

# Net Zero Regions Pilot

## Summary Evaluation Report

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[www.ktn-uk.org](http://www.ktn-uk.org)



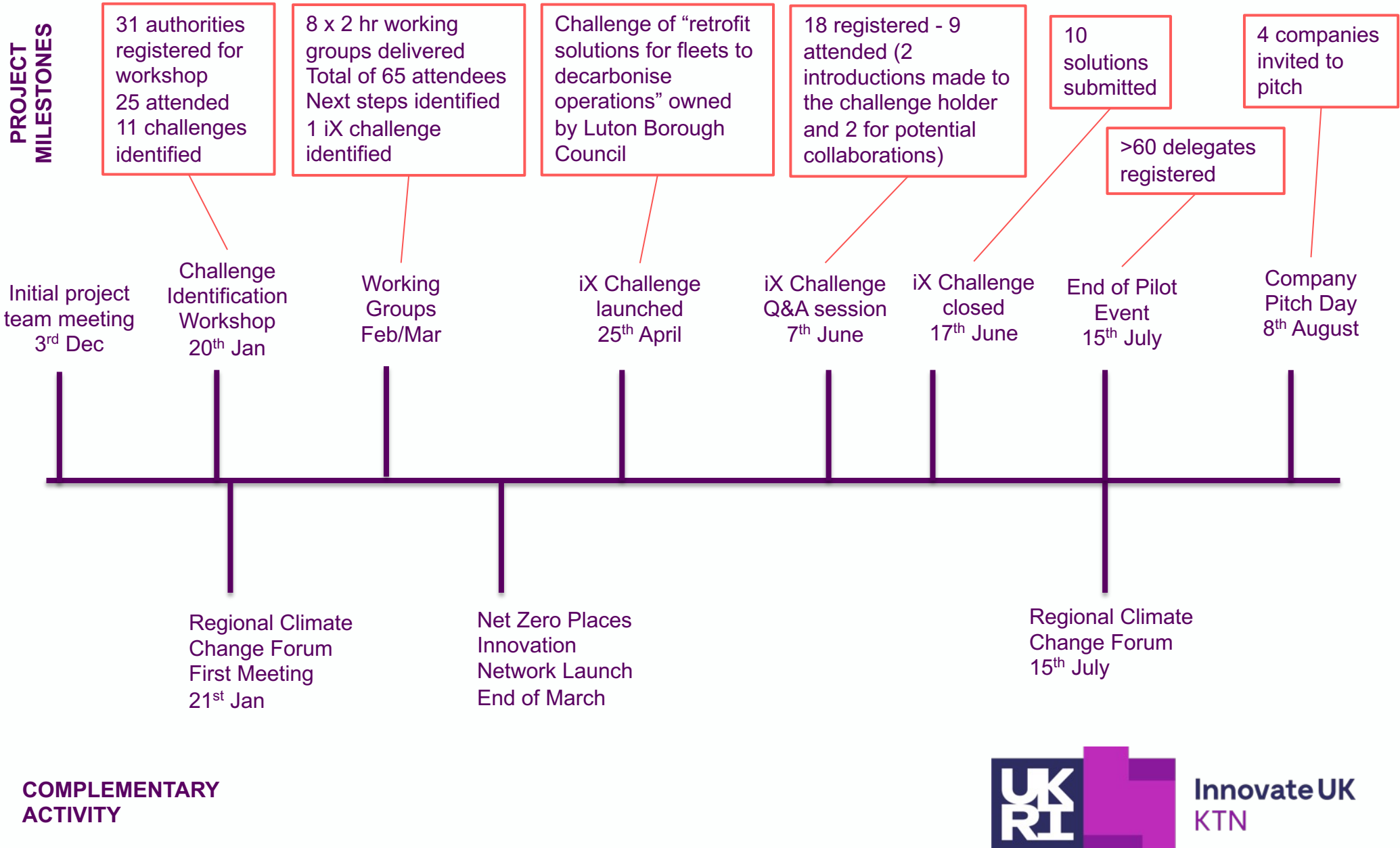
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## Net Zero Regions Pilot Aim

To engage local authorities and business across the East of England region to provide innovative input to a wide scope in meeting net zero carbon targets.

# Project Timeline

The timely and complementary activity by EELGA and IUK-KTN helped make the pilot a success



# Project Summary

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## ENGAGEMENT

- We had good participation from across the region for the pilot. Given the tight timelines for the pilot and the short lead-in time for the activity, to have >80% authorities engaged is a good achievement.

## COLLABORATION

- In the survey carried out in the initial workshop, a high level of collaboration was indicated (>90% collaborate or are developing collaborations). The respondents to the end-of-project survey indicated that this has increased further, although it is a small sample size.

## CHALLENGES

- 11 main challenges were identified in the initial workshop. The discussion in the workshop and the resulting challenges and working groups show high alignment with the thematic-led activity of Innovate UK KTN. The exception to this was the lowland peat challenge.

# Project Summary

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## BARRIERS

- Specific barriers that might affect regional collaboration were not particularly raised, however, there are many barriers facing local authorities reaching net zero. The challenges highlighted match those raised through the thematic-led activity of Innovate UK KTN. Some of the challenges, such as access to finance, and grid constraint, may be best addressed through a regionally-led approach.

## ACTION REQUIRED

- One challenge was able to be directly progressed through the iX platform to find solutions. Another challenge had already had solutions identified by Innovate UK KTN and showcasing was the action required. For the other challenges, common actions were around information sharing and linking to other partners in the ecosystem.

## APPETITE FOR INNOVATION

- The end of project survey revealed an increased appetite for adopting innovative technologies to solve net zero challenges among participating authorities.

## PARTICIPATION ACROSS REGION

County	% Participation
Cambridgeshire	67%
Essex	38%
Hertfordshire	73%
Norfolk	88%
Suffolk	50%

Council Type	% Participation
City	67%
Borough	46%
District	63%
County	80%
Unitary Authorities	83%

Most Councils participated fully (i.e. challenge workshop *and* working groups) or not at all





## BARRIERS

Confidence in  
decision making

Understanding what  
support is available  
(and who is offering  
it & how to access)

Understanding the  
journey others have  
taken (not just the  
outcome)

Creating an  
evidence base for a  
business case

Length of  
procurement terms

Difference in  
language used by  
different  
stakeholders

Getting more people  
in the discussion  
from different  
roles/teams

Opportunities to  
learn from others –  
mistakes/ difficulties

Understanding  
technologies

Further challenges identified through working groups,  
discussions and feedback received



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## NEXT STEPS FOR CHALLENGES

Working Groups	Next Steps
EV Charging placement	Showcase solutions
<b>Collaboration on HVO fuel for waste fleets</b>	<b>iX challenge underway</b>
Sustainable transport in a rural setting	Cross reference other providers/activities
Technology agnostic view of solving low carbon heating transition	Sharing experiences
Decarbonisation of heat and district heating	Sharing experiences
Sustainable homes and how to balance aesthetic needs with efficiency needs	Sharing experiences
Decarbonisation of large building stock (school buildings/care homes)	Sharing experiences
Grid constraint	Cross reference other providers/activities

**Common actions required around information sharing and linking to other partners in the ecosystem**



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## Ongoing delivery and next steps – partners

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- The working groups all identified next steps required and indicated an appetite to continue the group. The ongoing and complementary activities of Innovate UK KTN and EELGA provide an opportunity to capitalise on the momentum generated in the pilot.

EELGA have established their Regional Climate Change Forum and. The EELGA Regional Climate Change Forum, chaired by Cllr Richard Roberts, will continue to engage the local authorities in relevant discussions through this activity. They have commissioned a piece of work to carry out baseline analysis and mapping of the strengths and areas of improvement in relation to climate change partnerships and councils net zero targets in the East of England. This work will provide us with recommendations for what the regional forum should focus on in the future to add real value to this agenda in the region  
*(presenting outcomes at July event)*

Innovate UK KTN have an ongoing Net Zero Places Innovation Network and has indicated that (some of) the working groups and next steps could be integrated into this project.

<https://ktn-uk.org/programme/net-zero-places/>



## Ongoing delivery and next steps – other stakeholders

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- South-East Net Zero Hub has an ongoing (and extended) remit in the area
- Catapults – in particular the Energy Systems Catapult and their Net Zero Go tool, Connected Places Catapult and their Net Zero Navigator tool and work on the UK Cities Climate Investment Commission (CCIC)
- BEIS have established a National Forum to bring together local authority Directors to discuss key topics including, data, roles & responsibilities, capabilities.

# Recommendations

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- Further work should build in longer lead times
- Scaling needs to consider each region on a case-by-case basis to consider the active partners and activities in different parts of the country. It is important to have a project partner engaged with, and credible to, local authorities to ensure good levels of engagement.
- Activity should build on, and be integrated with, existing regional activity (such as the Net Zero Hubs and Regional Climate Change Forum) as well as connecting to national
- More is needed on the sharing of information, educating about different technologies, and how to future-proof decision making. Share experiences and the journey, rather than just success stories
- Citizen engagement was outside the scope of the pilot; however, this is an important factor that could be added to future work.
- Funding is critical to the process. Identifying challenges, and connecting solution providers is only effective if there is money to trial and implement solutions

# Takeaways from the pilot project – Participant comments

It was really helpful to meet other Councils in the region and understand the common challenges we are facing, as well as some differences in approach. However, the workshops I attended on retrofit have not led to any new innovative solutions yet.

That we all have a huge mountain to climb

Just how much there is to do but also how much help is available

There is no one technology/solution that will allow us to achieve net zero. Technologies are constantly evolving and their suitability is highly dependent on application & project's characteristics. Need to share good & bad experience to learn.

Opportunity

There is a lot of activity but there is no definitive way forward

I've really enjoyed the sessions that I attended and I have learnt so much! Even as a complete novice on Net Zero projects and information, I found the sessions easy to follow and other delegates were kind enough to explain technical information in a simple way for beginners like me.

Unfortunately, as with many local authorities I'm sure, I am having to research and carry out Net Zero work on top of my day job and I am finding it very difficult to get everything done.

The process to identify the common themes was helpful and it feels as though we captured all those that are key across the region as well as being those where there is considerable opportunity for securing at scale reductions in emissions.

**For further information or to discuss, please contact:**

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