



ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY
& IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Kent Community Foundation is embarking on a new environmental strategy that recognises many social issues are intertwined with environmental impact. Understanding the potential future impacts of warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers is crucial for the future prosperity, environmental quality, and health and well-being of our local communities.

Changes in our natural environment have been proven to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in society and the correlation between poverty in local communities and the environment is only likely to become stronger.

As one of the largest grant makers in Kent we have an important part to play in combating these challenges. We believe that local community action can be at the heart of delivering solutions that not only minimise the impact on the environment, but also offer additional benefits that people and local communities can reap.

As place-based grant makers, Community Foundations are pioneers of the statement ‘think global, act local’ and in partnership with donors and the local voluntary and community sector we can facilitate dynamic change in our own ‘back yard’.

Our research also highlighted that only 4% of all donations in the UK goes to environmental charities. As an organisation who connects people who care with local causes that matter this is an opportunity for us to increase this percentage in Kent and Medway by providing opportunities for our fund-holders and supporters to fund local projects through the creation of our new Environmental Fund.

We will adopt the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and include these in all of our activities across our grant making and business operations as well as our investment strategy.

As a charity we believe it is right and proper that our investment strategy aligns with our broader charitable values. This responds to the national objective of net zero carbon by 2050 set by HM Government (and monitored by the UK Committee on Climate Change), and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals which have been widely adopted in business and investment circles and now constitute best practice as defined by our umbrella body, UK Community Foundations. For this strategy in particular, our work will be contributing positively to Goals: 13 ‘Climate Action’ and 12 ‘Sustainable Consumption and Production’.

OVERVIEW

It is acknowledged that we are at the beginning of this strategy and therefore the implementation plans will be rolled out in four phases.

There four phases are:

1. Philanthropic – providing a sustainable source of income for our new environmental grant making plans.
2. Sustainable investment strategy - continuing the move to an sustainable and responsible investment portfolio in line with our charitable objects.
3. Grant making strategy – launching our new environment theme.
4. Organisational change – our operations and our policies.

OBJECTIVES

- Philanthropic:
 - Establish and grow a sustainable funding resource for the county by:
 - Enabling donors and funding partners to maximise the impact of their contributions and gain a greater degree of leverage and capacity than they would have been able to achieve individually through a contribution to our new Environmental Pooled Fund.
 - Using our fundraising influence to increase the amount of money donated to environmental projects in the county (only 4% of all donations in the UK go to environmental charities).
 - Informing, sharing and developing expertise and knowledge among donors and the local community of the range of positive environmental and social impacts achieved through supporting different types of environmental projects.
 - Encouraging corporate donors to engage through their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes.
 - Attracting and securing both endowment and flow-through donations.
- Sustainable Investment Strategy:
 - Move to a more sustainable and responsible investment portfolio in line with our charitable objects by:
 - Proactively assessing the risks and opportunities of a transition to a post carbon economy in our investment strategy and its implications on our total returns policy.
 - Instructing our investment managers to invest with environmental issues in mind, especially carbon footprint, sustainability and fossil fuels by using ESG screening methods
 - Communicating the benefits of moving to an ethical investment strategy to our fund-holders.
- Grant Making:
 - We will empower local communities to take action on local environmental issues leading to cumulative change by:
 - Creating an overriding grant making strategy that aligns with our three-year business plan and includes our new environmental theme and green emphasis.
 - Funding organisations who focus on education about global environmental issues in local communities. The criteria for this fund will be honed to ensure it is accessible to as wide an audience as possible.
 - Helping to increase knowledge of environmental project needs and best practice to our key stakeholders.
 - Mapping our progress against the relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Organisational:
 - Educate and Learn
 - Make opportunities for our trustees, staff, and stakeholders to learn more about the key causes and solutions associated with our changing environment.

- Communicate the importance of environmental issues to all staff and encourage a proactive approach to our own organisational behaviour.
- Communicate internally and externally our environmental policy and encourage feedback.

- Decarbonise our operations
 - Reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and office energy consumption.
 - Encourage staff to consider their carbon footprint when travelling for work.
 - Keeping printing to a minimum – asking panels/committees if they need papers and sending digital versions as the default stance.
 - Reduce the organisation’s level of waste production by reusing recycling and waste disposal initiatives.
 - Procure environmentally and socially responsible goods and services and seek to use quality local suppliers and services where possible.
 - Reduce the use of plastics in the office – identifying single use plastic consumption and finding alternatives.

- Report on progress
 - Routinely monitor the impact we have made and set targets for continuous improvements.
 - Identify relevant UN SDGs and incorporate their wording into policy