





















July 2009 Climate Change Update

Key to icons used

Sector					
Transport		Waste		Local Government	
Finance		Planning			
Energy		Economic Development		Climate Change background text	
Region of the UK					
Scotland		North West England		East of England	
Northern Ireland		Yorkshire and Humber		South East England	
Wales		East Midlands		South West England	
North East England		West Midlands		Greater London	

UK Low Carbon Transition Plan

The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan plots out how the UK will meet the cut in emissions set out in the budget of 34% on 1990 levels by 2020.

Transforming the country into a cleaner, greener and more prosperous place to live is at the heart of the Government's economic plans for Building Britain's Future and ensuring the UK is ready to take advantage of the opportunities ahead.

By 2020:

More than 1.2 million people will be in green jobs

- 7 million homes will have benefited from whole house makeovers, and more than 1.5 million households will be supported to produce their own clean energy
- Around 40% of electricity will be from low carbon sources, from renewables, nuclear and clean coal
- We will be importing half the amount of gas that we otherwise would
- The average new car will emit 40% less carbon than now.

The Transition Plan is the most systematic response to climate change of any major developed economy, and sets the standard for others in the run up to crucial global climate talks in Copenhagen in December.

A copy of the plan and a number of supporting documents can be found at:-
http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/publications/lc_trans_plan/lc_trans_plan.aspx

Supporting documents include:

Renewable Energy Strategy



The UK's energy policy aims to meet the challenge of reducing carbon emissions as well as providing a secure and safe supply of energy. Renewable energy is seen as one of the key parts of this strategy, in particular it will decarbonise the energy supply which will help to meet long term climate change targets. As part of the EU Climate and Energy package the UK has committed to sourcing 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020.

There are three main components to the Renewable Energy Strategy; greater financial support; swifter delivery and new resources and technologies.

- The financial framework is based on a series of incentive programmes. The Renewables Obligation will continue support centralised renewable infrastructure. Community scale installations will be supported through twin incentives for renewable heat and feed in tariffs called Clean Energy Cash-Back.
- A new Office for Renewable Energy Deployment will coordinate delivery of renewable energy. Regional Development Agencies are expected to provide the strategic leadership for meeting energy targets in their area. Local authorities should note changes to the planning regime, such as the Infrastructure Planning Committee and new planning policy statements, will be designed to ensure more renewable energy has a swift progression through the planning process.
- A range of funds are being created to drive through investment in research and development of new renewable technologies. The Severn Estuary is currently being considered for a range of proposals to deliver Sever Tidal Power.

There is a lot to be done to smooth the way for renewable energy. Throughout the document areas are highlighted, from grid transmission to the impact on aviation radar, where decisions still need to be made. However, with a long term commitment from the government to invest in renewable technology local authorities should be confident enough to set plans in place and lead renewable projects from start to finish. There are indeed economic benefits to investing early in this new industry (see also Low Carbon Industrial Strategy), but more will need to be done to involve communities in the process so that they can really share the benefits of renewable energy and not see it as a blight on their landscape.

<https://member.lgiu.org.uk/briefings/2009/Pages/200900302.aspx>

The Low Carbon Industrial Strategy (LCIS)



In order to meet the UK climate change target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2050, the government is committed to a transition to a low carbon economy. This strategy sets out the potential opportunities that a low carbon economy would bring to Britain and the government's programme of action that will help British-based firms to seize these opportunities. It introduces new government funding to support sectors with opportunities in a low carbon economy and highlights government investments to promote innovation and skills development in the low carbon sector. It also highlights the key initiatives currently underway in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The areas which the government sees as important for a transition to a low carbon economy are to ensure resource efficiency, modernise infrastructure, develop low carbon skills, generate demand for low carbon products, adapt to climate change and ensure a fair distribution of cost and benefits across the economy from this transition.

The following are of particular relevance to local authorities:

- A proposal to require all county and unitary councils to undertake local economic assessments a local authorities play a key role in developing sustainable local economies
- Low carbon economic areas (LCEAs) led by local authorities and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), with the first to be set up in South West of England
- A financial incentive for local authorities to pilot Local Development Orders, a mechanism to incentivise low carbon development by speeding up planning applications
- Low Carbon Innovation Group set up to deliver Britain's low carbon innovation goals with possible representation from local authorities
- £25 million of existing funding to ten new district heating schemes to supply low carbon heat to communities
- £2 billion of existing funding for local authorities on waste infrastructure from 2008-2011
- A Just Transition forum created to advise the government on ensuring a fair transition to a low carbon economy with representation from local bodies

<https://member.lgiu.org.uk/briefings/2009/Pages/200900304.aspx>

Low Carbon Transport - A Greener Future



The Department for Transport's Low Carbon Transport Strategy outlines the three key themes for driving reductions in emissions from transport sources over the next decade:

- Supporting a shift to new low carbon technologies and fuels
- Promoting lower carbon choices
- Using market mechanisms to support a shift to lower carbon transport

Specific initiatives announced include:

- Cutting average carbon dioxide emissions from new cars across the EU to 95g/km by 2020, a 40% reduction from 2007 levels
- Ensuring the Government leads by example by setting targets for central government departments and their agencies to procure new cars for administrative purposes that meet the EU standard for 2015 (130g/km) in 2011, four years early
- Pressing the EU to require new vans and HGVs to be more efficient
- Investing up to £30 million over the next two years to deliver several hundred low carbon buses, whilst incentivising fuel efficient operation of buses through amendments to Bus Services Operators Grants
- Demonstrating 340 new electric and lower carbon cars on the UK's roads, the largest project of its kind in the world
- Providing help worth about £2000 to £5000 per vehicle towards reducing the price of ultra-low carbon cars for consumers and industry from 2011, and up to £30 million to support the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in six or seven cities across the UK
- Committing to source 10% of UK transport energy from sustainable renewable sources by 2020.
- Launching a competition for the country's first Sustainable Travel City, building on projects in towns which saw reported car trips fall by 9%, walking increase by 14% and cycling increase by 12%
- Investing £140 million in promoting cycling in England in 2008-11 and a new £5 million investment in improving cycle storage at railway stations
- Encouraging rail travel by investing £15bn from 2009 -2014, with greater electrification a key objective.
- Putting a cap on emissions from all flights arriving at or leaving from European airports by including them in the EU Emissions Trading System from 2012
- Introducing a target to limit UK aviation emissions to below 2005 levels by 2050, despite forecast growth in passenger demand, which is likely to be met through more efficient engines and other new technologies and supported by government policies such as changes to airport passenger duty

This document is available from www.hmg.gov.uk/lowcarbon

Publications

ENDS Special report on the UK Carbon Reduction Commitment



The UK Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) is a world first. From April 2010 the scheme will draw thousands of private and public sector organisations into a trading scheme designed to expose and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. British managers need to start preparing now. Could the scheme also be a model for the rest of the world?

To download the ENDS Special Report on the CRC visit www.endsreport.com

Road to Copenhagen



The government released the Road to Copenhagen that sets out why a global deal on climate change is important and what kind of deal the UK is pushing for. The UK priorities for reaching a global deal at Copenhagen includes cutting greenhouse gas emissions, using the carbon market to support emissions reductions, using technology to tackle climate change, adapting to climate change, helping developing countries pay for action and reforming institutions to ensure fair and effective governance.

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/change_energy/tackling_clima/copenhagen/copenhagen.aspx

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

The case for climate change adaptation



The European Green and Blue Space Adaptation for Urban Areas and Eco Towns (GRaBS) project, led by the Town & Country Planning Association, launched a paper on the case for climate change adaptation. It particularly argues for adaptation policy and practice responses to take into account the disproportionate impact on people facing poverty and disadvantage and calls for better regional and local planning and urban design to reflect these vulnerabilities.

http://www.grabs-eu.org/downloads/20090617_GXP.pdf

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

Guidance to planners on carbon emissions reduction



The Royal Town Planning Institute published a set of seven commitments aimed to help planners ensure that carbon emissions reduction is at the forefront of the planning process. The commitments are promoting behavioural change, adapting existing places, working towards responsive legislation and policies, improving current practice, celebrating best practice, compiling best practices and developing climate change education and skills.

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/download/6440/Sevencommitments.pdf>

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

Climate change self evaluation guidance



The Energy Saving Trust produced guidance on climate change self evaluation aimed at partnerships and local authorities that want to improve their approach to climate change. The guide offers support in assessing approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, identifying what you are doing well and where improvements are needed, planning for improvements and preparing well argued evidence for CAA inspectors.

http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Media/node_54450/Climate-Change-Self-Evaluation

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

Defending critical infrastructure



The Institute of Civil Engineering produced a report that sets out their in-depth assessment conducted on the defence of the UK's critical infrastructure. The report found that the main threats to UK infrastructure are system failure, climate change and terrorism and that not enough was being done to ensure that the infrastructure could continue to function in adverse circumstances. It also sets out a list of recommendations to improve the security of our critical infrastructure.

<http://www.ice.org.uk/downloads/Summary%20briefing%20sheet.pdf>

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

Social Housing Energy Saving Programme



The Homes and Communities Academy has published online guidance on the Social Housing Energy Saving Programme that aims to providing £84 million funding for social landlords such as local authorities to insulate hard to treat cavity walls to make homes more energy efficient. The programme aims to tackle 130,000 homes, generate and support 2,500 jobs and save £120 a year on bills for each house. It can also save up to 800kg CO2 per household each year.

<http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/energy-saving-programme>

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

Guidance on recycling collection at flats



The Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) launched new guidance to help local authorities select the most appropriate recycling collection for flats. The guidance will help local authority officers to launch, manage and improve recycling and food waste collection systems from flats. This is important for local authorities as from December 2010 the Household Waste and Recycling Act 2003 will require all councils to collect at least two materials for recycling from all households including flats.

http://www.wrap.org.uk/local_authorities/research_guidance/collections_recycling/recycling_collections_for_flats/index.html

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

Breakthrough for the 21st century report



The Sustainable Development Commission produced a report that sets out 19 breakthrough ideas that could transform the UK into a sustainable society and make the biggest impact on Britain's effort to tackle climate change, resource depletion and inequality. The ideas include transforming the bank associated with the oil and gas industry into one which invest in projects to halt the effects of climate change and using fast-growing algae to absorb and capture the carbon emission given off by industries and mainstreaming cycling.

http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/SDC_Breakthroughs.pdf

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

How to get climate policy back on course report



A consortium of research institutes produced a report that outlines a strategy that aims to avert an otherwise imminent failure in climate policy. Published by the London School of Economics and Political Science's Mackinder Programme and the Institute for Science, Innovation & Society at the University of Oxford, the report argues that policies should focus primarily on improvement in energy efficiency and the decarbonisation of energy supply rather than on emissions.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/mackinderProgramme/pdf/ClimatePolBackonCoursePRODUCTIONFINAL060709.pdf>

(LGiU Local Sustainability Round-up July 2009)

Consultations

Carbon Management Strategy for Schools



The school sector is responsible for 15% of public sector carbon emissions arising from energy use in school buildings, school travel and transport, the procurement of goods and services and the production of waste in schools. We need to reduce these emissions to prevent greater adverse impact on climate change. This consultation is to gather stakeholder views on the feasibility and priority of options for action in the sector, to reduce carbon and greenhouse gases arising from the operation of the school system, while still delivering core business.

Closing Date: Friday 20 November 2009

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1642&external=no&menu=1>

Strengthening local democracy: Consultation - Local authorities tackling climate change



The consultation asks whether councils have the right powers and responsibilities to help address climate change, and invites views on proposals to give local authorities a greater role in tackling climate change through local carbon budgets or other mechanisms. It recognises the importance of involving local citizens in activities that will combat climate change.

The government wants to see councils increasingly active in reducing carbon, taking a key role in meeting UK carbon targets and adapting to the consequences of climate

change. In addition to responsibilities for planning, building control and management of waste, authorities will be encouraged to introduce entirely new roles and services.

Local authorities' activities and performance in this area should be transparent and accountable, encourage local solutions and innovation, and ensure fairness. Initiatives will include the council's role in:

- meeting local carbon budgets
- ensuring that communities benefit from low carbon economic development.

Views are sought on a number of significant issues, which will be used to shape specific policy options, including:

- coordination of funding streams to support low carbon activity in local areas
- innovative financing and investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy
- powers needed to give effect to publicly supported infrastructure plans

Government is also looking at a range of possible incentives to reward progress, and wants to learn from the LGiU-led voluntary carbon trading scheme.

The intention is that new freedoms and responsibilities will be delegated to councils putting in place plans that add value to national climate change policy, and demonstrate local support.

Specific questions focus on the value of current national indicators, how local authorities can add value to national climate change aims, and what measures are needed to ensure that national policies reinforce local efforts. Closing date 2 October 2009

<https://member.lgiu.org.uk/briefings/2009/Pages/200900317.aspx>

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/localdemocracyconsultation>

Consultation on the Government's Adaptation Reporting Power



The Climate Change Act 2008 gave the Government a power to ask public sector organisations, and statutory undertakers (such as energy and water companies) to report on their assessment of the risks climate change poses to them, and the actions they are going to take in response (the Adaptation Reporting Power). This consultation covers the main questions about the proposed use of the new power: who should report; what needs to be done; how should it be done; and what are the costs and benefits?

For full details, go to www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/climate-change-adapting/index.htm The deadline for responses is 9 September.

Coastal Change Policy



The government has released the Coastal Change Policy for consultation. Coastal change is the process in which the English coastline changes as a result of climate change such as sea-level rise and extreme weather events. The policy sets out the government's ideas for how coastal communities can successfully adapt to the impacts of coastal change and the government's role in supporting this. In addition to the consultation, the government is inviting bids from local authorities interested in becoming a coastal change pathfinder to pilot a new £11 million coastal change fund to explore some of the draft ideas and guidance set out in this consultation.

The Coastal Change Policy is now open for consultation and the pathfinder scheme is open for application. The deadline for both initiatives is 25 September 2009.

Further details are available from:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/coastal-change/index.htm>

LGiU subscribers can access a full briefing on the proposals from:

<https://member.lgiu.org.uk/briefings/2009/Pages/200900294.aspx>

News

From Kyoto to Kettering, Copenhagen to Croydon: local government's manifesto for building low-carbon communities



Local authorities have an absolutely crucial and pivotal role in tackling climate change. The LGA's new manifesto sets out the framework – and specific policies – needed to enable local government to develop low carbon communities. If central government gives local government the adequate framework and resources to deliver, councils can take on the responsibility for reducing emissions and adapting to climate change at the local level.

Read more at: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelId=2410039>

UK Climate Projections



Now that the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) have been launched, UKCIP (UK Climate Impacts Programme) is looking to work with stakeholders to put together case studies on the use of UKCP09, to enhance the UKCP09 user guidance. Please contact anna.steynor@ukcip.org.uk if you are interested in working on a case study and briefly outline what your potential project would entail.

Scottish parliament commits to cut emissions by 42% by 2020s



Scotland has set itself the world's most ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets, committing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 42% by 2020. The target set matches the more ambitious intended budget set by the CCC, which the CCC hopes the UK Government will move to following on from international negotiations to take place at Copenhagen in December.

<http://www.theccc.org.uk/news/ccc-newsletter/335-scottish-parliament-commits-to-cut-emissions-by-42-by-2020s>

Local projects receive £600,000 in 'Big Green Challenge Plus'



Community projects aimed at reducing carbon emissions and developing clean, local energy sources are set to receive up to £20,000 funding under a new partnership between the Department of Energy and Climate Change and NESTA.

The collaboration between DECC and NESTA (the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) will see direct funding and support packages, worth a total of £600,000, provided by DECC to 17 grassroots projects across England. NESTA will administer the scheme.

A low carbon co-operative in Manchester, a project to deliver local hydro power from water mills near Bath, and a plan to install renewable energy technologies on local farms around Winchester, are among the projects to receive funding under the 'Big Green Challenge Plus' partnership.

<http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/news/pn080/pn080.aspx>

Flooding law threatens council finances



Town hall leaders have warned that new flooding laws could leave local authorities with a funding black hole.

The draft floods and water bill will give councils the lead role they have been calling for in managing surface water in their area.

Councils will coordinate water companies, the Environment Agency and other local organisations to make sure drainage systems work properly and homes are protected, according to the government's proposals for improving flood risk management and ensuring water supplies are more secure.

However, in its response to the government's consultation on the bill which closed last week, the LGA criticised the government's calculations. It rejected the suggestions that local authorities will be able to fund the new role through savings they make by spending less clearing up after floods.

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelid=2665666>

Wind farms held up in planning process



A survey in the Guardian shows the extent to which wind farms are struggling to get through the planning process. The dispute at the Vestas factory on the Isle of Wight has highlighted the dispute over the siting of wind farms in rural locations.

New adaptation sub-committee appointed



The first six members of the adaptation sub-committee to the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) have been appointed by the government, headed by the newly-appointed Chair Lord John Krebs. The adaptation sub-committee will sit within the CCC. The CCC is an independent body established under the Climate Change Act to advise the Government on setting the first legally binding carbon budgets and to report to Parliament on the progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The CCC also advises on what the UK's long-term climate change target should be as a fair contribution towards a global deal.

<http://www.theccc.org.uk/about-the-ccc/adaptation-sub-committee>

Councils can create over 70,000 jobs



Independent research released by Friends of the Earth reveals that over 70,000 jobs could be created across England and Wales if local councils reduce carbon emissions by insulating homes and businesses, fitting renewable energy to buildings and installing low carbon district heating systems. These jobs include loft ladders, architects, plumbers, builders, electricians, plasterers and insulation specialists. New administrative, transit and warehouse positions could also be created to support insulation and renewable energy industries.

http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/media_briefing/carbon_descent_jobs_research.pdf

Four eco-towns get go ahead



The government announced four eco-town sites have passed tough standards to go through to the next stages of planning, public consultation and planning approval. The sites located in Hampshire, Cornwall, Norfolk and Oxfordshire will lead the way in innovative low-carbon designs and infrastructure. Local authorities in other areas will be able to bid for up to £5m to conduct planning work on proposals for other sites that wish to become eco-towns. However, LGiU believes that the planning approval and public consultation processes should come before the government's assessment of eco-town sites if the views of communities in those areas are to be considered.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1284621>