

Meeting: Improvement and Innovation Board

Date: Wednesday 15 February 2023



LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme

Purpose

To note the progress of work undertaken so far, and to support proposals for the 2023/24 programme.

Summary

The aim of the LGA's Climate Change Sector Support Programme is to help councils to reach their local carbon reduction and adaptation targets. We produce tools, case studies, roundtables, podcasts, webinars, action learning sets and projects to help build councils' capability and capacity in sustainability and the environment.

Since April 2022, 98 per cent of English councils have engaged with the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme. The LGA climate change 2021 survey found that 95 per cent of respondents reported that the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme has had a positive impact on their council. And in the 2022/23 programme, 96 per cent of councils who have received support have been satisfied.

This report covers the achievements from April 2022 to the end of December 2022, as well as the planned activities for the 2023/24 financial year. Appendix 1 provides an overview of work undertaken prior to April 2022. Appendix 2 provides an overview of the work undertaken with the LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board.

Recommendations

1. That the Improvement and Innovation Board notes the update on the actions taken under the LGA's Climate Change Sector Support Programme in 2022/23 and supports the forthcoming activity to take place from April 2023.
2. That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the significant demand for the support by councils and the ever-increasing demand for this work.
3. Continue to feed in priorities for councils in the area of environment and sustainability.

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Background

1. In July 2019, the LGA General Assembly passed a motion calling upon the government to explore the domestic implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through funded partnership roles with local authority areas, encouraging councils to continue to link local priorities with the overall ambitions of the SDGs and the declaration of a climate emergency.
2. Following the motion, the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme has been developed and is a comprehensive offer for councils which meets the needs of local authorities. This includes an array of support offered across the improvement division and beyond, in sharing good practice, leadership, productivity, research and information.
3. The LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme developed a set of priorities to work on in both 2022/23 and 2023/24. This was done in collaboration with the Improvement and Innovation Board Climate Change Member working group and the officer Climate Action Group, alongside feedback from the LGA 2021 climate change survey of councils.
4. The underlying principles of the programme are to:
 - Provide support and improvement to councils tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.
 - Help councils to achieve a green, just and inclusive economic recovery from the pandemic.
 - Work with local partners including education, businesses and citizens to achieve our aims.
 - Ensure support (and learning from support where it is for an individual council) will be made available to every council through events, case studies, podcasts, tools, blogs, e learning and so on.
 - Ensure all work is connected to the Sustainable Development Goals where appropriate.

Table 1: LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme: 2022/23

Since April 2022, 98 per cent of English councils have engaged with the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme.

We asked councils who have engaged in direct support from us during September-December 2022, the following questions:

- ❖ 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the support offered through the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme?' 173/181 councils answered very or somewhat satisfied (96 per cent).
- ❖ 'To what extent, if at all, will your council look to the LGA for support on climate change and adaptation matters in the future?' 162/181 councils answered yes (90 per cent). Nineteen people said 'don't know'.

The following projects were undertaken between April 2022-December 2022. The updates are based on how many engagements have taken place since the launch of the project.

Theme	Project/work area	Update
Communication and engagement	Climate Change web hub The webpage is the place to go for local government on climate change. It houses LGA resources, case studies and resources from elsewhere.	Webpage views: 44,327
	Monthly LGA climate change e-bulletin The monthly edition summarises all the support which the LGA offers to councils including anything which has been recently released or up and coming support that month.	E bulletin subscribers: 6,660
	COP27 Pass the Planet case studies Our Pass the Planet campaign promotes the notable practice happening in councils across England, with every region spotlighted. The campaign aims to support universal learning and share innovative solutions which councils can scale up or replicate.	Case studies: 211
	Climate emergency network knowledge hub The Hub is the place where councils who have declared a climate emergency or made any other type of commitment to reduce carbon and improve the environment, can share information and experiences.	Knowledge hub members: 552
	LGA Green Webinar Series Webinars cover a range of topics from housing retrofit and decarbonising transport to community engagement. Speakers are from councils sharing their good practice, and experts on the topic. Blogs from each webinar are available on the website.	8 webinars/conference sessions delivered so far with 1,136 attendees in total.
Data	The Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool The tool measures councils' own emissions, and supports a single	281 unique authorities have downloaded the tool so far (including councils and a few

	<p>approach for councils to measure them. It produces summary tables and charts to help local authorities understand their most significant sources of emissions, which can then be used to prioritise actions to reduce carbon emissions. It is free to use and has been endorsed by the Climate Change Committee.</p>	<p>parks and fire authorities).</p> <p>We launched a new waste calculator in January 2023 as part of a suite of LGA GHG tools.</p>
	<p>Scope 3 reporting guidance</p> <p>The document supports the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool and aims to assist local authorities with understanding the scale of scope 3 reporting, what to report and how to set an action plan for future reporting.</p>	2,194 views
Local collaboration	<p>The Net Zero Innovation Programme</p> <p>Delivered through a collaboration between the Local Government Association (LGA) and University College London (UCL), the Net Zero Innovation Programme brings together councils, universities and other stakeholders to address climate and sustainability challenges at the local level and seeks routes to achieve council's net zero, adaptation and biodiversity commitments.</p>	12 more councils on 2022/23 programme currently
Leadership	<p>Leadership Essentials: climate emergency including carbon literacy for Councillors</p> <p>This programme helped Councillors, across all services, to explore their crucial local leadership role in responding to the climate emergency. Councillors were offered the opportunity to be carbon literacy accredited.</p>	35 Councillors completed training
	<p>Leadership Essentials: climate emergency including carbon literacy for officers</p> <p>This programme helped senior council officers, across all services, to explore their crucial local leadership role in responding to the climate emergency. Officers were offered the opportunity to be carbon literacy accredited and to be trained to train others.</p>	<p>214 senior officers completed training</p> <p>141 officers completed the train the trainer sessions.</p>
	<p>Roundtable series for councils to develop climate action plans</p> <p>The LGA supported councils in their creation and development of climate action plans by organising a set of roundtables to bring councils together to discuss and share learning through facilitated peer support. These roundtables were open to all councils at any stage in their development or implementation of the climate action plans. The sessions were guided by councils, with facilitation and guest speakers contributing. Summaries of what was discussed can be found on the LGA website.</p>	51 councils supported

	<p>Sustainability in Council Services</p> <p>The LGA has commissioned the Zero Carbon Britain team at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) to undertake an exciting project to develop draft routemaps for councils across England to understand how to embed sustainability across some council service areas. We ran a series of workshops that brought together voices from across councils to contribute expertise in how service areas and operations work in reality. A webinar in March will explore what was discussed, provide space for feedback and questions, as well as explaining what the next steps for the project are.</p>	<p>Sign up to the Show and Tell Webinar on March 16 2023.</p> <p>We are very much welcoming feedback about the first draft so please do come along to the webinar.</p>
Heat and buildings	<p>Regional Retrofit Action Plan Training</p> <p>This brought together officers of all levels to support them with developing the tools, skills, opportunities and capabilities required to help grow the retrofit sector in their region. The briefings and blogs for each session can be found on our website for all to view.</p>	<p>109 council officers have received support to develop their capability in this area</p>
Transport	<p>Action learning sets for Councillors and officers</p> <p>The Decarbonising Transport Action Learning Sets have brought together Councillors and officers to help each other in addressing the challenges of decarbonising transport and local transport planning. Summaries of each set can be found on the webpages.</p>	<p>Underway with 30 Councillors and officers</p>

Spotlight on: The Net Zero Innovation Programme

5. The Net Zero Innovation Programme (NZIP) develops partnerships of researchers and council officers across all English regions and supports them in tackling the climate emergency.
6. You can watch a video which summaries the challenge, our solution and impact: [Net Zero Innovation Programme | Local Government Association](#)
7. The NZIP creates universal learning and products for all councils. A lot of this learning can be accessed via the case studies.
8. As an example, whilst on the LGA Net Zero Innovation Programme, Cambridgeshire County Council and UCL created a [carbon calculator](#) to improve accounting and reporting of a waste disposal and/or waste collection authority's scope 3 emissions from the management and treatment of waste.
9. On January 17 2023, we were really pleased to launch the [waste emissions calculator](#). This will aid councils in reducing scope 3 emissions, provide transparency of council expectations of suppliers, and enable council staff to understand and reduce environmental implications of their procurements and services. The tool is now part of the [LGA Greenhouse Gas Tool Accounting Suite](#).

10. The NZIP undertook and evaluation with the participants in the 2021/22 programme. The results can be found:

- ❖ Have you increased your skills and capacity to work on climate change/net zero projects? Yes - 100%
- ❖ How likely would you be to recommend NZIP to your peers? – Definitely/likely - 90%
- ❖ When you needed help with your project, were the NZIP team able to help effectively? – Yes – 91% Somewhat – 4%

LGA-UCL Net Zero Innovation Programme

The Net Zero Innovation programme partners councils and academics to solve local climate problems together. Here's our journey so far...

PARTNERS



In the past two years, NZIP has worked with **24 partnerships** from across England and a range of council and university types.

SPACE & TIME



Project teams were given the **space and time to think**, experiment and create interventions that really improve climate outcomes locally.

PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

The programme was an **opportunity to build partnerships** that lead to real world outcomes and action for impact.

SUSTAINED RELATIONSHIPS



11 out of 12 partners from year one continue to work together to accelerate local climate action as a result of being part of the programme.



MEANINGFUL CHANGE

100% of participants agreed that being involved in the programme helped them to **address the climate emergency** in their area.

TOOLS



Partnerships developed **solutions** ranging from procurement tools to measure and reduce carbon emissions, to tools that support policy decision-making in response to climate impacts on health. You can see all the projects developed through the programme by [visiting our website](#).

WIDESPREAD LEARNING



Partnerships are **encouraged to continue to develop and share their learning** to cascade impacts across councils.

STORY CONTINUES →

NZIP EXPLAINED

Councils are declaring climate emergencies. According to the United Nations, the world is warming faster than at any point in recorded history. [See the animation for more.](#)

Local councils want to find **solutions** to making areas carbon net zero by 2050.

How do councils:



Deliver on carbon reduction targets?



Create and execute Climate Action Plans?



Source funding, capacity and capability for change?

Universities also want to take action, and find evidence-based solutions.

Yet, local policy engagement efforts are disjointed and poorly supported beyond the hyper-local. **How can universities help?**



Immediate, medium and long-term support is needed to connect councils and universities and scale-up solutions across local authorities.

The Programme

This is where the LGA-UCL Net Zero Innovation Programme comes in. The programme works with councils and academics to solve local climate problems together. It does this by:

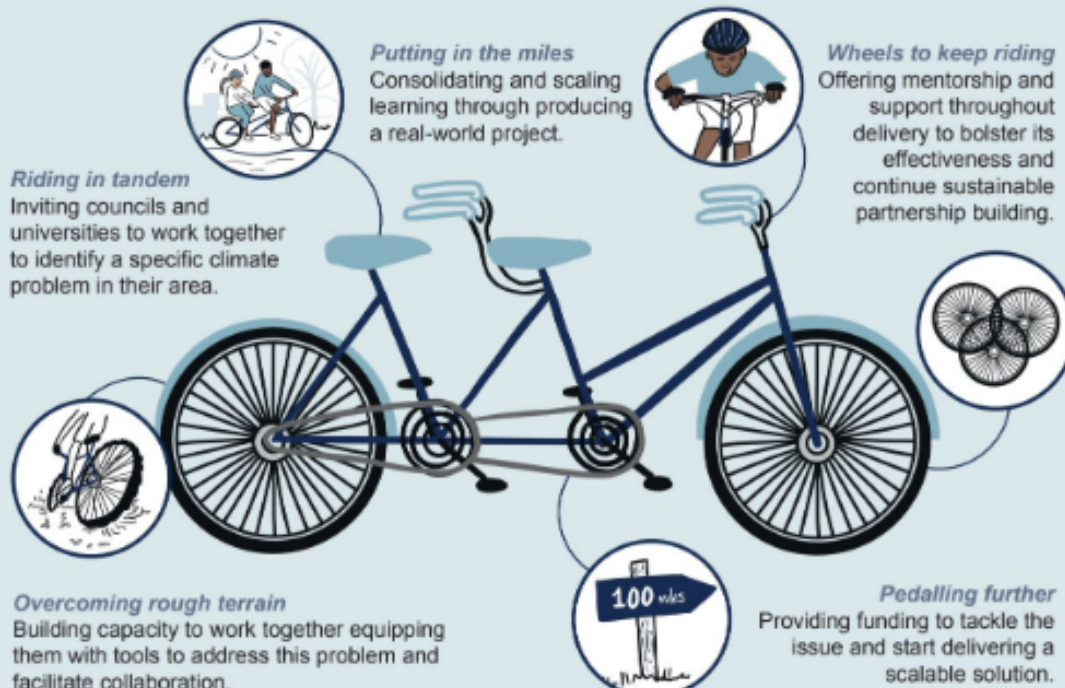


Table 2: LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme: 2023/24

Table 2 (below) presents the draft work to be undertaken by the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme between April 2023 and March 2024. This is dependent on funding negotiations with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Core activity	KPIs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage ongoing widescale use of reporting tools across the local government sector. Maintain and update tools including adding further measurements for scope 3 emissions, a universal challenge for the sector. Support for innovative approaches to enable councils to deliver net zero ambitions. Delivery of a series of webinars, training and guidance on net zero, adaptation, and green finance. Topics include carbon and adaptation literacy, green finance and housing retrofit. Display learning for all English councils on the LGA climate change hub, including but not limited to action plans. Widely share resources and best practice, including through the LGA Climate Change e-bulletin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and maintain a suite of reporting tools including the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool and the Waste Emissions Calculator. Updates will include further measurement of scope 3 emissions – by end of December 2023. Engage over 200 councils through a variety of activities, including supporting the development of practical responses to local-level net zero challenges, training, webinars and best practice – by end of March 2024. At least 80 per cent of respondents in councils that have received direct support from the Climate Change Sector Support Programme report that it provided them with knowledge and/or skills to address local climate challenges – by end of March 2024. 7,000 subscribers to the LGA Climate Change E-Bulletin – by end of March 2024.

Other LGA work relating to climate change includes:

11. The LGA is developing a range of activity to provide detailed propositions for how local and central government can work together to deliver decarbonisation. The LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board leads this work, together with the LGA Climate Change Task Group.
12. The table in Appendix 2 beneath introduces some of the priority policy work packages either recently completed, underway, or in planning.

Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations

13. An initial analysis of potential EDI considerations affecting the environment area has been carried out. People with the following protected characteristics have been identified as disproportionately impacted.

- **Age** – both the very young, the very old and people with underlying health issues are more vulnerable to the ill-effects of extreme heat or cold caused by climate change; older people are more susceptible to the social isolation which can result from poor local environment quality.
- **Disability** – those with restricted mobility may find multi stream recycling inhibitive; accessible ground floor dwellings are more susceptible to flooding; lack of access to green space can exacerbate mental ill health.
- **Pregnancy and Maternity** – pregnant people are more susceptible to the ill-effects of extreme heat caused by climate change; parents of young children may be negatively impacted by a lack of access to green space.
- **Race** – Gypsies and Travellers can struggle to access public services, including waste and recycling and running water.
- **Economic disadvantage** – those on lower incomes are more likely to live in poorly insulated housing, with more expensive metered heating tariffs, which can lead to fuel poverty; they are more likely to experience a lack of access to green infrastructure which can contribute to health inequalities; social housing of high-rise construction and/or with poorly engineered communal heating systems can be more severely impacted by extreme weather events.

Environmental considerations

14. All procurement activity for the programme will be sustainable.

15. Meetings and events will be held virtually, where possible, to avoid greenhouse gas emissions from travel.

Implications for Wales

16. We are engaging with our Wales Local Government Association colleagues, are sharing learning and work collaboratively on common issues. We are doing this alongside the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and Northern Ireland LGA. For example, they are looking in to using our [Behaviour Change and Environment toolkit](#) and Wales LGA participated in the Pass the Planet campaign.

Financial Implications

17. The support offer is funded through our Improvement Grant Determination letter from the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities.

Next steps

18. Officers will continue delivering the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme.

Appendix 1

The following work has been undertaken by the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme between February 2020 and March 2022.

Theme	Project/work area	Update
Data	<p>Scope 3 reporting guidance for social care</p> <p>This helps local authorities to measure and manage scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions. This set specific guidance for social care services scope three greenhouse gas emissions, covers all the main aspects of social care spend, and is applicable to both outsourced and in-sourced services.</p>	676 views
	<p>Climate adaptation toolkit and risk generator</p> <p>The Adaptation Toolkit is a 5-step process to help you prepare for the impacts the current and future climate could have on your authority, your residents, and the services you provide.</p>	91 unique authorities have downloaded the tool so far
	<p>LGA climate change survey 2021</p> <p>In October 2021 the LGA conducted a survey of the climate change officers of all councils in England. The purposes of the survey were to assess what actions local authorities are taking to combat climate change, to assess their future needs for support in this area, and to evaluate the climate change sector support offer provided by the LGA. A total of 178 responded – a response rate of 53 per cent.</p>	53 per cent of councils responded
Local collaboration	Net Zero Innovation Programme	24 councils supported. Case studies and podcast series available to all.
Leadership	Leadership Essentials: climate emergency including carbon literacy for Councillors	105 Councillors trained.
	Leadership Essentials: climate emergency including carbon literacy for officers	63 officers trained.
	<p>Councillors' workbook on the local path to net zero</p> <p>This workbook has been designed as a distance learning aid for local councillors. It is intended to provide councillors with insight and assistance with the key skills which will help you to be most effective in your role. Some of the content may be of most use to more newly elected councillors, but nonetheless if you have been a councillor for some time, the workbook should serve as a useful reminder of some of the key skills, approaches and tactics that make for an effective ward councillor. It may even challenge you to reconsider how you have approached aspects of the role to date.</p>	4,262 views
	<p>Scrutiny guide</p> <p>This publication covers 10 questions, and several supplementary follow ups, to ask if you are scrutinising climate action in your council. It lays out key issues on which local scrutineers (councillors sitting on scrutiny committees and the officers who support them) can pose questions to those with decision-making responsibility.</p>	2,502 views

Heat and buildings	<p>Action learning sets: building housing retrofit skills</p> <p>Over six months in 2021 and 2022, 24 officers and councillors from local authorities across England were invited to explore, unpick and address the challenges of retrofitting domestic properties. The focus was on developing the skills required inside and outside the councils to manage and implement retrofit programmes, including co-ordinating internal and external stakeholders, generating demand from householders, and upskilling suppliers.</p>	24 councils supported
Green economy	<p>Action learning sets for creating green jobs</p> <p>Following the successful completion of the action learning sets, the report seeks to capture the learnings across all of the individual authorities involved, the process and the outputs from the Action Learning Sets (ALS) and the output from the final symposium. The report includes key individual and collective learnings, key sector-wide learnings and conclusions and recommendations for the LGA to pursue.</p>	30 councils supported
	<p>Sustainable procurement toolkit</p> <p>This is a toolkit for commissioners, procurement practitioners and contract managers to help councils deliver on local economic, social and environment priorities.</p>	6,089 views
Community engagement	<p>Behavioural insights toolkit</p> <p>This resource takes a Councillor or officer through six steps of undertaking a behavioural change project. It then takes the user through a variety of green behaviours, applied to the six steps. These include behaviours in your own home, in the community and whilst on the move.</p>	4,211 views
	<p>Local Action for our Environment podcast</p> <p>The LGA released a podcast series to provide good practice for council officers and Members looking to engage their local communities on climate change.</p>	2,039 listens
Environment	<p>Biodiversity e-learning</p> <p>The LGA produced an e-learning module on biodiversity aimed at council officers and Members. This module will provide an introduction to the subject, as well as providing tips and guidance on how councils can take action to protect their natural habitats.</p>	8 councils completed the training

Appendix 2

The table beneath highlights the priority LGA policy work either recently completed, underway, or in planning.

Theme	Work package	Update
Whole Place	Local Net Zero Forum – a cross-Whitehall and local government group of Directors reviewing local and national government collaboration, funding, capacity, and data on net zero. LGA also successful in supporting creation of political tier of the Forum	First political meeting of the Forum in February 2023. Director tier has met three times and commissioned work through task groups.
Mission Zero – Net Zero Review	LGA engaged with Chris Skidmore review into delivering net zero, including holding a session with members and Chris Skidmore, engagement with officials on the review team, and submitting evidence. The review referenced the LGA on many occasions and was positive in recognising role of councils, and reinforcing some of the sector's concerns and asks. The LGA does not agree with everything in the review, however, and felt it could have gone further in some areas. The LGA will engage with government on next steps.	Review complete, letter on its conclusions sent in to government
Adaptation to climate change	Project to investigate, capture, and present what councils can offer and need from the next National Adaptation Programme 2023, and wider local / national collaboration on closing the adaptation gap.	Due to complete in March 2023
A plan for decarbonising all homes and buildings up to 2050	Heat and buildings decarbonisation – designing a single framework approach for how councils and government can work together to retrofit and decarbonise all homes and buildings up to 2050. Working with the Energy Systems Catapult. Includes detailed propositions on retrofit, grid capacity, signals on technological solutions, direct investment, market enabling, community engagement, landlords, green skills etc.	Project completed, to launch shortly.
Cost of living / energy efficiency	Research into the financial and social benefit case for energy efficiency advice and accelerating local interventions to insulate homes and reduce the demand for energy, while contributing to the reduction to emissions and positive health. Also engaging BEIS to shape and share learning of council role in ECO 4	Project complete, research will be updated in line with rising energy costs.
Street by street decarbonisation	Green streets, lessons for whole-place decarbonisation from street/neighbourhood projects	Project completed
Social housing	Research with National Housing Federation exploring the readiness of social housing for decarbonisation, and the	Project completed

	challenges to overcome. It found over 90% of social homes were not hard to decarbonise and made case for bringing forward investment.	
Electrification and grid	<p>Engagement of national grid and DNOs on the future relationship between councils and the electricity system for net zero, growth and resilience, for instance thinking about Local Area Energy Planning.</p> <p>Submission and engagement with Ofgem and BEIS on the local institutional governance role in shaping grid capacity, storage, flexibility etc for electrification</p>	<p>Planning events for councils and electricity system for early 2023</p> <p>Ofgem likely to publish consultation on next steps in Spring 2023</p>
Funding	Report into the green finance opportunities available to councils and the barriers and challenges created by a fragmented funding landscape on net zero. Continuous engagement with government on specific grant funding programmes and how to maximise their impact locally	Published and ongoing engagement
Heat and buildings	Representation on Government's Heat and Buildings Council	Ongoing.
Electric vehicle charging infrastructure	EV charging infrastructure – influencing national policy, strategy and resources in support of local government's role. Taking forward OZEV's EV infrastructure strategy recognise barriers facing councils and how to address them; includes £500m commitment for councils to fund on-street infrastructure including up to £50m revenue support.	Ongoing.
Buses	Engage DfT on the National Bus Strategy and support for Bus Service Improvement Plans	Ongoing.
Highways and active travel	Working with Government and Active Travel England to ensuring adequate resources for roads maintenance, especially in support of promoting greater cycling and walking.	Ongoing.
National road pricing	Research to understand local government's view on the potential future of national road pricing published. We will use this to continue our call for Government to make a decision on the future of motoring taxes as we transition to EVs and to involve local government in the development of options.	Ongoing
Last mile freight	Project commissioned on the opportunities and challenges presented by growth of last mile freight.	Project completed and published
Shared micromobility and car clubs	Two projects commissioned to raise awareness of the benefits and issues relating to shared micromobility (including e-scooters) and car clubs.	Reports planned to be published by end of 2022/ early 2023
Skills	Bringing stakeholders and the sector together to influence government policy through the BEIS led Green Jobs	Ongoing

	Delivery Group and local capacity and capability workstream. The focus has so far been primarily on retrofit skills but over the next year will be expanded to explore other green jobs, including in the zero carbon, land management, farming and sustainable tourism sectors.	
Waste	Influencing the future of the waste reforms, including on consistency (inc. garden waste, food waste), EPR, and deposit return scheme, and new consultations on reforming HWRC DIY waste charging, waste tracking and carriers	Awaiting Govts response to consistency consultation
Waste	Developed position on proposals to extend Emissions Trading Scheme to waste services, engaging with BEIS and Defra on next steps.	Awaiting Govts formal response
Bio-diversity	Engaging with Government on Bio-diversity Net Gain proposals, including the detail of policy and the staffing and resource concerns	Expected to be mandatory in 2023
Planning policy	Building case for how National Planning Policy Framework can work with local ambitions to achieve net zero and adaptation, and the opportunities for a more ambitious Future Homes Standard	In development
Nature recovery	Engaging with reforms to protect and grow the role of nature, including Local Nature Recovery Strategies and the Nature Recovery Network, linked to the issues of nutrient neutrality, and making wider case for coherent strategy to the nature recovery	More details on LNRS regulations and advice expected shortly
Responding to extreme weather events	Work to look at the impact the wildfires over the summer had on fire and rescue services' capacity and capability in conjunction with the National Fire Chiefs Council	Underway.
Other reactive policy issues	Responding to a range of Government led initiatives and policy change – for instance: on reaching all communities with energy payments; on proposed duties around energy standards for non-domestic buildings; Energy transition for buildings off the gas grid; development of hydrogen villages and towns and hydrogen regulation.	Continuous.