

## Climate Change and COP26

### Purpose of report

For direction.

### Summary

This report sets out the opportunities to participate in the COP26 UN climate change conference, including the LGA's programme of activity and communications to date. It also provides updates on the work of the LGA's Climate Change Task Group and wider policy work. A briefing that sets out our priority objectives and asks in engagement and lobbying opportunities has been appended.

### Recommendation

That the Board discuss and provide direction on the LGA's activities and opportunities to participate at COP26 with the purpose of strengthening the role of local government as a significant partner in the drive to meet the national ambitions on climate change.

### Action

Actions will follow from the discussion

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### Background

1. The UK is hosting, for the first time, the next UN international climate change conference in Glasgow from 1-12 November 2021 (COP26). The conference will bring together international delegations to agree on a process to accelerate progress towards the goal of the Paris agreement (to keep the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees).
2. The Government is planning for a physical Conference to take place which will be delivered across two sites in Glasgow: the Scottish Events Campus (SEC), referred to as the Blue Zone, and the Glasgow Science Centre, known as the Green Zone. The Blue Zone is managed by the United Nations (UN) and will host the negotiations. It will bring together delegations from 197 parties and observer organisations who can hold panel discussions, exhibits and side events.
3. The Green Zone is managed by the UK Government and is the platform for the general public, youth groups, academia, business and civil society who can host events, exhibitions, workshops, creative installations and other activities.
4. The Conference itself has four COP26 goals which are mitigation, adaptation, finance and collaboration. The UK Government is calling on international leaders to be more ambitious in their carbon reduction targets. It is positioning the UK as a global leader in responding to climate change and set a new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in December 2020 to reduce carbon emissions by at least 68% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. The [UK Presidency Programme](#) has been published which provides key areas of focus for each day of the Conference to progress the negotiations and drive ambition and action.
5. As you know, the LGA has been working hard to ensure that local government is recognised as central to the achievement of the nation's climate change ambitions, through its leadership of place. The Executive has established the Climate Change Task Group to lead this, supported by the EEHT Board, which has been engaging with Ministers and our domestic and international partners to make sure that COP26 has lasting, positive impacts for the local government sector.
6. This report will cover the following items:
  - 6.1. LGA priority objectives
  - 6.2. Successful activity on COP26 to date
  - 6.3. A programme of proposed LGA events at COP26
  - 6.4. Updates on the Climate Change Task Group
  - 6.5. Other policy updates
  - 6.6. A programme of activity and communications over the period July – November 2021
  - 6.7. Appendix - Key policy messages in lobbying and engagement opportunities

### **LGA priority objectives**

7. The LGA's priority objectives are set out below and a full brief of our key messages and asks from government can be found in the appendix at the end. This will be updated following recent feedback from the Climate Change Task Group and EEHT Board to include finance and our work on nature and biodiversity, particularly on the Environment Bill. Officers are also drafting an 'elevator pitch' of the LGA's key asks for engagement and communications opportunities at COP26.
- 7.1 **National/local government partnership** – local government would like to work towards building a partnership with central government to tackling climate change. The Government should use the forthcoming Net Zero Strategy, backed by the Comprehensive Spending Review to set out how national and local government will work together to deliver net zero along with a commitment to a national framework. A leadership group of central government departments and local leaders should be established to oversee the delivery of a national framework.
- 7.2 **Specific sector challenges** – some of the biggest challenges to achieving net zero are decarbonising our homes and transport systems. Many councils are already leading local and regional retrofit programmes and supporting the switch to low carbon and active modes of transport. However, councils need the right support, investment and investment conditions, including long-term certainty and clarity of roles across national and local government, and the business community to achieve the outcomes of decarbonisation.
- 7.3 **Supporting and improving the local government sector** – local government is already demonstrating great leadership and delivering successful, innovative projects, but there is a need for the sector to develop its skills and capacity to fulfil its potential. This includes exchanging experience of what works in different places, how the impacts of different initiatives can be understood, an assessment of costs and benefits, success replicated, and the need to upskill within local government. It could also include opportunities for central and local government to collectively learn from international approaches on multilevel collaboration on this challenge.
- 7.4 **COP26 specific asks** – we want to ensure lasting, positive impacts for the local government sector from COP26. We are supporting international calls for multilevel action and formal representation of regional and local government through a dedicated chapter for subnational governments in the official agreement reached at COP26. We have also been calling for a key role in designing and participating in the dedicated local government day on 11 November 2021, with the UK Government. However, we will need to continue to push Government in our political engagement to ensure that UK local government has a key role in the UK Government's plans and events.

### **Successful activity on COP26 to date**

8. The best opportunity to influence national and international key players will come through gaining access to the UN-controlled blue zone. The Climate Change Task Group has provided strategic oversight of the LGA's political engagement on climate change and

presence in Glasgow. Since the Task Group's establishment in April 2021, the LGA has made significant progress to develop strategic relationships and secure a strong presence at COP26. These include the following:

- 8.1. The LGA had been calling for a dedicated local and regional government day in line with previous COPs and we welcomed confirmation of this day by Allegra Stratton, COP26 spokesperson at Annual Conference. It will take place on 11 November 2021 under the theme of Cities, Regions and Built Environment. It will be important that local government in the UK has a key role in designing and participating in that day.
- 8.2. Through the UN Global Climate Action (GCA) Programme, we are able to send delegates to the formal part of the COP26 conference which will provide access to the blue zone with equivalent observer status. We are working through the Task Group, Lead Members on the EEHT Board and the political group offices on a provisional list of 10 delegates that is a mix of Members and officers.
- 8.3. We have received confirmation that our expression of interest to the UN GCA Hub has been successful and we have been given an indicative date to hold an event on 10 November 2021 at 10am, inside the blue zone. Officers are working on the content of the event (see below for further details).
- 8.4. We have been successful in our application for an exhibition space in the public-facing green zone, in partnership with NILGA. This will take place on 11 November 2021 the Cities, Regions and Built Environment Day and we will showcase the leading work of councils to tackle climate change. We are working closely with NILGA and colleagues in improvement, communications and events on the content and logistics of the exhibition stand. This is being overseen by the Task Group.

#### **A programme of proposed LGA events at COP26**

9. It will be important for the LGA to be active participants in the blue zone and capitalise on opportunities to communicate our key messages and lobbying priorities. Housing and transport are significant challenges for councils and have been important areas of policy focus for the EEHT Board over the last 12 months. We have been working with the UN and ICLEI to seek opportunities for us to influence these agendas through events and speaking/meeting opportunities which are set out as follows.
10. The UN's Global Climate Action Programme will host an interactive "action hub" for the two weeks of the conference (subject to any changes to the format and scope of the conference). The purpose-built amphitheatre will feature a programme of interactive and participatory sessions. The LGA received confirmation that we have been successful in our expression of interest and will hold an event on place leadership at 10am on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> November. Officers are working on the content of the event.

11. The Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) constituency has a Multilevel Action Pavilion in the blue zone. We have offered to be a session partner and proposed to hold an event on the afternoon and evening of 10 November 2021 in line with the UK Presidency theme of transport. There is a cost of £10,000 to be a session partner. We have confirmation from the LGMA's focal point, ICLEI that we will be able to host an event but await clarification on the date and details.
12. Below is a table of our proposed events at COP26. It is important to note that some of these events are not certain and we are waiting for clarification or further details on them. It has been difficult to plan due to the impact of Covid-19 on the ability of the UK Government to provide clarity on the logistics of the Conference. We will let Members know as soon as we have further information.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>Wednesday 10 November 2021</b>  <b>Time – TBC (<i>am is preferable</i>)</b>  <i>30 – 45 mins</i>	UN Global Climate Action Hub, blue zone	The UK Presidency theme is transport.  The details of the event are still to be determined. We proposed an event focused on place leadership to tackling climate change and including a short film, guest speaker and/or panel session.
<b>Wednesday 10 November 2021</b>  <b>Time – TBC (<i>pm through to evening is preferable</i>)</b>	LGMA pavilion, blue zone	The UK Presidency theme is transport.  Proposed afternoon session that will merge into an evening/drinks reception for the wider local government family.
<b>Thursday 11 November 2021</b>  <i>Daytime/evening</i>	LGMA pavilion, blue zone  And/or  UK Presidency pavilion, blue zone	The UK Presidency themes is cities, regions and built environment.  Events and activities on this day are still to be determined. The LGA is part of a joint working group (to be set up), coordinated by ICLEI with LGMA partners to shape the agenda inside the LGMA pavilion. The LGMA are hosting an evening reception.  The LGA is also calling for a key role in participating and shaping this day with the UK Government. We understand that our joint proposal with the four UK local government associations to the Cabinet Office is being considered. However, we will need to continue to push Government in our political engagement to ensure local government has a key role in the UK Government's plans and events.

<p><b>Thursday 11 November 2021</b></p> <p><i>All day</i></p>	<p>Green zone</p>	<p>The LGA in partnership with NILGA has an exhibition stand in the public-facing green zone.</p> <p>It will be managed by officers.</p>
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### Climate Change Task Group updates

13. Earlier this year, the Executive Advisory Board agreed to establish a Climate Change Task Group to oversee the LGA's strategic engagement with government and Ministers on climate change, particularly this COP26 year. The Group first met in April and for the first couple of meetings, Members discussed the need for a strong narrative of [local government's offer to central government](#). This is set out in the LGA's [A local path to net zero](#) campaign which highlights the significant role of councils in advancing the UK's net zero ambitions. Information about COP26 is also available, including a calendar of international and national events leading up to November and a range of videos and think pieces by councils and industry experts on the four COP26 goals: mitigation, adaptation, finance and collaboration.
14. The key focus of the narrative is to set out why councils should be trusted delivery partners with government, reflecting on the functions and responsibilities that councils have to deliver in their areas. It has underpinned the LGA's lobbying on climate change and engagement with Ministers and Alok Sharma, COP26 President. It was also shared with the EEHT Board and is summarised below:
- 14.1. **Place shaping** - places are local and councils are the master planners. [Councils' own direct emissions account for approximately 2 - 5 per cent of total emissions and they are estimated to have significant scope to influence around a third of local area emissions.](#)
- 14.2. **Purchasing powers and market shaping** – procurement is a key power that councils have to deliver net zero and they can bring together partners from the private and voluntary sectors. [Local government third party spend in 2019/20 was at least £63 billion.](#)
- 14.3. **Problem solving and direct delivery** – every place is unique and different localities have different geographies, demographics, infrastructure and resources. [LGA polling in June 2021](#) found that 73 per cent of respondents most trusted their local councils compared to 17 per cent that most trusted government when it came to local decision making.
- 14.4. **Convenors and communicators** – councils are convenors and communicators for civil society and businesses. [As much as 62 per cent of the future reduction in emissions will rely on individual choices and behaviours.](#)

14.5. **Assets** – councils are landlords and significant asset-owners. Councils are responsible for an estimated 27,000 parks and green spaces.

15. A priority area of focus for the Task Group is to develop strategic relationships with key partner organisations and engage Ministers across Whitehall about how national and local government can work in partnership to address key climate challenges, as set out above. The Task Group has met with a number of partner organisations and Ministers from different government departments which is outlined below. The Task Group also have an outstanding invitation to Minister Jo Churchill at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

- Minister Eddie Hughes MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)
- Andrew Griffith MP, UK Net Zero Business Champion, COP26 Presidency
- Rachel Maclean MP, former Minister for Environment, Department for Transport (DfT) (now Minister for Safeguarding)
- Yunus Arikan, Director of Global Advocacy at Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)
- Jason Torrance, Assistant Chief Executive, UK100
- Mayor Marvin Rees and Chris Murray, Core Cities UK

16. These meetings have been helpful discussions and have provided an opportunity for the Task Group to communicate the LGA's priority objectives and key asks from Government and COP26 (see section 'LGA's priority objectives', paragraph 7 above).

### **Other policy updates**

17. **Permanent Secretaries/Local Government Chief Executives roundtable** – on 27 September 2021, a roundtable took place between a number of Permanent Secretaries and UK local government chief executives to discuss local government's role in climate change. It was chaired by Jeremy Pocklington (DLUHC) and Sarah Munby (BEIS) with Mark Lloyd coordinating the local government input. Representatives from all the four UK local government associations were present. Permanent Secretaries from DLUHC, DfT, DEFRA, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Department for Education (DfE) and Treasury attended.

18. This was considered the start of a more strategic conversation between national and local government and goes some way to addressing the LGA's ask for greater joined up working across Whitehall in partnership with councils. Successful outcomes came out of the meeting for national and local government to take forward, including a statement of intent marking the beginning of renewed collaboration across-Government and local government and, development of a cross-government/local government climate change

leadership group to take forward the forthcoming Net Zero Strategy.

19. **Low carbon infrastructure policy research** – the LGA commissioned policy research following discussions at the EEHT Board about the challenges of infrastructure for achieving net zero. This research, by WPI Economics sets out the strategic and economic case for the local delivery of low carbon infrastructure projects and the co-benefits across job creation and health. WPI Economics presented initial findings to the EEHT Board in July. It will contribute to the development of a robust evidence base that strengthens our lobbying on climate change and a green economic recovery. We are preparing to launch the report before COP26 alongside a press release and social media threads.

### **Coordinating Climate Change activity across the LGA**

20. Climate change touches on every aspect of the work of councils and this is why it is a key priority in the LGA's Business Plan. The Executive has determined that the EEHT Board should lead on this policy area but has also established the Climate Change Task Group to lead on its engagement with Ministers and other stakeholders. Other Boards including the City Regions Board, People and Places Board and the Culture, Tourism and Sport Board have recognised the importance of climate change to their portfolios and are keen to do work in this area.
21. The Improvement and Innovation Board oversees the LGA Sector Support Climate Change Programme. A smaller working group meet to recommend priorities and generate ideas for the programme. The working group will liaise with the LGA Boards for their feed-in to the Sector Support 2022/23 priorities.
22. Outcomes from Spending Review, the forthcoming Net Zero Strategy and COP 26 will very likely have implications for the work of a number of LGA policy and improvement Boards. It would be useful to understand in more detail the work of the Boards in relation to climate change and how to ensure a good degree of coordination in that work. Cllr David Renard, Chair of the EEHT Board and Cllr Marvin Rees, Chair of the City Regions Board, have met to discuss this issue and have suggested that in the first instance it would be helpful to map the LGA Boards' work programmes to climate change objectives. This can be brought back to a future meeting of the Executive Advisory Board for consideration. Continuing liaison between Boards will ensure that the LGA works efficiently and provides a coherent set of messages to its members, government and other stakeholders.

### **Programme of activity and communications (July – November 2021)**

23. The below table sets out the LGA's key activity and communications programme from the period July – November 2021. It brings together the work of both policy and improvement and includes future communications plans at COP26.

Date	Content	Communications
<b>July</b>	Launch of <a href="#">Pass the Planet</a>	Campaign to promote local good practice and support universal learning and sharing of innovative solutions which councils can scale up or replicate. Starting in the East and travelling around England and Wales to finish in the North East near COP26, case studies can be viewed on an interactive map and all regions are being spotlighted between July and November 2021.
	London Climate Action Week	Cllr David Renard sat on the local government and net zero panel with guest speakers including Minister Eddie Hughes and Mayor Philip Glanville.
	LGA Annual Conference	We delivered a plenary session on local government and COP26 and welcomed speakers from Number 10, Allegra Stratton, COP26 spokesperson and the UN.
	Webinar	Held a webinar to share key initial findings from research that we commissioned to understand the role of local government in different low carbon infrastructure projects.
	Climate Change Task Group Ministerial meetings	Climate Change Task Group met with Minister Eddie Hughes MP, now Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and Andrew Griffith MP, Business Champion for COP26.
	Monthly climate change e-bulletin	
<b>August</b>	First magazine	Scheduled climate change series from May – November. Issued an article on adaptation, featuring a think piece by the UK Green Building Council.
	Public polling and issue <a href="#">Biodiversity press release</a>	Climate emergency: LGA poll shows more than 9 in 10 residents support increased biodiversity.
	Successful outcome of expression of interest	Confirmation by Cabinet Office of an exhibition space in the green zone at COP26.
	Climate Change Task Group	Meeting with UK100.
	<a href="#">A local path to net zero</a>	Promote council good practice videos on social media.
	Monthly climate change e-bulletin	
<b>September</b>	Launch open call for photographs	Launched an open call to all councils in the UK to submit photographs showcasing innovative local climate activity to showcase at the exhibition stand at COP26.
	Oral evidence session	Cllr Blake provided oral evidence to the Environmental Audit Committee on local government and net zero.
	First magazine	Scheduled climate change series from May – November. Issued an article on biodiversity, featuring a think piece by the Canal & River Trust.
	Climate change podcasts	Launch of community engagement podcasts that colleagues in improvement are leading.
	Climate Change Task Group	Ministerial meeting with former Transport Minister, Rachel Maclean (now Minister for Safeguarding).
	Permanent Secretaries meeting	Roundtable of Permanent Secretaries and Chief Executives in local government on climate change, marking the beginning of a new collaborative arrangement across

		Government and local authorities on delivering net zero and adaptation.
	Monthly climate change e-bulletin	
<b>Looking ahead</b>		
<b>October</b>	Social media	Scheduled social media to promote the LGA's exhibition stand in the green zone at COP26, in line with social media by the Cabinet Office.
	First magazine	Scheduled climate change series from May – November. COP26 article which will be the cover issue for October edition.
	Climate Change Task Group	Meeting with C40 and Core Cities UK.
	Internal comms video	Colleagues in policy and improvement shared updates about the LGA's COP26 activity in the internal comms weekly Friday video.
	Launch of biodiversity e-learning sets	To coincide with the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the LGA is launching its first climate change e-learning module on biodiversity. This module will provide an introduction to the subject and will be available to council officers and members. The module will soon be available on our <a href="#">webpage</a> .
	Webinar	Hold a webinar on climate action plans as part of the Design in the Public Sector Programme.
	Launch of policy research	Launch set piece report with evidence and costings setting out how local government can lead on the decarbonisation of homes, transport and energy.
	Issue press release and social media threads to launch policy research	Issue a press release and social media thread to support the launch of said new policy research above.
	Short film complete	Commissioned a professional video producer to develop a short film as content for COP26.
	Monthly climate change e-bulletin	
<b>November</b>	Webinar	Host a webinar to showcase local good practice as a culmination of the Pass the Planet campaign. We will spotlight four council case studies which are aligned to the official COP26 goals: mitigation, adaptation, collaboration and finance.
	First magazine	Scheduled climate change series from May – November. Article about reflections and successes from COP26.
	Social media thread	Scheduled social media throughout the two-week Conference
	COP26 event, blue zone – adaptation	Host an event on place leadership on 10 November 2021 in the UN Global Climate Action Hub.
	COP26 event, blue zone – transport	Proposed event to hold an afternoon session in the LGMA pavilion followed by drinks/evening reception.
	COP26 event, blue zone – cities & built environment	Proposed day of local government activity in the LGMA pavilion followed by an evening reception hosted by LGMA.

	COP26 event, green zone	LGA exhibition stand showcasing and promoting local government activity on COP26 using a range of videos, photographs and virtual reality headsets.
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## Appendix – key messages and asks in lobbying and communications opportunities

### Strategic direction and engagement

**Key message:** councils want to work as partners with central government to tackle climate change and are well-placed to do this as place-shapers, convenors of communities and partners, delivery agents, commissioners and owners of assets. Net zero can only be achieved with decarbonisation happening in every place across the country and this will require local leadership.

**Key asks:**

- Include a specific chapter in the UK Net Zero Strategy on the role of local government in place, backed by the Comprehensive Spending Review, which sets out how central government, devolved administrations and local government will work together to deliver Net Zero and adapt to climate change in places.
- Create a leadership group of central government departments and UK local government to take forward this chapter of the Net Zero Strategy, developing, leading and overseeing the delivery of a single framework / programme for local government, and discussing with devolved administrations and their local authorities how this would best align with Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
- Formal representation of regional and local government through a dedicated chapter for subnational governments in the official agreement reached at COP26. Commitment to empowering local government should also be reflected in the updated National Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

**Key stats:**

- [Councils' own direct emissions account for approximately 2 - 5 per cent of total emissions and they are estimated to have significant scope to influence around a third of local area emissions.](#)
- [LGA polling in June 2021](#) found that 73 per cent of respondents most trusted their local councils compared to 17 per cent that most trusted government when it came to local decision making.

### Low carbon economy

**Key message:** councils want to create thriving, resilient economies and drive a green economic recovery from the pandemic. Councils know their places, industries and local skills profiles and can identify opportunities for growth, including developing skilled, green jobs.

**Key asks:**

- Cement the strategic role of local government in steering the local further education, skills, and careers advice system to create pathways into the different mix of green jobs created locally.
- Government should back and fund the trailing of the LGA's [Work Local model](#), which provides a framework for an integrated and devolved employment and skills system.
- Alongside stimulating jobs and careers in the green industries, help make existing jobs in the economy 'greener' by supporting them to reduce emissions.

**Key stats:**

- [LGA published analysis](#) found that nearly 700,000 jobs could be created in England's low-carbon and renewable energy economy by 2030, rising to more than 1 million by 2050.

- [LGA research](#) revealed real concerns about immediate (2020 – 2025) skill gaps in nuclear construction, design and planning supply chain, design and installation of heat pumps, and within the financial services.

## Decarbonising homes and buildings

**Key message:** councils are taking action to decarbonise buildings in their areas. They are retrofitting public sector buildings and council-owned housing by trialling innovative new retrofit approaches, building low carbon council houses and using the planning process to implement higher energy efficiency standards.

### Key asks:

- Empower the local planning system to ensure that developers build new homes that are energy efficient and contribute to Net Zero, and create developments where public transport, active travel and shared mobility are at the heart of design.
- Create the mix of incentives, interventions, and delivery programmes to support housing retrofit across all housing tenures and commercial property, including supporting supply chain development, green skills, and regulation.

### Key stats:

- Based on trends of the last ten years, unless Government changes course, there will be 1.97m English households in need of fuel poverty retrofit by the end of the decade.
- Councils could create demand for an additional 31,000 though jobs by addressing fuel poverty and supporting heat pump installations.
- Councils could reduce costs to the NHS by £1.9 billion/year from retrofitting fuel poor and council-owned homes.

## Decarbonising transport

**Key message:** councils can embed transport decarbonisation principles in spatial planning and across transport policymaking. Through transport plans and local plans, councils have the powers to design and deliver a vision for local infrastructure that will enable the switch to low carbon, active modes of transport and promote public transport.

### Key asks:

- Broaden investments and subsidies to reduce the over-reliance on transition to electric vehicles and incentivise modal shift to public, shared and active forms of travel.
- Councils want to do more on EV chargepoints but there is lack of clarity and understanding of councils' role and insufficient financial support to develop local strategies. There needs to be greater infrastructure funding flexibility to enable councils to provide a range of solutions.
- Move towards consolidation and long-term funding certainty with local freedoms, in line with changes to guidance on Local Transport Plans. Divert a portion of £27bn strategic road building to support local roads and sustainable transport investment.
- Provide consistent backing and messaging from central government to support local authority decisions on reallocating road space.

### Key stats:

- Between 2016/17 – 20/21 funding for such schemes came from 16 different sources.

- The average annual spend per person on walking and cycling is around £7.65 per head in England compared with an average annual spend of around £25.60 per head in the Netherlands.
- To safely meet the Committee on Climate Change's balanced pathway, 1.5 billion journeys need to be shifted from cars to walking or cycling in England by 2030 and 3.1 billion journeys shifted to walking or cycling in England by 2050.

## Adapting to the impacts of climate change

**Key message:** adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change is a key challenge for councils and greater focus by the government has been on mitigation. Whilst government announced some funding for flooding which was confirmed in the 2020 Spending Review, this will not address the estimated increase in flooding by 2050.

### Key asks:

- Councils are well placed to lead a local approach to flood defence, using their local knowledge to ensure that money is directed towards projects that best reflect local needs, including protecting key roads and bridges to keep local residents and businesses moving.
- Funding for flood defences should be devolved to local areas and sit within a new national framework for addressing the climate emergency
- Back locally developed adaptation pilots to test out different, integrated approaches, providing useful data on the costs and benefits of different approaches, interdependencies and inequalities.
- Work with local government on renewed and fully funded plans for adaptation.
- Integrate adaptation into current and forthcoming policies such as Building Regulations and National Planning Policy Framework reviews and, the Heat and Buildings and Net Zero strategies.

### Key stats:

- The LGA's [climate change survey](#) in February 2020 found that 8 out of 10 councils surveyed had been affected by a climate related incident in the last five years and 70 per cent of those councils identified flooding as one of those incidents.

## Protecting and growing the natural environment

**Key message:** it is important that local communities have access to high-quality, healthy green spaces and ecosystems. Protecting the natural environment and enhancing biodiversity are critical to addressing climate change.

### Key asks:

- Ensure sufficient resourcing and profile in delivering the nature-based solutions, including Local Nature Recovery Strategies and Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Move the waste reform proposals forward in ways that best contribute to Net Zero such as waste reduction and consider the cost/benefits of some proposals including free garden waste collections.
- How waste is collected should continue to be determined locally. Current approaches reflect a range of local factors.

### Key stats:

- Councils are responsible for an estimated 27,000 parks and green spaces.

- Councils have maintained recycling rates of around 45 per cent in recent years even though central government funding for councils has reduced by £15bn, nearly 60 per cent, since 2010.

## Building consensus for change

**Key messages:** capitalising on the public's increasing awareness of the challenge and need to act. Community capacity and cohesion issues will arise in the transition to net zero and it is only at the local level that these can be addressed.

**Key asks:**

- Leverage, harness and grow the support in communities for further climate action and look at incentives to adjust behaviours and make informed choices.
- Set clear, consistent, and regular national and local communication to businesses and communities of the opportunities, changes, and programmes and consider a joint communications plan with local government.

**Key stats:**

- As much as 62% of the future reduction in emissions will rely on individual choices and behaviours.