DAT4CTION in Kent, UK

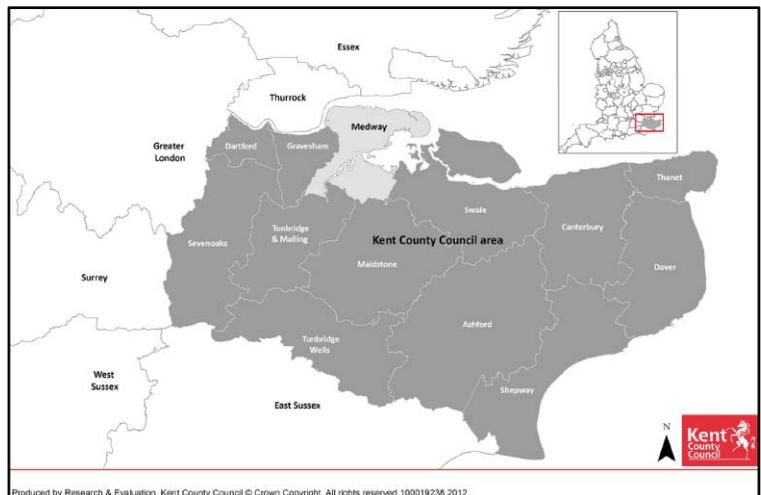# Data Sharing: Key Issues & Local Needs

Introduction

The main objective of the Data4Action project is to improve local authorities' access to energy data. Organizations from eleven different European countries participate in this project, which is co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme. This document summarizes the situation and objectives of Data4Action in Kent.

Objectives

The key objective for the county of Kent is to establish a central data and intelligence observatory (hub) that will underpin and support evidence based decision making, policy and project development for the county across environment and related energy, health and economic outcomes.

Sharing information on sustainable energy in Kent

Kent County Council (KCC) is a strategic local authority working in partnership with local authorities, public and private sector organisations across the county of Kent. There are already a number of ways that data and information is shared across these partners relating to some common environmental, social and economic interests.

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The Kent Environment Strategy and its delivery plan are important partnership documents for the county. They document the key challenges the county faces to its environment, health and wellbeing of residents and economy from environmental change and growth in population and infrastructure. To ensure that our priorities and actions are focussed and pragmatic we need to ensure that we take an evidenced based approach and continue to engage with a range of stakeholders from across the public, private and community sectors.

Some of the key interests regarding energy data relate to national targets on reduction in

greenhouse gas emissions and uptake of renewable sources of energy, which form part of a transition toward a low carbon society. This means that in the context of planned growth across the county additional low carbon and appropriate renewable energy infrastructure, as well an increase in uptake of energy efficiency initiatives, will be needed across the domestic, private and public sectors.

To support this, Data4Action is enabling KCC to address gaps in our knowledge where we need to support evidenced based decisions and influencing, for example around understanding our energy consumption and generation profile.

The latest revised version of the Kent Environment Strategy builds on previous work and raises as a priority the need to centrally collate an evidence base of data and information that can be used to develop and influence policy, projects and actions in a focussed and pragmatic approach.

Sources of information at local level

Data	Level data available at	Provider	Gap*
CO_2 emissions	County and local	Central Government (DECC), Local Authority energy usage including schools	• Sector based analysis and application
Fuel Poverty and energy data	County and local	Central Government and Local Authorities	• Central database of existing housing energy data
Renewable energy generation	County	OfGEM (energy regulator)	• Measure of renewable energy generated • Measure of number of installations
Air quality	County and local	Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership (KMAQP) – local authority network	• Transport related emissions • Health impacts

Main problems to overcome

A key gap for the county is ensuring that decision makers have access to clear and understandable data and information, providing key evidence for appropriate strategies, plans and actions. This challenge is being met through the Kent Environment Strategy where the first theme is dedicated to bridging our gaps in understanding our risks and opportunities, with a priority to develop a central evidence base that addresses key priorities to support decision makers. Development of this evidence base will be in collaboration across partners in Kent and Medway to ensure it addresses priorities for the County and enables evidence based decision making for improved energy efficiency and generation, supporting delivery towards national and EU targets in carbon reduction.

Two key problems to overcome are given below:

Resource: in a period of reducing resources how can the central evidence base be financed and maintained and developed into the future.

Perception: there can be misconceptions with renewable energy technology, how can the evidence base be used to mitigate this and how can it be used to support investment in long-term decisions and investments such as with district heating schemes.

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