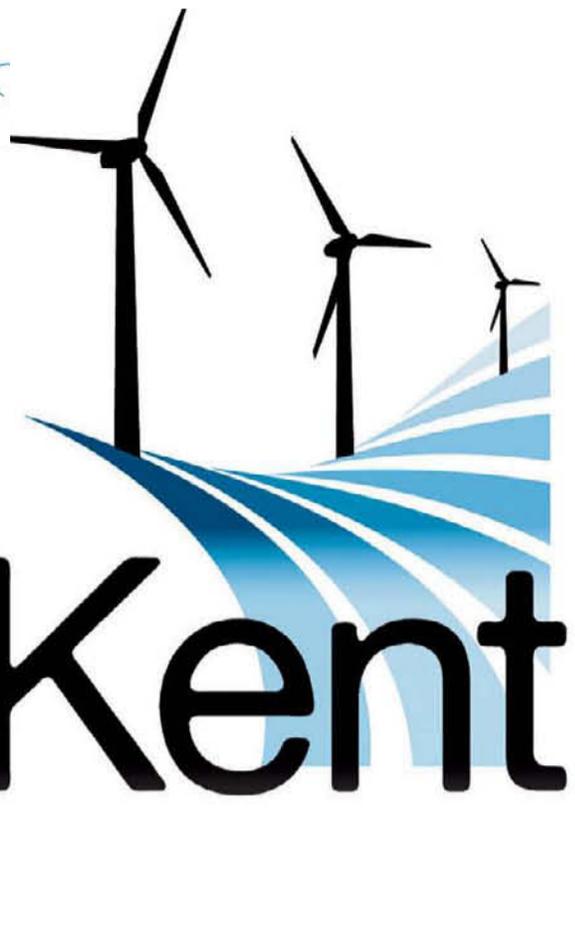


FOCUS ON GROWTH

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European Regional
Development Fund 2007-13



Low Carbon Kent

Energy saving equals growth

Growing the economy is one of the top priorities at Kent County Council (KCC), with energy efficiency a key way of helping this happen.

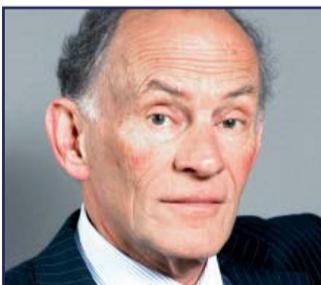
The council is driving to reduce dependence on natural resources and support the Government in achieving its target to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050.

The low carbon sector is still showing the greatest potential for business growth.

It employs almost 25,000 people and is growing at between 4% and 5% annually.

To help Kent businesses make the most of this fantastic opportunity, KCC set up the Low Carbon Kent (LCK) network to help companies become more environmentally sustainable.

Businesses that join the network, especially those with new low-carbon services and technologies, have access to finance, get assistance to help reduce utility bills and costs by managing their



David Brazier, KCC Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

environmental performance, get advice on how to be legally compliant, and have opportunities to network with organisations.

Low Carbon Kent also commission research to help businesses understand the low carbon opportunities available and how to take advantage.

Since launching in 2010, more than 1,400 businesses have joined Low Carbon Kent, with more than 500 of them being certified to the Steps-to-Environmental



Management (STEM) scheme.

STEM enables businesses to put in place a simple Environmental Management System (EMS) that meets the needs of their clients while helping them save money.

On average, businesses the council have worked with have saved around £2,000 annually through doing things such as reducing waste, implementing energy saving lighting and driving more efficiently.

In October 2013, the council secured £1m of grants to support low carbon businesses to develop or deliver a service or product.

So far grants of £225,000 have been given to 20 businesses, unlocking £380,000 of private funding and creating 28 jobs.

This supplement showcases the businesses involved in the Low Carbon Kent network.

KCC Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Cllr David Brazier said: "Low Carbon Kent continues to grow, demonstrating that more businesses in Kent are realising the benefits of being sustainable. This is not just a nice thing to do, it also makes financial sense."

"As a council, and with the launch of our grants scheme, we will continue to support these businesses to make sure we have the skills, finance and policies to make Kent a smart, low carbon and resource efficient county."



Chris Seamark of LC+

£1m in grants for businesses

Businesses across Kent and Medway can get grant funding from Low Carbon Kent's latest offering Low Carbon Plus (LC+), which has £1m available.

The integrated programme of financial assistance and business support aims to increase demand for low carbon technology, increase efficiency and grow businesses in the low carbon and environmental goods and services (LCEGS) sector.

LC+ also offers grants of up to £20,000 to businesses who provide a low carbon or environmental product or service, such as solar panel installers and sustainable tourism providers. The grant is only available to Low Carbon Kent Network members.

This project is supported by funding from the European Regional Development Fund, which is managed by the Department for Communities & Local Government and being delivered by Kent County Council.

LC+ Project Manager Chris Seamark said: "Despite Kent having a relatively strong LCEGS sector, businesses are still facing challenges of securing finance for their innovative products, and encouraging consumers to opt for eco-friendly products."

"LC+ aims to meet both these challenges by raising awareness of new green products and providing grants to LCEGS businesses."

For details contact Chris Seamark on 03000 415 111, email lowcarbon@kent.gov.uk or visit kent.gov.uk/lowcarbon

YOUR 12-PAGE PULL-OUT SUPPLEMENT

Cutting carbon to save money



Ecosan apprentice Charlotte Webb with Director Sonja Wood

How Low Carbon Kent can make a difference

EcoSan is an Ashford-based company offering eco-friendly washroom solutions. Director Sonja Wood said: "Being a member of Low Carbon Kent has helped my company raise its profile at events like Kent 2020 Vision Live and the Annual Green Business Conference.

"I have completed the Gold level of the Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) scheme, which helped me to achieve ISO14001 accreditation.

"We were also awarded the Commitment to the Environment award at the Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEIBA) in 2011.

"I am thrilled to hear about the Low Carbon Plus (LC+) grant scheme which will make our laundry services easier."

There are many examples of Kent companies benefiting from signing up to STEM.

Ashford-based health and safety consultancy **Invicta Safety** has seen a 9% decrease in its energy and water usage over the last year following the implementation of a STEM EMS.

Another company, **Insulo** in Swanley, has increased monthly sales by £80,000 following a grant for marketing and business development.

The **UK Electric Bike Centre** in Staplehurst has been able to expand its bike-tour and bike hire services with a £12,000 grant.

We have been supporting businesses in Kent and Medway for some time now to help them cut costs, cut carbon and to grow and develop.

Being an environmentally sustainable business makes business sense and many companies within the county are becoming much more environmentally aware.

In times of both growth and recession there are competitive advantages to be gained from this.

What's more, every company can benefit, no matter how big or small and irrespective of budget. These days, more and more clients are asking to see how green their suppliers are.

Our Low Carbon Kent Network is going from strength to strength, bringing together like-minded businesses who want to reap the rewards of improving their environmental performance and

by **Carolyn McKenzie**, Kent County Council Head of Sustainability and Climate Change



not just for the good of their souls, but for their bottom line too.

Over the years we have developed strong relationships with businesses in the low carbon sector

and know a little of the challenges they face.

The support delivered through Low Carbon Kent is tailored to meet those needs and will continue to

"We were awarded the Commitment to the Environment award at the Kent Excellence in Business Awards in 2011. I am thrilled to hear about the Low Carbon Plus grant scheme."

– **Ecosan Director Sonja Wood**

develop and adapt to address future challenges. Just tell us what you need and we will see how we can help.

As businesses go from strength to strength, we strongly encourage them to access the 0% interest loans that Kent County Council is offering as part of the national Regional Growth Fund (RGF).

These loans can help Kent businesses expand, grow and develop. For example, Newform Energy, a design and consultancy service for new technologies, has received a Tiger fund loan to build a low carbon office using the company's products.

And this is just the beginning. It is our vision to continue to create an attractive county for low carbon business, where consumers

are using resources efficiently and opting for low carbon products and suppliers are developing and selling innovative green products.

We want to work with you to address future challenges and provide support for your low carbon business to grow.

You will see many articles within this supplement with examples of how companies have benefitted from Low Carbon Kent.

■ To find out more, visit kent.gov.uk/lowcarbon



Environmental impact on business

Putting in place an Environmental Management System (EMS) can increase sales while at the same time saving thousands of pounds, according to government research.

In a study commissioned by the Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2012, two thirds of businesses surveyed either had or were likely to increase sales since implementing an EMS, and reported an annual average saving over two years of almost £5,000 per million-pound turnover.

An EMS is a structured framework for managing an

organisation's impact on the environment.

Environmental impacts vary between organisations but typically include business waste, emissions, energy use, transport and consumption of materials.

An EMS will help an organisation manage and improve its environmental performance, comply with environmental laws and regulations, generate financial savings through efficient practices and improve the standing and reputation of the business with stakeholders.

Companies interested in setting up an EMS can do

so with Low Carbon Kent's scheme Steps to Environmental Management (STEM).

Launched in 2010 with support from the South East European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Competitiveness Programme, the scheme was developed specifically for small and medium sized businesses that often don't have the resources and time for other environmental standards like ISO 14001 or the EU Eco-Management Audit Scheme (EMAS).

However, each of the criteria in STEM corresponds to a requirement in ISO 14001,

meaning that should an organisation want to get formal certification, a lot of the hard work has been done already.

STEM Gold also includes a section on business resilience, where companies can show how bad weather has affected them in the past and how they can improve resilience to future weather events.

The initiative can be done through self-assessment, completing Blue, Silver and Gold forms which lead the company through 16 topics ranging from management commitment, to legal compliance and environmental reporting.

The assessment forms include guidance notes on each section and helpful templates to assist the business in completing each of the criteria. Businesses can also attend a workshop which gives them hands-on support in understanding and completing the assessment form.

Nova IT Solutions director Heather Nowak - whose company offers customer support with cloud, hosted and network services - said: "I am very impressed by the STEM scheme as it has helped my business to understand how our activities impact on the environment and importantly

how the environment impacts on us. The workshops have also been very useful and helped me to better understand the process for filling in the forms."

The STEM scheme is part-funded by the ERDF programme, making it free for SMEs to get involved.

More than 500 SMEs in Kent and Medway have been certified to at least one level of the scheme.

It will be updated to incorporate changes to ISO 14001 which are due to be published at the end of 2015.

For more information either visit kent.gov.uk/lowcarbon or email lowcarbon@kent.gov.uk

Reaping rewards of EMS

Frozen food wholesaler Kff uses a lot of energy in its operations across the UK, with frozen and chilled storage running 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Aylesford-based firm has temperature-controlled lorries delivering to customers each day and dozens of sales managers are on the road.

To minimise their impact on the environment, the company put in place an efficient Energy Management System (EMS).

In 2012, the business decided to sign up to the STEM (Steps to Environmental Management Scheme) workshops provided by Low Carbon Kent.

By attending the workshop, the firm was able to carry out an assessment of its energy use. Looking into various aspects, the firm set about implementing measures to reduce its carbon footprint.

It reviewed the company car list and updated the fleet to make sure it met the requirement of less than 110g/km of CO2 emissions per vehicle. By 2013, the average consumption of cars brought into the business was 106g/km.

The company also made other changes like adjusting default printer settings to double-sided and black and white, making a



Kff utilised their EMS to improve the energy efficiency

considerable difference to the amount of paper and ink cartridges used.

The most significant change made was in April this year, when the business invested in a voltage optimisation unit at its main depot, which reduces the voltage

a building uses from 240W to 220W. Based on 2013 figures, it is predicted this will reduce yearly energy consumption by a minimum of 8% - a total saving of 206,607kwh each year.

Simple measures like making sure delivery vehicles take

the most efficient route is critical.

In 2011, the firm opened its second depot in Whitney, Oxford, which has significantly reduced the number of food miles accumulated to delivering in the Midlands area.

This new site uses much less

In 2011, the firm opened its second depot in Whitney, Oxford, which has significantly reduced the number of food miles accumulated to delivering in the Midlands area.

electricity thanks to its 21st century lighting, with energy consumption equating to 3kW with LED lighting compared to 8kW with fluorescent.

It produces more light than heat so the refrigeration systems do not have to work harder to counteract the warmth generated by the lights, which also saves energy.

Since joining STEM, Kff has invested heavily in EMS for the greater good of the environment and bosses are proud to hold the Gold level STEM award as recognition of their achievements.

As part of an ongoing commitment to the environment, the company says it will continue to look at ways to improve its carbon footprint with the help and guidance provided by the Low Carbon Kent team.

Offshore wind farms offer growth for business

Kent has the ability to meet 40% of the supply chain needs of the growing offshore wind industry, according to a study.

Research by Kent County Council and the University of Chichester has revealed how businesses in the county could become part of a significant regional supply chain cluster.

While Kent could meet two fifths of the industry's supply chain needs, this capability rises to 60% if neighbouring counties are taken into account.

By looking at materials and services needed to build and run an offshore wind farm, the study identified 650 supply chain categories and assessed local business capability against these.

The study suggests Kent companies can make the most of the opportunities in the sector, with strength in operations and maintenance, support services, port and marine activities.

The future market for spares is expected to be a significant growth area.

The university believes this could be worth £879m a year by 2020.

The full study can be found at www.kentwindenergy.co.uk.

College leads the way

Hadlow College was awarded the Commitment to the Environment award at this year's prestigious Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEiBAs) - and with good reason.

Its work is underpinned by a commitment to environmental integrity. Sustainability is at the heart of its ethos and ambition.

It is one of the UK's leading land-based colleges with projects across Kent and South East London, including the Betteshanger Sustainable Parks project, turning a former colliery into a campus and business park.

The college, graded outstanding by Ofsted, promotes a less philosophy when it comes to using resources and carbon management.

Hadlow's Rural Regeneration Centre is a showcase of low carbon technology, using just 10% of typical energy usage of a modern building.

Rainwater harvesting and energy efficient glasshouses are part of the mix which won the college its KEiBA prize.

Finance and Resources Director Mark Lumsdon-Taylor said: "We are overjoyed to receive this recognition of the work we do to ensure that sustainability is embodied in every single aspect of our business, from the student Green Entrepreneurship Scheme to on-campus food production and the staff bike scheme.

"We believe delivering and



Hadlow College's Mark Lumsdon-Taylor, Cllr Sue Murray and Roger Cowap of Barclays Bank with bikes

promoting sustainability through our less banner has produced an increase in students in environmental courses and a marked reduction in our energy and water bills.

"We will continue to promote this ethos at our exciting new development, the Betteshanger Sustainable Parks scheme."

Hadlow punches well above its weight, with involvement in a £4m equestrian centre with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, the £40m Betteshanger Sustainable Parks scheme and founding a rural community free school.

Energy audits, low energy appliances, modern energy controls and shared transport for off-site meetings are all high on the agenda.

It has 10 bikes on site to encourage staff to cycle cross-campus, which is estimated to have saved 10,000 fuel miles and £13,500 in just four months.

Students are encouraged to become green entrepreneurs by developing micro-businesses with environmental benefits.

Hadlow provides community and staff allotments and plans a food hub to encourage people to grow more of their own food.

KEiBA judges were impressed with how the college involves a large number of stakeholders to deliver its environmental programme, the quality of the initiatives and the range and quantity of them.

For more information, visit hadlow.ac.uk.



Businesses working together for a low carbon future



Why joining the Low Carbon Kent business network will benefit your business:

- Cut costs by cutting carbon
- Improve your green credentials
- Develop an Environmental Management System
- Be listed on our low carbon business directory
- Reduce fuel costs with advice on smarter working initiatives
- Link to other funded services (e.g. loan funds, research grants, innovation vouchers)
- Business networking events

kent.gov.uk/lowcarbon
lowcarbon@kent.gov.uk
t : 0300 041 5111

So many benefits to High Growth

High Growth Kent offers support for ambitious, growth-focused businesses to help obtain funding, find new customers and help with exporting overseas.

Over the last 18 months, coaches have helped Kent companies raise £16.4m investment and create 300 new jobs.

The initiative is part funded by Kent County Council and the European Union and delivered by growth experts BSK-CIC.

With the help of business coaches, it aims to help companies with the potential for 20% year-on-year growth or the ability to reach about £1m turnover within one year of start-up.

Being a part of High Growth Kent means companies can take advantage of:

- An informal discussion with an experienced coach
- Up to three days of free coaching support
- Connections to other organisations that can help a business grow
- Support to gain access to local funding
- Meeting and working with similar high growth companies in Kent
- Referrals to other forms of public support and advice networks

For full details, visit highgrowthkent.co.uk or call 08457 226655.



The value of good energy efficiency

The link between employees' productivity and the energy efficiency of a building is driving the business case for going green, writes



Green Deal adviser **Graham Tarrant**

Employees are a business's biggest investment. That's why companies take the review of their employees' performance so seriously.

What many don't do is review the performance of another important asset - their building. That's just as vital, because the energy efficiency of your building is interwoven with the productivity of your staff.

Companies have become swift to respond to staff complaints that their PC is too slow by upgrading to the latest system or software.

However, companies remain less quick to address the more frequent complaints that the office is too hot, too cold or too dimly lit - and yet these heating or lighting issues can have as much, if not more, impact on your employees' productivity.

Temperature affects workplace performance. The Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) has estimated work levels fall by almost a third when temperatures reach 30C.



Energy efficiency is big business

If you've stayed in a hotel that allows you to set your own room temperature, remember how much more comfortable you felt.

The same works for your staff. According to a report by the International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP) in 2011, adopting a simple measure such as individual temperature controls resulted in productivity gains of up to 7%.

The impact of lighting can be even more marked. If lighting is too poor it can lead to eye strain;

too bright leads to headaches. The Centre for Building Performance and Diagnostics at Carnegie Mellon has identified studies linking improved lighting design with up to 23% gains in individual productivity.

It doesn't have to be onerous to put your building's performance review higher up your agenda. A Green Deal adviser from Green ROI, a Kent-based non-domestic energy assessment firm, can help you rate your building in areas that impact employees'

comfort and motivation, such as heating, lighting, ventilation and noise pollution.

They can identify what areas you need to improve, what measures to take and what funding you could receive.

Such an appraisal should be your prioritised step to safeguarding, motivating, retaining and recruiting the greatest asset - your staff.

For more information, visit greenroi.co.uk or call 01634 505100.

Insulators blocking out all the elements

Insulo Ltd is a provider of various energy efficiency solutions such as external and internal wall insulation.

It is their mission to help save the consumer money and reduce the UK's carbon footprint by reducing energy bills and keeping homes warm.

The solutions the Hextable-based company offer have many environmental benefits.

Managing director Jon Webb said: "As global warming continues to affect our planet and the price of fuel rises, the need for energy efficient households becomes ever more prevalent.

"Effective insulation and modern heating systems are the first major steps towards reducing our reliance on environmentally damaging fossil fuels."

Insulo have recently undergone rapid expansion, primarily due to the changes in government legislation with the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO).

In April 2014, the company was awarded more than £8,000 of grant funding from the Low Carbon Plus (LC+) project to fund business development consultancy and to develop a new website.

As a result, Insulo have managed to bring in about £80,000 of extra business a month.

Mr Webb added: "I couldn't believe how easy the grant process was.

"The project manager for LC+ was on hand at every stage to offer support and guidance on how to complete the application form.

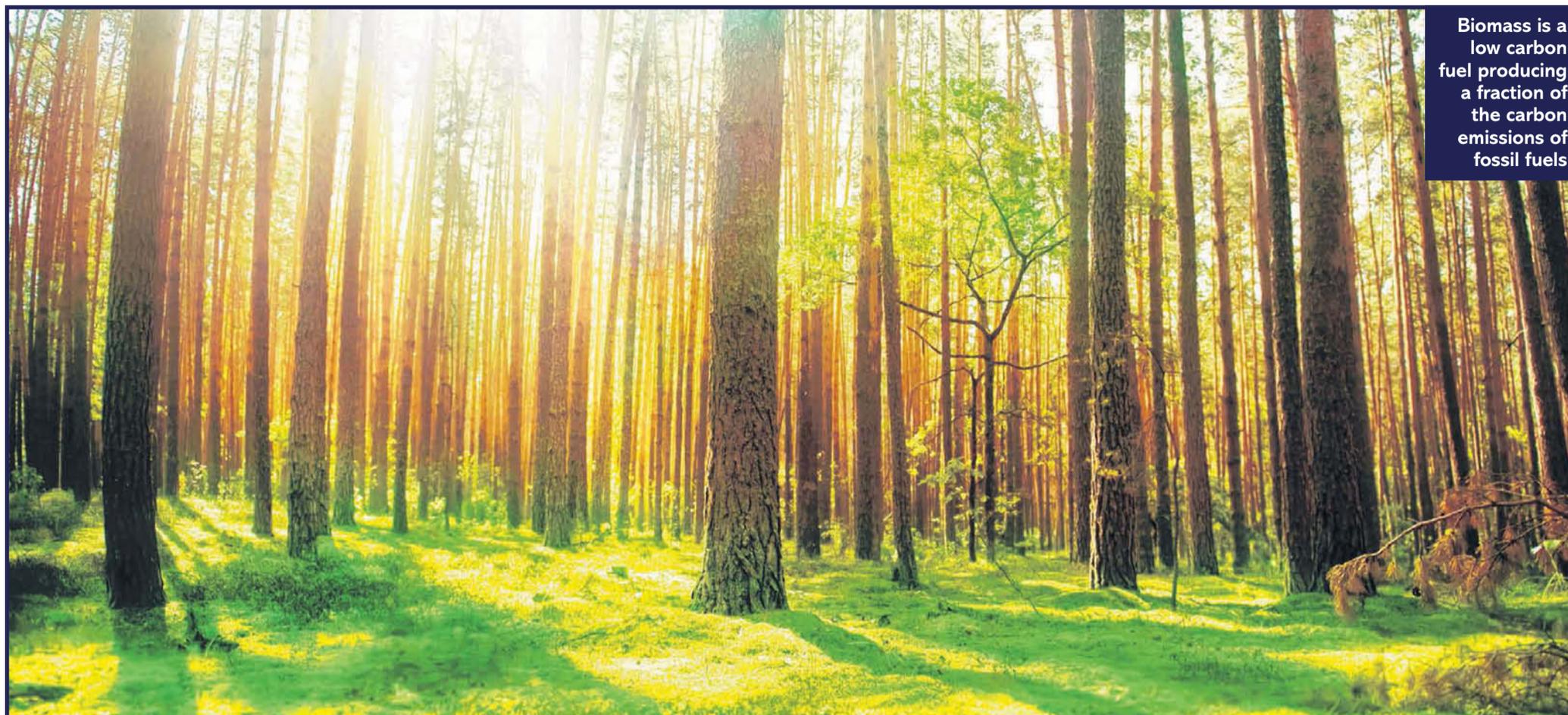
"I would highly recommend this grant to other Kent based SMEs."

For more information, visit insulo.co.uk, call 01322 614517 or email info@insulo.co.uk.



To join the Kent Wind Energy Network go to www.kentwindenergy.co.uk





Biomass is a low carbon fuel producing a fraction of the carbon emissions of fossil fuels

Low Carbon Kent invests in biomass supply chain

Low Carbon Kent has been investing in and supporting Kent's biomass supply chain to create a sustainable economy with carbon reducing benefits. Biomass as a fuel source includes a multitude of materials including logs, chip, pellets, straw, energy crops and waste organic materials.

Using biomass for natural heating results in a very low lifecycle of carbon emissions relative to conventional sources, such as gas, heating oil or electricity. Perhaps the most significant means of carbon reduction is the potential for the fuel to be grown and distributed locally.

Kent boasts a good supply of woodland with a number of companies already supplying wood fuel for domestic and commercial biomass boilers. Log suppliers Steve and Joanne Knaggs of Log Heat, based in Shadoxhurst, used Low Carbon Kent's Low Carbon Plus (LC+) scheme to secure a

£20,000 grant to update their machinery. They said: "We have doubled capacity and supply a better product to our customers." Biomass installers the Heating Hub, based in Rochester, were similarly able to invest in plant to improve their installation

procedures via the LC+ grant. Managing director Jo Alsop is passionate about the local benefits of biomass boilers. She said: "Biomass is a genuine opportunity for everyone in Kent to support the local economy and utilise resources that are on our doorstep."

At the consumer end, projects like the Woodfuel Pathfinder give homeowners, businesses and institutions free, impartial advice and support on installing a biomass system or harvesting wood fuel. Details at kentdowns.org.uk, call 01303 815170 or email mail@kentdowns.org.uk

By the power of the sun

Newform Energy offer a design and consultancy service and investigate new, cutting edge technologies.

Many people have heard of solar PV panels or photo-voltaic panels and may have heard of solar thermal panels for hot water requirements.

Not everyone has heard of the hybrid technology photo-voltaic thermal (PV-T) panels, a new technology which Faversham-based Newform specialises in.

Established in 2006, the company has spent many years carrying out research and development into affordable renewable energy products.

They are now wholesale providers for the hybrid panel PV-T, Solar PV, Solar Thermal, multi-source heat pumps, biomass and other renewable energy technologies. They design the most appropriate system for their clients, employing Microgeneration



PV-T panels in-situ on Walthamstow Fire Station provide electricity and heating for the station

Certification Scheme (MCS) accredited installers to fit the technologies. Their PV-T panel is manufactured

in Turkey, however Newform Energy has exclusive global distribution rights. The product has been validated

by British Gas and patents have been obtained by the manufacturer. Newform Energy holds some

patents including one for the design of a system which incorporates the hybrid PV-T with an air source heat pump.

Hybrid PV-T is being trialled on some social housing in Goudhurst, Aylesbury and Corby. Newform Energy was awarded an interest-free loan through the Tiger fund run by Kent County Council, part of the Regional Growth Fund set up by the government.

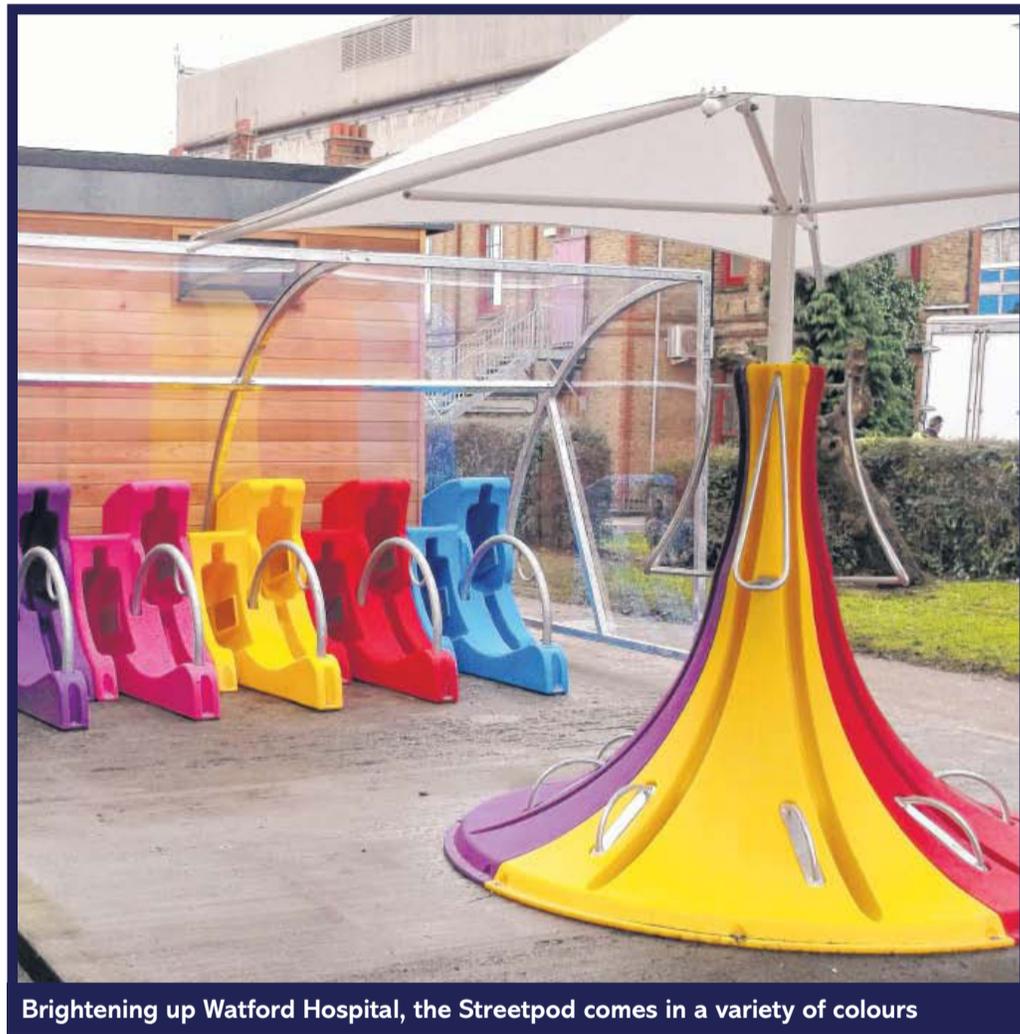
As part of this loan they have been able to build a zero-carbon office using their core products which include PV-T, heat pump technology and an earth energy bank for inter-seasonal energy storage.

The fund also enabled the company to grow rapidly expanding employment from just half a dozen to over 35 employees.

They received their latest accolade earlier this year as a finalist in the Housing Innovation Awards for Most Innovative Use of Renewable Technology.

To find out more, visit newformenergy.com

...Why energy saving



Brightening up Watford Hospital, the Streetpod comes in a variety of colours

Creating cycle storage with recycled materials

Cyclepods Ltd are a cycle storage company specialising in products made from 100% recycled or recyclable materials for bike storage, all manufactured in the UK. Initially, the Westerham-based company sourced aluminium frames from China, which meant low profit, high environmental impact and long lead-in times. Working with the not-for-profit Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and after significant investment, Cyclepods decided to swap aluminium materials for recycled plastic, which then changed the focus of the business to a more environmentally conscious one. Creative Director James Steward said: "We believe the use of recycled materials should not compromise quality and bike parking should encourage cycling and a healthier way of life. "Our products also boast a higher security level than traditional storage options. Our Streetpods are even police approved and hold



Secured-by-Design status. "Unlike traditional bike racks, our products prevent overcrowding and damage to the bikes, making us very bike and cyclist friendly. "We are dedicated to helping organisations achieve the right level of bike storage to suit their needs. With our team of accommodating and caring designers, salesmen and installers we can take any project, large or small, from inception to installation." Through Low Carbon Kent, Cyclepods received support to increase awareness of their product range within Kent and abroad. Following a site visit to Rotterdam, the company were introduced to 3D printing and how prototyping costs could be significantly reduced using this new technology. They applied for a grant from Low Carbon Plus (LC+) and were awarded £20,000

to help them towards a 3D printer, as well as other initiatives that would lead to company growth. The grant also enabled Cyclepods to extend their market from schools, businesses, stations and hospitals to the home and is pleased to introduce the Lockerpod+. Lockerpod+ is made from recycled polyethylene and holds up to four bikes. It comes in colours to suit any home, from standard recycled green to stone effect. Boasting a three-point locking system and inner metal frame as well as options for ground anchors, the Lockerpod+ has achieved Gold Secure Status from Sold Secure, meaning it offers cyclists a discount on bike insurance. Mr Steward added: "Low Carbon Kent has offered us support in a variety of ways, from speaking at the Annual Green Business Conference to visiting Makerspace in Rotterdam. "The grant from Low Carbon Plus has been valuable for the successful launch of Lockerpod+."

The first sustainable conference centre in Europe

As Europe's first low carbon conference and events centre, the Pines Calyx has numerous low carbon features.

The venue in St Margaret's Bay, Dover, is made of reclaimed construction materials for starters, and its innovative renewable energy systems impress.

It has a hybrid solar powered system with a water source heat pump providing both heat and electricity for the building.

It also has several passive climate-control systems, reducing the building's energy demand, and a borehole supplying fresh water, with all waste-water running directly to a reed-bed filtration system.

The managers still strive to improve the centre's environmental performance.

A recent energy audit - conducted as part of the Technology Strategy Board's Building Performance Evaluation project - showed the venue had halved its energy consumption following a programme to optimise energy use through improved

control systems, fine tuning of existing energy systems and improved demand management. Pines Calyx clients include leaders in the low carbon field and organisations from many other disciplines. They have all found the quality of service provided leads to outstanding

control systems, fine tuning of existing energy systems and improved demand management.

Pines Calyx clients include leaders in the low carbon field and organisations from many other disciplines.

They have all found the quality of service provided leads to outstanding



results for their management team building events or co

The organisation also delivers low carbon building training on developing Sustainable B Plans.

In October, it will p

Reducing carbon



Ecoegg have started to create a bit of a spin in the laundry and household sector with their range of eco-friendly, money-saving laundry and household products. The Maidstone firm was born out of the lack of alternatives to chemical laden laundry products. They hatched their first product, the Ecoegg Laundry Egg, in 2010 and have never looked back. The Laundry Egg contains natural and powerful cleaning pellets which activate in the water and are scientifically proven to lift away dirt and grime. Crucially, it does not

contain any harsh chemicals. Despite also being a money-saving product - the 720 Wash Laundry Egg lasts three years for the average family), this product has many environmental benefits. Ecoegg co-founder and director Rob Knight said: "By using the Laundry Egg instead of chemical detergent we are helping 700,000 tons of detergent from polluting our water system every year. "What's more, buying one Laundry Egg saves up to 60-70 boxes of traditional laundry detergent from being recycled.

has worked for us



Low Carbon Plus grants of up to £20,000

Low Carbon Kent's Low Carbon Plus project has £1m of grant funding available to small and medium businesses in the low carbon environmental goods and services (LCEGS) sector.

Who can apply: Businesses employing fewer than 250 people. All grant applicants need to join the Low Carbon Kent network.

What: The grant can be used to cover the four types of expenditure.

- Development finance: funding required to expand the business such as marketing costs
- Plant and machinery: costs of re-tooling and installation of machinery and hardware, as well as the required training
- Intangible assets: costs for purchasing patents, IT, software and licences
- Consultancy costs: marketing and business planning.

Where: Any business within Kent and Medway.

When: Businesses can apply from now until June 2015.

How: Call 03000 415 111, visit kent.gov.uk/lowcarbon, or email lowcarbon@kent.gov.uk.

at away-days, conferences. Offers bespoke services, for example Building Skills

Performance Gap Masterclass developed by the Good Homes Alliance.

The Pines Calyx offices host several SMEs and social enterprises engaged in the low carbon sector including Helionix Designs, the designers of Pines Calyx. Helionix secured funding for an ultra-

low impact construction product and build system to be used for Pines Calyx Phase 2, planned for 2015 to 2016.

This will create equally inspiring ultra-low impact accommodation on-site.

To support the development of Phase 2, Pines Calyx secured a grant

from Low Carbon Plus of £20,000 to conduct feasibility studies and carry out marketing and communication for the new development.

For more information on the Pines Calyx, visit pinescalyx.co.uk or call 01304 851737.

on footprint one wash at a time



"Consumers are becoming savvier in the ethics of business and are placing increased importance on businesses being good. Our products meet this need, giving customers a real choice over the products that they choose." In November last year, they opened their own dedicated warehousing

and production facility in Maidstone providing an increase in employment in the local area. They intend to achieve Low Carbon Kent's Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) scheme to ensure they are both promoting eco-friendly products and producing them in an environmentally sound manner. The message has now spread to 34 countries, with the company selling 32 products. Details at ecoegg.com, call 01622 535 200 or email customerservices@ecoegg.com.



Ecoegg hatched their first product in 2010

LEADER in KENT

The new RDPE Leader Programme starts in January 2015.

Grants will be available for rural and land-based businesses and community groups in the Leader areas of West Kent, Kent Downs and Marshes and East Kent.



If you have a project in need of funding and support please contact huw.jarvis@kent.gov.uk or tel. 01622 696940



sustainable

innovation

RECYCLING network across the county



Kent-based resource management and recycling specialist Countrystyle Recycling Ltd delivers a range of specialised, cost-effective resource management services. Countrystyle serves both private and public sector clients across Kent, the South East, London and further afield.

Countrystyle operates a network of facilities strategically positioned across Kent to provide clients with innovative and reliable resource management solutions.

Its flagship facility at Ridham near Sittingbourne provides services for the recycling of plasterboard and waste wood and the manufacture of refuse-derived fuel and sustainable peat-free compost.

Other facilities include waste transfer stations at Strood and Folkestone and a cardboard and plastics baling facility, operating from its Lenham headquarters. Countrystyle has an in-depth knowledge and capability to provide integrated waste and resource management solutions for its customers.

Its experienced management team, friendly staff, modern vehicle fleet and network of facilities enable the firm to provide bespoke recycling solutions for handling, segregating, moving, processing and the treatment of waste streams and the manufacture of high-quality end products.

Managing director Chris Howard said: "Our objective is simple - to provide tailored resource management services that exceed customer expectation, drive innovation and set the standard to sustainable quality end products. We have a long track record for spotting opportunities, understanding the market and evolving solutions to provide customers with reliable recycling and recovery services."



THE WIDER PICTURE
Countrystyle understands the importance of the circular economy and is proud to be at the very heart of the drive to reduce the adverse environmental impact of waste by diverting as much as possible away from landfill and recycling it into reusable materials or energy.
With significant investment in dedicated staff and new specialist equipment, Countrystyle is continuing to expand its resource processing capability and to develop tailored quality end products in order to meet its aim of supporting customers to achieve zero waste to landfill.

expectation

SERVICES

Handling everything from mixed waste and recyclables through to industrial wastes, Countrystyle is at the forefront of modern resource management.

The company operates state-of-the-art materials recovery and in-vessel composting facilities in Kent, supported by a network of local waste transfer sites and an extensive haulage fleet.

Their award-winning organics and recycling teams process waste and manufacture market-ready, quality products such as compost and wood chip fuel for biomass. Their pioneering plasterboard recycling service ensures construction materials can be recycled and the baling and wrapping operation produces fuel for electricity and heat.

Operations director Jamie Houston said: "We love a challenge. We offer a complete service for our customers, from collection to processing, and we thrive on coming up with innovative solutions for the trickiest of waste streams."

Countrystyle also operates a reliable and cost-effective skip hire business. The company offers a range of skip sizes and larger RoRo containers depending on the customer's requirements.



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Countrystyle's brand is founded on quality, flexibility and reliability.

Whether providing professional collection services from offices, factories, farms, retail and leisure outlets, or processing material streams to produce high grade quality products, the skills and professional expertise of the Countrystyle team ensures the highest levels of customer satisfaction.

Countrystyle also prides itself on its commitment to the local area and undertakes a number of charity and supportive roles.



Countrystyle was delighted to be awarded the Business Commitment to the Community Award at the 2014 Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEIBA) in recognition of their recent initiatives within the local community.

quality



CUSTOMERS

Using their expert knowledge, Countrystyle helps businesses and organisations of all shapes and sizes work out how much waste they generate.

The company works out how best to reduce waste in its purest sense and educates firms about how to think differently about waste.



For more information visit www.countrystylerecycling.co.uk
email: info@countrystylerecycling.co.uk tel: 0844 880 7700

KENT CAR DEALERSHIP SAVES OVER £3K

Lumina suspected Haywards car dealership was paying extremely high rates for its electricity.

They searched the entire market for the best possible price and offered the Sevenoaks business a one-year fixed electricity contract that was 27% cheaper.

The total saving was £3,115. The Group Development Manager said: "I really was astonished Lumina Energy were able to beat my current rates by such a high percentage.

"The service they provide is quick, easy and hassle free and I have been delighted throughout."

STAY COMPLIANT WITH PEAT TESTING

Companies sometimes forget the importance of PEAT (Portable Electrical Appliance Testing).

Ultimately, businesses have a legal obligation to make sure all electrical appliances in the workplace are inspected for electrical safety.

As a general rule, if the appliance can be unplugged from the electrical supply then it probably requires PEAT testing by a qualified engineer. This is important to:

- comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989;
- comply with all Health & Safety requirements;
- comply with Provision and User of Work Equipment;
- comply with ISO standards;
- meet building insurance obligations;
- provide an evidence trail (backed up by external records) that staff safety is taken seriously;
- significantly reduce risk of injury or fire.

Since the PEAT regulations came into force, many providers have entered the market.

To make sure they are providing the best service, ask a PEAT supplier:

- do they carry out testing out of working hours to suit your business?
- are minor repairs carried out for free?
- will the business receive full certification in both electronic and paper format?
- are all of their engineers approved testing staff?
- are their staff City & Guilds qualified and SELECT certified?
- Do they have public liability indemnity?

LASER's PEAT team is made up of five qualified engineers working throughout Kent.

Clients range from local authorities sites, to charities and local businesses.

For information call 0800 484 0840.



The Lumina Energy team

Cheaper energy sourced

Lumina Energy is an independent UK energy cost reduction company which is part of Commercial Services, one of Kent's largest organisations.

Although Lumina was established in 2012, Commercial Services can trace its history back to 1902, as the Stores Department for the County of Kent's Education Committee.

By 1933, Kent County Council was recognised as one of only three councils across the county which "purchased certain goods for themselves through a Buying Committee" and it was this

expertise, along with the bulk purchasing of petrol and fuel by the Supplies Department, that later led to the formation of LASER, the UK's leading energy-buying group.

Until the 1970s, fuel was one of many goods and services provided by the Supplies Department.

However, the global energy crisis in the 1970s created a national oil and coal supply emergency, which focused attention on fuel security and the need to procure energy more efficiently.

In parliament, KCC was recognised as "perhaps the finest

example of its type for its purchasing methods", noting that KCC could supply small district councils with fuel at virtually the same price that the largest government-buying organisation was paying.

Other councils soon joined KCC's fuel-purchasing consortium, which was formally launched as LASER in 1989. LASER now purchases around £400m of energy a year on behalf of more than 120 local authorities and public-funded bodies.

More recently, the relentless

rise in gas and oil costs over the last few years has taken its toll on businesses.

Commercial Services decided in 2011 to use LASER's experience and supplier relationships to develop a purchasing model specifically for the business sector.

Launched in Sevenoaks in 2012 by Michael Fallon – at the time the Business Minister – Lumina Energy now works with customers that range from small local businesses with one or two meters, to large companies with several sites and many meters.

On average Lumina's clients save more than 23% on their incumbent supplier's renewal offer.

Companies in their renewal period or with a contract that has ended can let Lumina Energy take the hassle of switching off their hands.

For information, call Lumina Energy on 0800 168 5688 or visit www.luminaenergy.co.uk to request a call back.

Lumina Energy's service is free and impartial – it comes from an organisation that understands energy procurement.



Save energy: Make a list

In a period of stubbornly high energy prices companies of all sizes need to put energy efficiency at the top of their agendas, writes James Dubois, director of Lumina Energy. Making an energy-saving list, ideally compiled after discussions with everyone in the business, is a good place to start, prioritising things that can be introduced straight away.

These should include:

- Turning appliances and monitors off at the socket when they are not in use (they use energy even in stand-by mode);
- Reducing room temperatures by 1°C. The only difference firms will notice is the savings of up to 10% on next year's bill;
- Installing cheap gadgets such as flow restrictors, self-closing taps and low flow showerheads. All these are proven to cut hot water usage and reduce water bills.

For longer term benefits, bigger energy efficiency solutions such as LED lighting should be an area of focus.

LED lighting is a growing area that offers companies great saving opportunities.

Funding and grants for projects are available and these can cover the initial upfront costs for installing new lighting into a building which are paid back over a number of years through the savings achieved. Not only do LEDs consume 10 times less energy than incandescent bulbs and three times less energy than fluorescent tubes, but the average life expectancy of LED fixtures is roughly 50,000 hours more than the average fluorescent lamp.

That means maintenance costs are significantly reduced while performance remains excellent for years.

Lumina's sister company LASER recently completed an LED installation project for Churchill Primary School in Folkestone.

The school's business manager initially decided to replace 22 of the 60 watt exterior halogen lights with 20 watt LEDs. When the instant savings were noticed, LASER were asked to carry out a full audit of the school.



James Dubois, Director of Lumina Energy

The report recommended installing suspended lighting in the classrooms, auto LEDs in the toilets and cupboard areas and LED signs to replace emergency lights and fire escape signs.

It reduced the monthly electricity consumption by 19% and saved around £1,200 a year.

Business manager Anne Wells said: "All my expectations were met, and not only have our consumption and costs been reduced but the installation has created new areas to teach in and fun placed for the children to learn in."

LEDs offer enormous potential for both energy savings and improved working environments.

Lighting is one of those things that gets overlooked when offices are redecorated but there are some really interesting LEDs on the market and the prices have dropped significantly in recent years.

On average, firms are seeing monthly energy consumption reduce by 20% through the installation of LED lighting but just as importantly, clients report reduced eye strain and better use of previously gloomy areas.

So, if you haven't already compiled an energy saving list, put it on the agenda for your next staff meeting. If you would like one of our lighting specialists to do a free lighting survey of your building, call us on 0800 484 0840.

from the experts

WHAT ABOUT WATER?

Most companies have a fixed water supplier and annual increases in water bills have been inevitable.

However, the opening of water markets to full competition in 2017 means many companies are paying more attention to how they can reduce their water spend. An understanding of current and historical consumption is crucial.

Lumina and LASER now



offer water reporting and validation services which highlight potential areas of saving. These include:

- Leak identification
- Analysis of consumption trends

- Bill validation on current and retrospective billing
- Monitoring water consumption against targets
- Identifying missing invoices and estimated data

This process includes running the information contained in each client's bills through the company's database, which contains thousands of supplier records.

Where there is an overcharge, even if this dates back six years, they can obtain a

refund. Victories include a retrospective saving of £6,178 for a property owned by London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, as well as a permanent reduction of 50% on their on-going billing.

The best advice is to include water with other utilities and look for ways to make savings.

If businesses start preparing for 2017, the chances are they can claim a refund.

lumina
INTEGRATED ENERGY SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESS.



Take control of your energy costs and watch your savings grow!

Call 0808 168 5688 or visit www.luminaenergy.co.uk

EXPANSION EAST KENT

Where: Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet
More information:
kent.gov.uk/expansion
Example: Algaecytes
Funding approved: £500,000
Total Jobs: 22
 Algaecytes is a private company founded in 2010, commercialising 25 years of algae research by world leading bioscientists. It is seeking to raise finance to build two demonstration units in Sandwich to produce high purity Omega-3 oils from freshwater algae.

TIGER

Where: Dartford, Gravesham, Medway, Swale and Thurrock
More information: www.kent.gov.uk/business/business-loans-and-funding/tiger-loans
Example: GCSI Limited
Funding approved: £195,000
Total Jobs: 32
 GCSI Limited is a low carbon installer and Green Deal approved installer for gas/oil boilers and loft and cavity insulation and was one of the first to be approved in Kent.

ESCALATE

Where: West Kent, Hastings, Rother and Wealden
More information:
kent.gov.uk/escalate
Example: DotImpact Ltd
Funding approved: £40,000
Total jobs: 4.5
 DotImpact is a digital marketing agency that works with small and medium enterprises in Kent to accelerate commercial growth through the effective use of digital best practice. The money will help DotImpact Ltd to move to larger offices.

Interest-free loans to give firms a boost

So far more than £30m has been awarded to local businesses from three interest-free loan schemes.

The money has helped companies to expand or relocate to larger premises, create more jobs, buy new equipment or simply get help with marketing and publicity.

A £2.4m Tiger loan helped transport company EH Nicholls Jnr Ltd in Sittingbourne to expand their business.

Managing director Paul Nicholls said: "The Tiger fund has enabled us to develop locally, keep the staff that we had in the Swale area and, indeed, employ more."

Fudge Kitchen used a £110,000 Expansion East Kent loan to convert an industrial unit in Aylesham into a new production facility for its hand-crafted fudge, which is sold all over the country.

The company expects to exceed its target of creating 19 new jobs in an area where they are desperately needed.

Managing director Sian Holt said: "The new

£55m to share out

Interest-free loans are available to Kent companies that want to expand and create jobs.

The county is a flagship area for the Regional Growth Fund, the government's £2.6bn national fund to support private sector job creation and new investment.

Kent County Council has been awarded £55m to loan to Kent firms. There are three funding options available for ambitious businesses across the county.

■ The Tiger Fund is a £20m package of funding to support new investment and new jobs across north Kent, Medway and Thurrock over two years. More than £9m has already been

awarded to businesses in the area.

■ Escalate offers interest-free loans to existing companies around the A21 corridor in west Kent to encourage them to create more jobs. It is funded by £5.5m ringfenced from the Tiger fund.

■ Expansion East Kent has already given out loans of more than £23m to businesses of all shapes and sizes, from pre-start-ups to established family firms. As part of this £35m scheme, the Small Business Boost has been launched to encourage smaller businesses to apply for funding.

production facility will allow Fudge Kitchen to more than double previous production volumes; and the consolidation of everything to one site will give additional efficiency benefits."

Regional Growth Fund programme manager Jacqui Ward said: "It is so exciting to see that these loans are

making a real difference to the private sectors and employment across the county and we would really encourage other businesses to come forward to see if one of our schemes across Kent could help their business grow and get their ideas off the ground."

For details, visit kent.gov.uk/business



Regional Growth Fund Programme Manager Jacqui Ward



Nicholls Transport Managing Director Paul Nicholls



Sian Holt, from Fudge Kitchen

Low Carbon Kent

LowCarbon.plus

The Low Carbon Plus project has £1million available to give as grants to enable businesses in the low carbon sector to expand and develop

visit kent.gov.uk/lowcarbon

EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in Your Future
European Regional
Development Fund 2007-13

In partnership with
Kent
County
Council
kent.gov.uk

Book now for our FREE Green Business Conference!

When: Tuesday 16th September, 1pm – 5pm
Where: Ashford International Hotel, Ashford, TN24 8UX
Cost: Free

Come and network over some complimentary refreshments and learn about developments and support available in the low carbon economy with a focus on Kent.

The theme this year is around The Circular Economy and Green Retrofit. We have some interesting speakers lined up including talks from Siemens, the Aldersgate Group and Estover Energy.

The conference is once again organised by Kent County Council's Low Carbon Kent network, this year in partnership with Ashford Borough Council as part of the Greenov project. Attending the conference is free of charge due to part funding from European Regional Development Fund Interreg projects.

For further details and to reserve places, visit bit.ly/LCKConference

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL | FUSION | Kent County Council | Greenov | "Investing in your future"