers

10/07/25 - Environment Services and Climate Change Committee Report on Public Conveniences

<https://ws.swale.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=356&MID=4315>

12/11/25 - Environment Services and Climate Change Committee Report on Public Conveniences

<https://ws.swale.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=356&MId=4316&Ver=4>

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