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Sustainability Bulletin

April 2025



The LGA's Sustainability Improvement Programme is delivered in partnership and funded through the Crown Commercial Service. The programme provides opportunities to build councils' capability and capacity in sustainability and the environment.

Improvement

Spotlight on Merton's Mission to Tackle Air Quality

The Air Quality Team at the Regulatory Services Partnership (led by Merton Council and including Richmond and Wandsworth) embarked on a 'Cleaning Up Construction' project in 2019 to tackle construction pollution. Since then, the team's remit has evolved from monitoring air quality, influencing council contracts to delivering the world's first Low Emissions Zone for Construction.

[Read about the case study on our website.](#)

Addressing the Nature Emergency Webinar for Local Planning Authority Councillors

Wednesday 2 April 2025, 3.00pm - 4.00pm or 6.00pm - 7.00pm | Virtual Event | Councillors

This online event for members will cover the challenges and opportunities their role presents to address the nature emergency and take action to deliver nature

recovery. It is especially relevant to cabinet members and portfolio holders. Councillors can sign up for one of two repeat sessions at 15.00pm or 18:00pm. Sign up on [Eventbrite to attend](#).

Planning for the Net Zero Energy Transition

Thursday 3 April 2025, 10.00am - 11.30am | Virtual Event | Officers and Councillors

This virtual event will focus on how councils are coordinating work within their local energy systems to ensure they have a local and regional vision to achieve net zero targets. Speakers will share insights on how local authorities can be at the centre of the UK's energy transition by developing plans for local area energy and heat networks alongside the National Energy System Operator (NESO) and the emerging Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESPs).

[Sign up for the Net Zero Energy Transition \(virtual event\).](#)

Green Jobs and Skills to Develop the 'Green Economy' Roundtable

Thursday 24 April 2025, 10.00am - 11.45am | Roundtable | Officers

To achieve net zero targets, local areas are looking to understand the skills gaps emerging within the low-carbon sector and, as a result, the opportunities for upskilling the workforce. This LGA Sustainability roundtable will explore the role local government has in developing the 'Green Economy and Skills' to meet gaps and demand. It will feature 'spotlight on' presentations from councils with experience and insights on leading green skills programmes before we progress into a roundtable discussion.

[Sign up for the Green Jobs and Skills Roundtable.](#)

Community Energy Knowledge Exchange

On 27 February, the LGA held a knowledge exchange event about community energy projects for officers. The London Borough of Barnet presented their experience supporting projects and led the discussion on how councils can enable and convene in this area. [The session notes are posted on the Sustainability Hub.](#)

Adaptation and Resilience Roundtable

The LGA hosted an adaptation and resilience roundtable on 11 March 2025 for officers and councillors. West Sussex County Council presented their approach to resilience and their Climate Vulnerability Index and Oxfordshire County

Council shared their cross-agency approach to flooding. [The notes and slides are available on the Sustainability Hub.](#)

Policy

Emissions Trading Scheme

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) are keen to discuss some of the concerns local authorities highlighted in their response to government's consultation on extending the Emissions Trading Scheme to include waste incinerators, and what that might do to the viability of heat networks, new or existing. We have blocked out the morning of 15 April 2025 and morning of 17 April 2025 for a discussion with DESNZ officials. If you would like to be involved in a discussion on either of those days, please email andrew.richmond@local.gov.uk.

Hydrogen webinar

On Wednesday 5 March 2025 the LGA hosted a webinar on 'What local authority planners need to know about hydrogen'. DESNZ is supporting the development of the hydrogen economy through funding research and feasibility studies and this session was a policy briefing to assist local authority planners who may be assessing hydrogen project planning applications. The webinar was well attended with over 110 local authority attendees.

Non-domestic private rental sector minimum energy efficiency standards

Technopolis, on behalf of DESNZ, would like to collect insights on your experience implementing central government policy. Technopolis invites you to share your views in a 30-minute interview on the non-domestic private rental sector Minimum Level of Energy Efficiency for their evaluation. Please indicate your interest and availability [online form](#) or email beth.sloan@technopolis-group.com for more information.

Warm Homes Retrofit Funding

Government has confirmed allocations to councils of the [local grant](#) and [Social Housing Fund 3](#) for warm homes. There are several reforms to the grants which are positive, moving towards our asks for funding certainty, flexibility, and support for place-based approaches to retrofit. Trailblazer devolution areas will include retrofit funding within integrated settlements. The LGA is engaging with

Government as it develops its Warm Homes Plan, we hope to see further reforms enabling place-based approaches to retrofit.

Regional Energy Strategic Planning (RESP) forums

The National Energy System Operator (NESO) is commencing their first ever RESP forums. These online forums are intended for organisations, businesses, and individuals with a keen interest in the energy system in your area. By joining your nearest forum, you will learn more about NESO and our RESP role, meet the NESO RESP team for your region/nation and help NESO understand the energy issues that are most important to your local area. To sign-up, please visit [NESO web page](#), which lists all forum dates and times, and includes registration links for each event.

Heat networks and the energy ombudsman

From 1 April 2025, new legislation will mean that all heat network consumers will have access to Energy Ombudsman for alternative dispute resolution. To ensure a smooth transition, Energy Ombudsman is urging all heat network suppliers to register with them as the new legislation comes into effect. [Find out more on the Ombudsman website.](#)

Local Partnerships

Greenhouse Gas Accounting and Benchmarking

Councils can use the free [Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool](#) and [Waste Emissions Calculator](#) from the LGA and Local Partnerships to track emissions. You can submit completed toolkits to access emissions benchmarking against other councils and compare performance with peers.

We are always open to feedback on the tools to support continued development at ghgaccounting@localpartnerships.gov.uk

From policy to practice: making electric vehicle (EV) charging accessible for all UK households

New government guidance tackles one of the biggest adoption barriers for electric vehicles: charging for homes without driveways. Practical solutions are finally within reach for millions of households. [Find out more about how this can be supported by local authorities.](#)

Contract Management Pioneer Programme (CMPP)

Two new resources have now been published as part of the CMPP. The **Sustainability Procurement Playbook** provides practical guidance on improving the sustainability performance of new contracts. The **Supply Chain Decarbonisation Strategy** is a template strategy for local authorities to review and update and select the content they wish to use. View tools 19 and 20 online. [View tools 19 and 20 on the CMPP resources page.](#)

Visit the [Sustainability hub](#) or email sustainability@local.gov.uk

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