

do a little  change a lot



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN SCOTLAND
Guidance for Chief Executives of Scottish local authorities



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Making it work together

**climate friendly policies
will reduce the worst
anticipated impacts of
climate change and offer
economic and social
opportunities**



Guidance for Chief Executives of Scottish local authorities

Climate change is recognised as the most serious environmental threat we currently face. It is a threat that must be tackled by innovative and forward thinking. It cannot be addressed effectively by a single agency and requires to be considered as a priority action area by a wide range of public service providers, the voluntary and the private sector. Community engagement is essential. Local Government has lead responsibility for developing Community Planning in Scotland and through this mechanism should seek to address the climate change agenda together with its partners and by effectively engaging the community.

Climate friendly policies will reduce the worst anticipated impacts of climate change and offer economic and social opportunities. By taking early action both to address and to adapt to the expected impacts of climate change, our communities will benefit from an improved environment including warmer homes, new business opportunities, improved air quality, less waste, and sustainable forms of transport.

But if we ignore climate change, the prospects are bleak – additional costs and misery from increased storm damage and flooding; lost revenue and perhaps failure of businesses involved in activities reliant on the climate such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism; and higher incidence of health problems such as respiratory diseases associated with damp.

Tackling energy consumption and reducing reliance on fossil fuels lies at the heart of many of the policies required to achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. The realisation of these policies needs to be addressed within the community planning process if economic and social implications are also to be considered. Local authorities are major users of energy and taking action to reduce energy use offers potential financial savings. But, just as important, it will act as a signal to others that energy wastage is unacceptable. In addition, by seeking to obtain supplies of energy from new renewable sources, which are exempt from the climate change levy, local authorities can make financial savings and be at the forefront of encouraging investment and expansion of Scotland's renewable industry.

Climate change will impact on our country and our communities. That is now considered a certainty. That is why it requires a commitment at the highest level and, by working together, we can prepare for the challenges we will face. Ignoring the threat of climate change is not an option - we must act now.

Rhona Brankin
Deputy Minister for Environment
and Rural Development

Norman Murray
CoSLA President

What this guidance is for

Climate change is a global issue, which is probably already affecting your local communities. Climate change protection, therefore, is an essential factor in community well being. Further, a commitment to Local Agenda 21, the local strategy for sustainability, looks for both a long term vision and a global perspective in community planning that should therefore encompass action on sustainable energy. This guidance is intended to help local authority Chief Executives lead the response to the challenge of climate change. You have a vital role to play and are best placed to make sure that your authority supports the Scottish and UK Climate Change Programmes, both published in November 2000.

Whilst this guidance has been designed specifically for Chief Executives it will be of use to elected members and officials and we hope you will distribute it widely throughout your authority.

CHIEF EXECUTIVES - ASK YOURSELVES:

Do you know how climate change will affect your community?

Do you see your authority as leading the response to climate change in your area, for example, through the community planning process or following the lead of others?

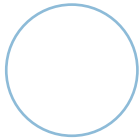
Do you know what actions your authority is already taking to tackle climate change and how these link up with other initiatives, especially those of your partners?

Do you promote climate protection and respond positively to opportunities outside the public estate?

Have you assigned responsibility for co-ordinating your response and developing your climate change strategy?

Do you know what impact the services provided by your authority have on climate change?

Have you briefed elected members yet and have you made a policy commitment that will translate to objectives and strategy as the community planning process progresses?



Why we need to act

The floods that occurred in Scotland in spring 2000 showed vividly how vulnerable we are to the effects of severe weather. Although we cannot say that any particular episode of severe weather was due to climate change, we do know that the greenhouse gases that are already in the atmosphere mean that extreme weather events are likely to happen more often, however effective we are at cutting emissions.

Research carried out for the Scottish Executive suggests that Scotland is likely to become warmer, wetter and windier with an increased risk of flooding - particularly in the west - as a result of climate change. We therefore need to adapt. We can also avoid the worst effects of climate change if we reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

The ABC buying consortium of 12 local authorities and associate member organisations will save over £450,000 on their electricity bills in the next two years. This is because they are buying 20% (about 112 Gigawatt hours) of their electricity from renewable sources, which is exempt from the Climate Change Levy. This means they will reduce carbon emissions by at least 10,000 tonnes per year. The consortium has also negotiated for 5% of its unmetered supplies for street lighting from 'green energy' sources, believed to be the first contract of its kind and one which delivers a further saving of £37,000.

Around the world, countries are working to cut emissions through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The UK has a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 12.5% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012. The UK Government also has a domestic goal to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 20% below 1990 levels by 2010. The UK's climate change programme explains how the UK is on course to meet current targets, thanks in part to the action local authorities have already taken. *The Scottish Climate Change Programme* supports the UK Programme and describes action in devolved areas that will deliver a Scottish share of these objectives.

THE BENEFITS

Many of the actions that local authorities can take will also contribute to the wider objectives of local authorities and their partners in the community planning process, i.e. social justice, health improvement. For example, a strategy on climate change could mean:

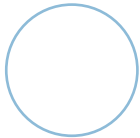
- lower fuel bills, helping people to tackle fuel poverty and its health effects;
- lower costs for businesses, making them more competitive;
- more efficient use of resources in public services;
- new employment and training opportunities for your area;
- a better transport system, improving access for local residents and businesses;
- improved local air quality; and
- increased resilience to the effects of climate change, leading to greater protection and a better quality of life for people living and working in your area.

South Ayrshire Council set up an Energy Agency with European funding (SAVE II) to work with the in-house energy management section. Its purpose is to co-ordinate an energy strategy for the Council that covers energy efficiency and renewables promotion in the public and private sectors. The establishment of the Agency provided the capacity to run key projects and enabled access to further external funding for several authorities. Benefits to residents and business include, £250,000 for central heating installations and training on energy efficiency to over 200 organisations.

CHIEF EXECUTIVES ACTION LIST

The remainder of this guidance helps you to consider what you are already doing and to identify areas where you might be able to do more as service providers, corporate managers and community leaders. Drawing together these actions and filling the gaps could form the main elements of a Council climate change strategy. Integrating climate change strategy within your community plan will mean this will have greater robustness and provide a more sustainable vision of the future.

It can also help to identify those areas where you think additional support or guidance to local authorities is required, suggests where this might be obtained and asks for your feedback.



As service providers

- Do you have a **transport strategy** that will cut emissions by promoting better travel plans and reducing traffic levels?
- Do your **development plans** bring together a set of planning policies that promote sustainable development by, for example, **siting** development to reduce the need to travel, by providing a positive framework guiding developers to locations where renewable energy developments are likely to be permitted and by encouraging energy efficiency and the prudent use of natural resources?
- Does your **housing strategy** aim to meet Home Energy Conservation Act targets for all tenures and improve the energy rating of homes? Does it make best use of Warm Deal and maximise investment through the Energy Efficiency Commitment scheme in partnership with utilities?
- Do you ensure sustainable outputs from the **Central Heating Scheme**? Do you have a **strategy for cross-referral** to agencies that provide fuel debt and energy advice and grants?
- Do you have a **waste strategy** that aims to reduce landfill emissions?

As corporate managers

- Do you have an **asset management plan and capital strategy** that identify sustainability as a strategic objective?
- Are you minimising the impact of the **climate change levy** by:
 - Monitoring energy use;
 - Setting targets for energy efficiency improvements;
 - Operating a self sustaining fund to invest in efficiency measures;
 - Requiring renewable energy options in tendering exercises;
 - Identifying energy use as a criteria in purchasing decisions; and
 - Accessing energy funds and grants?
- Do you plan to make an **application for assistance** under the Scottish Clean Energy Demonstration Scheme?
- Does your authority propose to become a **Council for Climate Protection**?
- How is sustainability integrated into your management and decision making processes? Are you building **performance management** and assessment around sustainability? Have you integrated environmental management with your quality system?

As community leaders

- Are you taking a leading role on this issue by using the **community planning process** to help your partners and your community understand what sustainable development may mean for them and the links to climate change?
- Does your **community planning process** include reaching a strategic agreement on taking action on climate change? Does it fully involve partners in pursuing economic, social and environmental well-being through jointly resourced energy action?
- Do you **engage the local community** in developing a vision for the future that encompasses climate change protection and the use of sustainable energy, and agreement on the means to deliver that vision?
- Have you reviewed your **Local Agenda 21 strategy** to reflect the importance of climate change? Is your LA21 strategy fully integrated with your community plan?
- Do you help local businesses to see the potential for **competitive advantage** in being more energy efficient and anticipating climate change?
- Do you lead by example publicising your achievements, e.g. by showing how energy efficiency investment has been worthwhile or that **travel planning** can work?

As service providers

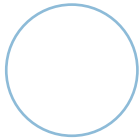
- Do your strategies for **educational policy development** include innovative ways of promoting citizenship? Do they focus on sustainability?
- Do your **publicity programmes** raise people's awareness of climate change and help them to identify what they can do?
- Do you take **action to improve local air quality** which recognises the additional benefits of reducing greenhouse gases?
- Do you aim to **promote the Government's climate change programme by education and enforcement**, through the council's regulatory roles in environmental health, building control, etc?
- Have you considered how your **Structure Plan** might take an integrated approach to energy management (supply, demand, integration of renewables and demonstration projects)?

As corporate managers

- Are you aware of how well your **buildings** compare with best practice? Are you working towards improving energy performance in new building and refurbishment?
- Does your **best value programme** require each review to assess sustainability? Have you considered sustainability or climate change as a cross cutting review? Is energy part of public performance reporting?
- Does your **vehicle fleet** minimise its environmental impact, for example, through clean fuelled vehicles, low emissions and good fuel efficiency? Does your authority also have a **travel plan** covering your employees' travel to, from, and during, work?
- Does your **procurement strategy** promote green purchasing?
- Do you have a **climate change strategy** that is integrated with other policies, carried through to functional objectives and is implemented vigorously?

As community leaders

- Do you involve **key partners** in tackling climate change, for example, by sharing good practice, and by maximising sustainable outputs from externally funded projects?
- Do you support **renewal and regeneration** partnership initiatives that integrate sustainable energy and climate protection, by including buildings of a high standard, energy service companies or community energy efficiency businesses?
- Do your **Local Biodiversity Action Plans** consider local wildlife sites and other 'stepping stones' for wildlife to disperse as a consequence of climate change?
- Have you considered setting voluntary local **targets**? Are you **reporting** progress on related sustainability indicators to elected members and local people?



ADAPTING TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change will have far-reaching effects on our economy, society and environment. Research continues into how best we can respond. But it is clear that we will need to build flexibility into all aspects of strategic decision making by local authorities and their partners in the community planning process.

- When you make **planning and development decisions on infrastructure and buildings**, do you consider the location of the development, its resilience to more extreme weather and likely pressures on utilities such as water?

Other questions to ask include:

- How vulnerable are your authority's **operations and responsibilities** to climate change? What aspects are currently vulnerable and how can they be adapted to make them resilient to both current and predicted extremes?
- Does your **development plan** contain policies to avoid development in areas of significant flood risk?
- Do your **emergency arrangements/plans** recognise the increased risk of weather related incidents and provide for them? Are you taking preventative steps where possible? For example, does your **flood prevention policy** include early warning for flood risks arising from watercourses for which your council is responsible. Does it increase **road drainage provision**?
- Do you consider whether your programmes for renovating old **housing stock** and building new homes are sufficiently resilient to accommodate climate change over the lifetime of the homes?

Sustainable energy provision has been placed at the heart of the development plan for the 3000 acres of the South East Wedge by Midlothian and Edinburgh Councils, with proposals for community heating schemes driven by energy efficient combined heat and power and by exploring the potential for thermal heat from ground water heat recovery.

Combined heat and power and heat recovery schemes have been shown to reduce householders' energy bills and, through Energy Services, have been integrated with home insulation packages for warm, affordable homes.

THE NEED FOR CONTINUING ACTION

The need to adapt to the effects of climate change and to cut greenhouse gas emissions will be with us for the rest of this century and beyond. Experts predict that we will need global cuts of at least 60% over the next 100 years to stabilise atmospheric levels of greenhouse gases. The UK is also likely to find future international targets more difficult to meet as, for instance, our nuclear power stations close down.

Each local authority has a vital role in leading community responses to the challenge of climate change. Strategies developed now within the community planning process could pay huge dividends in the future. Your local authority may already be doing a great deal but, if we are to meet the longer term challenges, then we will need to achieve more. The organisations sponsoring this guidance aim to review this action plan in the future, to stimulate continual progress.

Further help and advice on climate change is available from:

- The [Scottish climate change programme](#), supports the UK climate change programme and describes action in devolved areas to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Copies are available on the Scottish Executive's climate change website at: www.scotland.gov.uk/climatechange. The Executive's climate change web-site also gives more detail on action in Scotland to tackle climate change and contains links to other useful websites. Enquiries can be e-mailed to climate.change@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
- The [UK's climate change programme](#) gives more details of the Government's plans for tackling climate change, and it emphasises the key role of local authorities. Copies are available from the Stationery Office and through a link on the Scottish Executive's climate change website at: www.scotland.gov.uk/climatechange
- The [UK Climate Impacts Programme](#) helps organisations to assess their vulnerability to climate change so that they can plan how to adapt. The latest climate change scenarios for the UK are available from UKCIP. Further details can be found on the UKCIP's website at: www.ukcip.org.uk. The findings of research to consider Regional Climate Change Scenarios for Scotland are available on the Scottish Executive's climate change website at: www.scotland.gov.uk/climatechange
- The [Society of Local Authority Chief Executives](#). Their website address is www.solace.org.uk
- The [Convention of Scottish Local Authorities](#) whose website address is www.cosla.gov.uk
- The [Scottish Energy Efficiency Office](#) can offer advice on how to reduce energy consumption: www.energy-efficiency.org



- The [Energy Saving Trust](http://www.est.org.uk) can provide advice on delivering energy efficiency to domestic customers: www.est.org.uk
- The [Local Authority Energy Advisory Service](http://www.practicalhelp.org.uk) can give help and advice on energy efficiency: www.practicalhelp.org.uk
- [Scottish Environment Protection Agency](http://www.sepa.org.uk) website at: www.sepa.org.uk

Other linked initiatives:

- The [Councils for Climate Protection \(CCP\)](http://www.idea.gov.uk/climate). In its first phase, this scheme is working with 24 councils across England and Wales to develop community-wide greenhouse gas inventories and climate protection plans. The CCP will provide guidance, training and good practice studies for all local authorities on the integration of climate protection into the local government improvement agenda. You can find further details on the Idea website: www.idea.gov.uk/climate
- [Teaching Company Scheme on Energy and the Environment](http://www.seef.org.uk). The Scottish Energy Environment Foundation (SEEF) is promoting a Teaching Company Scheme (TCS) to link the knowledge within Scottish Universities to Scottish companies, assisting the development of technologies and practices that will reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Companies involved in the scheme can be contracted to supply their knowledge and technologies to other organisations, including Scottish local authorities. For further information contact SEEF on 0141 548 2034 or e-mail: info@seef.org.uk
- The [Scottish Energy Demonstration Scheme](http://www.energy-efficiency.org) is operated by the Scottish Energy Efficiency Office. The purpose of the scheme is to encourage the development, demonstration, application and replication of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies in Scotland. Assistance towards the cost of specific projects is available in the form of capital and revenue grants - subject to a maximum overall grant limit of £80,000. Further details available on the Scottish Energy Efficiency Office website: www.energy-efficiency.org
- The [Carbon Trust](http://www.carbon-trust.org) will recycle receipts from the climate change levy to accelerate the take-up of cost effective, low carbon technologies by business and other levy payers.
- The Scottish Executive's *do a little: change a lot* campaign will provide the public with information about easy steps that they can take to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

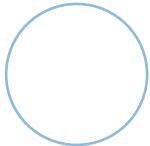
We would be pleased to receive information on the actions you are taking or propose to take. We would also be happy to receive feedback on this document and your suggestions for what further support and guidance would be useful to you and from what source. Please send details to [Fenella McEwan, Energy Adviser, CoSLA, Rosebery House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5XZ](mailto:Fenella@cosla.gov.uk) or e-mail: Fenella@cosla.gov.uk before 31 October 2001.

strategies developed now could pay huge dividends in the future

Contact:

The Scottish Executive
Climate Change Team
Victoria Quay
EDINBURGH
EH6 6QQ

Tel: 0131 244 7815
Fax: 0131 244 0211
Email: climate.change@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Small changes in the way we perform everyday tasks can have huge impacts on Scotland's environment.

Walking short distances rather than using the car, or being careful not to overfill the kettle are just two positive steps we can all take.

This butterfly represents the beauty and fragility of Scotland's environment. The motif will be utilised extensively by the Scottish Executive and its partners in their efforts to persuade people they can do a little to change a lot.

© Crown Copyright 2001

Copies of this guidance are available on the Scottish Executive website at www.scotland.gov.uk/climatechange

A limited number of hard copies of the booklet are available from:

The Scottish Executive
Climate Change Team
1.H-North

Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Email: climate.change@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

We may make a charge for copies.

Produced on behalf of the Scottish Executive by Astron B20560 8/01

ISBN 0-7559-0133-9

