



*Local Government Association*

# climate change

## a survey of local authorities

research briefing 19  
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*LGAresearch*

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## executive summary

### About the survey

This research project was carried out in partnership by the Local Government Association (LGA), Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and De Montfort University. The aim of the survey was to get a comprehensive picture of how local authorities are making progress on climate change work.

A postal questionnaire was sent out to all 410 local authorities in England and Wales in June 2002. Subsequent reminders were sent out during the autumn of 2002. By the end of the fieldwork, 207 local authorities in England and Wales had responded - a response rate of 51 per cent.

- The survey showed that only seven per cent of local authorities in the UK and Wales have developed a climate change strategy. However, nearly half of the respondents stated that their strategy was under consideration (Table 3);
- the majority of councils (68 per cent) had not considered the effects climate change will have on them or how to address them (Table 5);
- only 34 per cent of councils had set an emissions reduction target for *their* emissions and only 25 per cent had set a target for reduction of *community-wide* emissions (Table 7);
- one-third of councils had produced their community strategy and the remaining two-thirds planned to have their strategies published by 31 March 2003 (Table 4). Only nine per cent had considered measures to tackle greenhouse gas emissions to a considerable extent in their community strategy, but the majority (45 per cent) had considered them to some extent (Table 15);
- nearly four-fifths of councils say that insufficient staff or staff time is the major barrier to them making progress on climate change issues, nearly as many authorities (71 per cent) mention 'other priorities taking higher priority in the council', and

the third most significant barrier cited by more than half of all councils was 'lack of funding' (Table 16);

- nearly three-quarters of councils say they need extra help, support and training to enable them to produce a climate change strategy (Table 17);
- only two-fifths of councils (41 per cent) have an up-to-date energy policy (Table 20a);
- over half of councils (55 per cent) buy a proportion of green electricity which exceeds the current three per cent level of the generation mix set out by the government. With 12 per cent obtaining more than 80 per cent of their electricity from green sources (Table 22);
- less than a fifth of councils have access to energy consumption data for their areas, from utility companies (Table 28); and
- four-fifths of local authority chief executives (82 per cent) feel that they are informed about climate change, at least to some extent. Only five per cent of local authority chief executives consider that their authority is not tackling climate change at all. However the majority (54 per cent) felt they were tackling climate change to a small extent (Table 30).

### Background and policy implications

We know that the UK as a whole is on track to meet its commitments to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions both domestically and as part of the European contribution to the Kyoto protocol. We also know that the next stage of emission cuts will be more challenging and that in any case deeper cuts may well be needed to protect us from the effects of global warming. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution has estimated that a cut of 60 per cent in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is needed by 2050 as against the UK domestic commitment to 20 per cent by 2010. There will be no more quick wins like the switch from coal to gas in electricity generation.

Central government plays a hugely important role in providing leadership, regulation, introducing economic instruments and setting performance management frameworks. But, in practical terms, decisions about where development is sited and whether it is energy efficient, how local transport is managed to promote alternatives to cars, how much waste is sent to landfill or recycled, will depend on decisions taken locally and action-led by local authorities. It does not make sense to look at the UK's approach to tackling climate change and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions without looking at the role of local authorities.

Local authorities have a major impact as organisations in their own right - with their own 'in-house' impacts on energy, waste, staff travel and purchasing. But, they also have a wider impact through the services they provide and the influence they can exercise through planning, transport, waste, energy efficiency services and advice and housing. They bring together economic, social and environmental concerns and they have the potential to link their own actions with others through community strategies.

The Councils for Climate Protection pilot (CCP), led by the IDeA has shown the potential for local government in this area. The provision of specialist software, linked to training and support has enabled the pilot councils to build up inventories of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for their own in-house activities and their areas, to consider different future scenarios and to develop programmes of action to cut emissions. At the time of writing, both the LGA and IDeA hope that the pilot programme will be continued and extended to a much wider group of authorities.

This recent survey of local authorities in England and Wales shows a recognition of the importance of climate change and of the need to take action, but difficulty in acting on this. It confirms what the CCP pilot suggested, that local authorities want more guidance and support. It also shows that, while we know there are a small number of

outstanding authorities that have achieved a great deal, the majority are struggling to give this issue priority - difficulties about staffing and resources follow to a certain extent. But where action is relatively clear and simple to take, local authorities are moving forward - over half the respondents to the survey are buying a proportion of their electricity from renewable sources and 59 per cent said that energy efficiency was very or fairly important when procuring products and services.

The potential to deliver more action on climate change through community strategies is under-exploited, with most councils not seeing this issue as having major significance in the existing or planned strategy. Perhaps linked to this, 69 per cent of respondents said that they had not quantified or documented the effects of climate change in their area. Would a clear understanding of climate impacts on local communities help in identifying priorities for action?

For the LGA and IDeA, this survey confirms the need for a programme of tailored support and advice for local authorities, combined with information about climate impacts, which is easy to interpret locally. It confirms that the link between procurement, sustainability and climate change is one where local authorities feel they can make an impact and is a fruitful area for further work. It suggests that the link to community strategies needs more attention.

For central government, the survey results reinforce the need for national leadership, and a clear demonstration that climate change is indeed a national priority. This needs to be communicated clearly to local authorities by valuing and rewarding those who take action in this area, even if the benefits are long term and not as tangible as cleaner streets or improved exam results.

## survey results

### Regional networks

As Table 1 shows, most local authorities (60 per cent) are involved in some form of regional 'sustainable energy' network. London boroughs and unitary authorities are most likely to be involved (80 per cent), and district councils least likely to be involved (49 per cent).

Examples of regional networks stated by local authorities were:

East Midlands Regional Assembly Sustainable Development Advisory Group  
 Yorkshire and Humberside Sustainable Development Forum  
 HECA Eastern Network  
 South East Climate Change Partnership  
 The Nottingham and Derbyshire Local Authority Partnership.

**Table 1: does your council participate in any regional 'sustainable energy' networks (eg regional assembly working group, sustainable development round tables etc.)? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes	76	49	57	80	80	71	<b>60 %</b>
No	24	51	43	20	20	29	<b>40 %</b>

Base: 203

### Section 1: climate change strategy

#### The Nottingham declaration<sup>1</sup>

As Table 2 shows nearly a quarter (23 per cent) of the respondents have already signed the

Nottingham declaration - 47 local authorities - and 29 per cent are either planning to sign it or considering whether to sign it. The majority of local authorities (39 per cent) have yet to make any consideration about signing it.

**Table 2: what is the situation regarding your council signing the Nottingham declaration on climate change? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Already signed	27	17	36	40	35	0	<b>23 %</b>
Planning to sign	11	5	21	10	10	12	<b>9 %</b>
Considering whether to sign it	22	21	21	15	20	6	<b>20 %</b>
No consideration has been made	22	47	14	30	30	82	<b>39 %</b>
Have rejected signing it	18	10	8	5	5	0	<b>9 %</b>

Base: 204

**1 Local authorities were invited to enorse the *The Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change*, launched on 25 October 2000. The LGA supports the initiative which confirms that climate change is firmly on the local government agenda. Further information can be found on LGA's website at [www.lga.gov.uk/Documents/Circular/769-00.pdf](http://www.lga.gov.uk/Documents/Circular/769-00.pdf)**

### Status of council's climate change strategy

As Table 3 shows, only seven per cent of those councils which responded had already developed a climate change strategy. Nearly half of the councils

(47 per cent) stated that their climate change strategy was under consideration. 23% per cent stated that they intended to produce a strategy by 30 September 2003 and a further 23 per cent were not intending to develop a strategy at all.

**Table 3: what is the status of the council's climate change emission strategy? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Already developed	0	8	14	5	10	14	<b>7 %</b>
Will be developed by 31 December 2002	15	2	0	30	29	0	<b>9 %</b>
Will be developed by 31 March 2003	4	8	29	10	3	14	<b>9 %</b>
Will be developed by 30 September 2003	8	3	0	10	10	0	<b>5 %</b>
Under consideration	50	52	43	35	24	58	<b>47 %</b>
Not intending to develop a strategy	23	27	14	10	24	14	<b>23 %</b>

Base:204

### Coverage of strategy

As Table 4 shows, of those councils that intended to produce a strategy there was nearly an even split between those whose strategy would cover

only the councils own activities (47 per cent) and those whose strategy would cover all activities in the council's area (53 per cent).

**Table 4: if you have or plan to produce a climate change emissions strategy, what is the coverage of the strategy? %**

	County Council	District council	London borough	Met borough	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Local council's own activities	42	59	55	18	29	33	<b>47 %</b>
All activity in the councils' area	58	41	45	82	71	67	<b>53 %</b>

Base: 139

### The effects of climate change

As Table 5 shows, the vast majority of councils (68 per cent) have not considered the effects of

climate change on their area at all and of those which have considered them only four per cent have fully addressed them in a strategy.

**Table 5: does your council have any strategy to adapt to the effects of climate change you expect in your area? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Effects not documented or quantified	56	72	100	55	62	57	<b>68 %</b>
Effects documented but not addressed by strategy	28	11	0	20	10	28	<b>14 %</b>
Effects documented and <u>partially</u> addressed by strategy	16	15	0	15	14	15	<b>14 %</b>
Effects documented and <u>fully</u> addressed by strategy	0	2	0	10	14	0	<b>4 %</b>

Base:197

### Greenhouse gas inventory

As shown in Table 6, just over half (54 per cent) of councils still haven't produced a inventory of their greenhouse gas emissions which is an essential

part in the development of a strategy to mitigate climate change. Of those that have produced an inventory the majority (26 per cent) had produced it for their own council emissions.

**Table 6: has your council conducted an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions?**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met borough	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes, local council emissions only	40	24	50	15	24	12	<b>26 %</b>
Yes, local council and local area emissions	20	4	21	35	33	12	<b>14 %</b>
Yes, just local area omissions	4	4	0	20	0	28	<b>6 %</b>
No	36	68	29	30	43	43	<b>54 %</b>

Base:202

### Council emissions reduction target

As Table 7 shows, only 34 per cent of councils had set an emissions reduction target for their emissions.

**Table 7: has your council set a target for the reduction of its own emissions (ie from its own buildings, activities etc)? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes	54	26	36	50	50	14	<b>34 %</b>
No	46	74	64	50	50	86	<b>66 %</b>

Base: 204

As table 8 shows, those council which had set a target were asked in which year this target was set. The results were evenly split between 1998

and earlier, 2000, 2001 and 2002 each receiving nearly 25 per cent; 1999 was the least popular year.

**Table 8: what was the date that this target was set?**

<= 1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
18	3	15	16	15
<b>27 %</b>	<b>4 %</b>	<b>22 %</b>	<b>24 %</b>	<b>22 %</b>

Base 67

Those councils which had set a target for the reduction of its own emissions were asked to state the base year, the percentage decrease and the target year for reductions to be achieved.

Table 9a shows that the most common base year for emissions reduction inventories was the year 2000 or later, this differs significantly from the Kyoto and CCP base year of 1990, which received only two per cent.

**Table 9a: base year target set**

>2000	1996-99	1991-95	1990	<1990
22	15	6	13	1
<b>39 %</b>	<b>26 %</b>	<b>11 %</b>	<b>23 %</b>	<b>2 %</b>

Base 57

Table 9b shows that the most common target for reduction of council emissions was 16-20 per cent which agrees with the Kyoto emissions reductions target, it is also important to note that 17 per

cent of the councils who had set a target for reduction of their own emissions had set a target of greater than 20 per cent.

**Table 9b: percentage decrease in emissions**

0-5 %	6-10 %	11-15 %	16-20 %	20 %+
11	13	11	19	11
<b>17 %</b>	<b>20 %</b>	<b>17 %</b>	<b>29 %</b>	<b>17 %</b>

Base 65

In Table 9c it can be seen that the most common target years for emissions reductions to be achieved are 2003-2005, which again conflicts with the Kyoto target year of 2010, which only 21 per cent of councils are using.

**Table 9c: target year for reductions to be achieved**

<2002	2003-5	2006-9	2010	>2010
11	21	7	11	3
<b>21 %</b>	<b>40 %</b>	<b>13 %</b>	<b>21 %</b>	<b>6 %</b>

Base 53

### Local area emissions reduction target

Of those councils which had conducted an inventory of council emissions only 25 per cent

had actually set an emissions reduction target for the local community emissions.

**Table 10: has your council set a target for the reduction of emissions in the area (ie from activities and buildings other than those of the council)? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes	8	21	15	40	53	28	<b>25 %</b>
No	92	79	85	60	47	72	<b>75 %</b>

Base: 194

Those councils which had set a target were asked in which year this target was set the results were very spread out over the eight-year period but the

most popular year was for councils to set their target was 1996. (Table 11)

**Table 11: what was the date that this target was set?**

<=1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
1	4	18	3	1	1	4	4	4
<b>3 %</b>	<b>10 %</b>	<b>45 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>	<b>3 %</b>	<b>3 %</b>	<b>10 %</b>	<b>10 %</b>	<b>10 %</b>

Base 40

Those councils which had set a target for the reduction of local area emissions were asked to state the base year, the percentage decrease and the target year for reductions to be achieved.

years for emissions reduction inventories of local emissions was the year 1996-99, this differs significantly from the Kyoto and CCP base year of 1990, which only eight councils (21 per cent) opted for.

Table 12a shows that the most common base

**Table 12a: base year target set**

>2000	1996-99	1991-95	1990	<1990
3	25	3	8	0
<b>8 %</b>	<b>64 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>	<b>21 %</b>	<b>0 %</b>

Base 39

Table 12b shows that the most common target for reduction of council emissions was 20 per cent or more, which agrees with the Kyoto emissions reductions target.

**Table 12b: percentage decrease in emissions**

0-5 %	6-10 %	11-15 %	16-20 %	20 %+
3	6	1	4	31
<b>7 %</b>	<b>13 %</b>	<b>2 %</b>	<b>9 %</b>	<b>69 %</b>

Base 45

In Table 12c it can be seen that the most common target years for emissions reductions to be achieved are 2006-9, which again conflicts with the Kyoto target year of 2010, which only nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of councils are using.

<2002	2003-5	2006-9	2010	>2010
0	6	15	10	11
<b>0 %</b>	<b>14 %</b>	<b>36 %</b>	<b>24 %</b>	<b>26 %</b>

Base: 42

### Targets for sectors

Authorities were asked if their targets included any individual breakdowns for different sectors, table 13 shows that nearly a quarter (22 per cent) of local authorities had set a target for the domestic sector.

	CC	DC	LB	MB	UA	WU	Total %
Domestic	0	23	21	35	38	12	<b>22</b>
Commercial and industrial	0	3	0	15	0	12	<b>4</b>
Transport	4	5	7	25	9	12	<b>8</b>
Waste	4	5	7	20	5	12	<b>7</b>
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

Base:207

### Community strategy

One-third of councils had already produced their community strategy, however the remaining two-thirds plan to have their strategies published by 31 March 2003.

	County Council	District council	London Borough	Met authority	Unitary Authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes	27	25	54	68	43	14	<b>33 %</b>
No, but plan to by 30 September 2002	5	6	15	6	9	14	<b>7 %</b>
No, but plan to by 31 March 2003	68	69	31	26	48	72	<b>60 %</b>

Base:195

As table 15 shows, councils were then asked to what extent measures to tackle greenhouse gas emissions have been included in their community strategy.

Only nine per cent had considered measures to tackle Greenhouse gas emissions to a considerable extent, But the majority 45 per cent had at least considered then to some extent.

**Table 15 to what extent have measures to tackle greenhouse gas emissions been or will be incorporated into the community strategy? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Not considered	33	20	17	11	9	17	<b>19 %</b>
To only a small extent	19	27	33	34	29	33	<b>27 %</b>
To some extent	48	45	50	44	43	33	<b>45 %</b>
To a considerable extent	0	8	0	11	19	17	<b>9 %</b>
The most important factor	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0 %</b>

Base:187

### Barriers

Authorities were asked 20 questions about the barriers to climate change planning. Table 16 overleaf presents the ranked responses according to how many councils selected them (respondents were free to select as many or as few as they wished).

Nearly four-fifths of councils say that insufficient staff or staff time is a barrier to making progress on climate change issues, which puts it in first position. Nearly as many authorities (71 per cent, 2nd position) mention 'other priorities', and the only other barrier cited by more than half of all councils was 'lack of funding', at 69 per cent.

After these top three barriers, there is a big gap of over 20 per cent to those scoring less than 50 per cent of authorities. Very noticeably however, four of the next five barriers are to do with lack of awareness, on the part of local business (cited by 47 per cent, 4th), then the public (46 per cent, 5th), councillors (43 per cent, 7th) and staff (41 per cent, 8th). Contrast these with 'lack of awareness or interest from voluntary and community sector organisations', which came much lower (28 per cent, 13th position).

An interesting barrier neatly splits the 'awareness' group into two by coming at sixth position, and is the only other barrier to score over two-fifths of respondents (at 46 per cent), this being 'difficulty co-ordinating between departments within the authority'. The contrast is with two related barriers which scored comparatively low, ie 'difficulty co-ordination regionally between adjacent areas' (20 per cent, 16th position) and 'difficulty co-ordinating between county and district councils' (at 16 per cent, 18th position).

Traditional complaints vary quite widely in terms of how they score. 'Need to bid for project funding uses too many resources' comes ninth (38 per cent), whereas in contrast 'insufficient local authority powers' is 12th (28 per cent) and even lower are 'local resistance to specific schemes (public, community groups, businesses etc)' (15 per cent, 19th position) and 'risk of litigation (planning appeals etc.)' (12 per cent, 20th and last position).

Nearly a third of councils cite 'difficulty delivering climate change actions through other plans and strategies (eg reducing pollution, traffic congestion etc.)' (32 per cent, 10th position), and 'lack of appropriate government guidance' (30 per cent, 11th position).

**Table 16: what difficulties does your council face now or in the future with regard to climate change planning? %**

	CC	DC	LB	MB	UA	WU	Total
1. Insufficient staff or staff time	69	84	78	75	67	50	<b>78 %</b>
2. Other issues take higher priority in the council	73	74	57	65	62	75	<b>71 %</b>
3. Lack of funding	77	68	78	65	67	50	<b>69 %</b>
4. Lack of awareness or interest from local businesses	42	44	43	55	67	50	<b>47 %</b>
5. Lack of awareness or interest from the public	42	42	28	60	57	75	<b>46 %</b>
6. Difficulty co-ordinating different departments within the authority	42	45	50	40	57	62	<b>46 %</b>
7. Lack of awareness or interest from councillors	50	44	36	45	24	50	<b>43 %</b>
8. Lack of awareness or interest from council staff	31	39	36	55	43	62	<b>41 %</b>
9. Need to bid for project funding uses too many resources	31	40	28	45	48	0	<b>38 %</b>
10. Difficulty delivering climate change actions through other plans and strategies (e.g. reducing pollution, traffic congestion etc.)	31	34	21	45	19	37	<b>32 %</b>
11. Lack of appropriate government guidance	23	33	28	30	23	37	<b>30 %</b>
12. Insufficient local authority powers	19	31	36	35	19	0	<b>28 %</b>
13. Lack of awareness or interest from other public sector organisations (e.g. health)	15	26	21	35	38	50	<b>28 %</b>
14. Difficulties in exploiting EU assistance	27	25	28	30	33	0	<b>26 %</b>
15. Lack of awareness or interest from voluntary and community sector organisations	15	23	7	20	33	37	<b>22 %</b>
16. Difficulty co-ordinating regionally between adjacent areas	8	21	14	25	33	12	<b>20 %</b>
17. ICT	4	23	0	10	19	0	<b>16 %</b>
18. Difficulty co-ordinating between county and district councils	8	12	0	0	19	0	<b>16 %</b>
19. Local resistance to specific schemes (public, community groups, businesses etc.)	19	12	14	15	24	25	<b>15 %</b>
20. Risk of litigation (planning appeals etc.)	11	13	0	25	9	0	<b>12 %</b>

Base: (NB all councils responding to survey) 207

The responses given in the field where other barriers could be described were varied but the following covers the majority of themes raised. Firstly, several authorities pointed out that it was "too early to say", typically because they were "as yet to start [our] climate change strategy".

Some councils raised doubts about the "uncertainty regarding impacts of climate change at the local level" whereas others mentioned that "people struggle with the concept of thinking globally and acting locally". One even mentioned, "what difference will it make if [we take] the initiative if no one else does - especially the big polluters like the US". Some confusion with the 'hole in the ozone layer' was indicated by the response "If clear links can be made to issues like ... skin cancers etc.". One respondent even mentioned the "lack of acceptance that climate change is occurring".

As regards the "strategy to cross reference existing targets from transport and waste strategies ...there is discomfort that climate change targets would be more ambitious".

A common complaint was "difficulty obtaining data from utilities".

Not uncommon was a response like the "council policy places highest priority on social and economic issues" or even "increasingly customer focussed ... like ... keeping the streets clean", as was the possible answer, that it "requires statutory duty upon local authorities".

A number of councils also raised doubts about the wisdom of producing "yet another strategy".

On the subject of government action, a comment was made of the need "to ensure councillors and senior managers take climate change seriously, a government target" and others referred to "a statutory obligation".

"I think the main thing is that this area is not a priority for councils and there are no statutory duties to undertake this work. Therefore with other more pressing priorities and limited budgets other work takes precedence".

### Support to produce climate change strategy

Nearly three-quarters of councils say they need support in producing a climate change strategy, with all council types clearly needing help (Table 17).

**Table 17: Does your council need any additional support and training to help you produce its climate change strategy? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total
Yes	67	72	75	65	80	86	<b>72 %</b>
No	33	28	25	35	20	14	<b>28 %</b>

Base: 184

Numerous respondents indicated that 'any help' would be appreciated. One wanted "basic training or support on a strategy for a small authority". Another specified "training for management team, portfolio holders and relevant officers". The many general comments included "training on the effects of climate change and the actions to be taken to minimise those effects" and "information on how to tackle the issues".

"Sharing of best practice" and "the barriers etc [that other councils] came across" were typical comments. A district council suggested that the "county should coordinate".

Several councils are clearly preoccupied with producing emissions inventories, including getting data on energy use [and] emissions, as they made reference to training in that subject area when answering this question, in addition to the specific question later on regarding support and training on emissions modelling.

One typical request was for delivering a "form of words which will shake higher management" and others included help on "informing and motivating councillors" and "how to get political support for something so long term". More generally were the points about "awareness and relevance to local situation" and "awareness-raising both within and outside the authority".

Request for assistance on finance matters included requests for "support for resource bids, what funding opportunities are available" and the more specific "methods of financing major schemes for renewable energy".

Regarding other related initiatives, a request was made for "guidance on how best to integrate these into a climate change emissions strategy, without duplicating effort". One respondent wanted "guidance on why yet another strategy is needed" although another said "any package should recognise the [sustainable development] three circle model of social, economic and environmental issues". One authority wanted "examples of ... how the issue has been incorporated in community strategies". A potential solution was hinted at in "consultancy advice helped us in developing [our] energy strategy and policy".

Specific requests included "how to set meaningful targets" in a variety of sectors and "how to monitor them", as well as "roll of CCP software for all local authorities" and "ICT packages".

As regards writing the strategy, a request for the "suggested format and contents" was made, and others for "a model document [as] piloted by similar councils" and guidance on developing a "strategy for [the] wider community".

## Section 2: software and modelling

### Software for greenhouse gas inventories

As table 18 shows, nearly three-quarters of councils have not used computer based software to carry out a greenhouse gas inventory. Although the earlier question on producing an inventory shows that over half had not in any case conducted an inventory, this means around 20 per cent of councils have conducted an inventory without using any software support at all. The commonest software solution was the use of standard desktop tools like Excel (12 per cent of councils).

**Table 18: has your council used computer-based software to carry out the greenhouse gas inventory? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes, using standard desktop tools like Excel	16	12	15	15	5	0	<b>12 %</b>
Yes, using CCP	12	2	15	25	14	0	<b>7 %</b>
Yes, using other software	16	6	31	20	14	0	<b>11 %</b>
No	56	80	39	40	67	100	<b>70 %</b>

Base: 198

### Support for emissions modelling

As Table 19 shows, nearly three-quarters of councils (72 per cent) are indicating the need for help on emissions modelling.

**Table 19: do you need any additional support and training to help you do emissions modelling? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes	48	76	75	61	75	83	<b>72 %</b>
No	52	24	25	29	25	17	<b>28 %</b>

Base: 168

Most respondents indicated that 'any help' would be appreciated and went on to ask for information on the type of software available, basic training in how to use them and help to interpret the results. Some typical answers are displayed below:

"Would like to know more about emissions modelling and what support and training needs are available. What will DREAM, EEP, TEMIS, allow the council to do? Who will take notice of and act on the data coming out of the modelling? It is expensive - time, money?"

"Identification of the most appropriate software to use and then training in its use"

"I don't know anything about this and doubt that anyone else in the authority does."

"Some examples of what to include and miss out; extrapolation of data; best software programs; costs; and demonstrations of programs."

### Section 3: internal energy use

#### Policy on internal energy use

As Table 20a shows, only two fifths of councils (41 per cent) have an up-to-date energy policy. Forty per cent of those consider that a document published before 2000 warrants the description 'up to date', despite recent major changes in the energy markets.

**Table 20a: has your council an up-to-date published policy regarding its own use of energy? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes	56	36	38	42	48	33	<b>41 %</b>
No	44	64	62	58	52	67	<b>60 %</b>

Base: 200

**Table 20b: please give the date the energy policy was last published.**

1994 or earlier	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
5	1	0	5	4	6	4	14	12
<b>10 %</b>	<b>2 %</b>	<b>0 %</b>	<b>10 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>	<b>12 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>	<b>27 %</b>	<b>24 %</b>

Base: 51

### Energy efficiency and procurement

Nearly three-fifths of councils (59 per cent) consider energy efficiency fairly or very important

when procuring products and services, 10 times the number that consider it not at all important (six per cent).

**Table 21: in council procurement policies, how important is energy efficiency when determining which product or service to purchase? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Very important	12	18	21	10	9	15	<b>16 %</b>
Fairly important	28	39	50	70	43	57	<b>43 %</b>
Not very important	52	36	21	15	39	28	<b>35 %</b>
Not at all important	8	7	8	5	9	0	<b>6 %</b>

Base: 202

### Buying green electricity

Over half of councils (55 per cent) buy a proportion of green electricity which exceeds the current three per cent level of the generation mix

set out by the government. With 12 per cent obtaining more than 80 per cent of their electricity from green sources.

**Table 22: what percentage of electricity published by the council is from 'green' sources? Number of councils whose 'green supply proportion' falls into the stated range:**

Up to 3 %	4-10 %	11-20 %	20 %-80 %	More than 80 %
84	26	10	33	21
<b>45 %</b>	<b>18 %</b>	<b>6 %</b>	<b>19 %</b>	<b>12 %</b>

Base: 174

### Ownership of renewable energy

Where councils do declare ownership of renewable energy systems, just over a third mention a combined heat and power installation.

Just under a third (29 per cent in each case) mention solar hot water or photovoltaics, but knowledge of these within a council may be limited, due to the small scale nature of most of these installations, thus depressing the figures.

**Table 23: which renewable energy installations are owned by the council, or likely to be implemented in the next 2 years, to generate energy for council use?**

(% = the percentage of those that responded that indicated that answer)

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Combined heat and power (excluding waste schemes)	19	35	43	60	57	50	<b>37</b>
Solar photo-voltaics	50	18	43	55	29	62	<b>29</b>
Solar water heating	35	22	57	50	29	50	<b>29</b>
Other Renewable Energy types	35	13	21	25	19	37	<b>18</b>
Energy from biomass	42	7	7	25	14	62	<b>16</b>
Energy from waste	27	3	7	40	29	62	<b>14</b>
<i>Indicated any of the above</i>	65	51	71	90	76	75	<b>59</b>

Base: 207

## Section 4: energy use in the authorities area

### ESCOs

Over four-fifths of councils are not involved and are not planning to get involved in running an energy services company (ESCO). Only two per cent of councils have an established ESCO.

**Table 24: what plans does your council have to establish an Energy Services Company to supply energy to the council's area? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total
Already established	0	1	8	5	0	14	<b>2 %</b>
Under development	8	4	14	0	10	0	<b>6 %</b>
Considering	8	10	14	10	30	0	<b>12 %</b>
No current plans	82	85	64	85	60	86	<b>81 %</b>

Base: 197

### Number of CHP and district heating systems

Nearly as many councils are operating two or more district heating or combined heat and power systems (23 per cent) as compared to those who run only one (26 per cent).

**Table 25: how many combined heat and power (CHP) or district heating systems is the council/ESCO, operating or planning to operate in the next two years?**

No systems	1 system	2 systems	3 systems	More than 4
78	40	15	7	13
<b>51 %</b>	<b>26 %</b>	<b>10 %</b>	<b>5 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>

Base: 153

### Supporting renewable energy developments

Although over half of councils (54 per cent) have not supported renewable energy developments in their areas, of those that have, 29 per cent have supported two or more.

**Table 26: how many renewable energy developments has the council supported (excluding CHP and district heating?) %**

No developments	1 system	2 systems	3 systems	4 or more
83	26	24	5	15
<b>54 %</b>	<b>17 %</b>	<b>16 %</b>	<b>3 %</b>	<b>10 %</b>

Base: 153

## Renewable energy targets

As Table 27 shows, over four-fifths of councils (81 per cent) do not have any targets for developing renewable energy in their areas. London boroughs rate particularly poorly on this.

**Table 27: Does the council have any targets for the development of renewable energy in its area?**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total
Yes	33	16	7	22	25	14	<b>19 %</b>
No	67	84	93	78	75	86	<b>81 %</b>

Base: 198

## Access to utility data

As Table 28 shows, less than a fifth of councils have access to energy consumption data for their areas, from utility companies. Metropolitan

authorities fare the best but only two-fifths have access to data. Even where access is granted, it was only to certain companies' data for either gas or electricity, so the picture is very poor.

**Table 28: Does the council have access to energy consumption data (other than for the council's own consumption) from utilities?**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes	14	12	21	40	28	0	<b>18 %</b>
No	86	88	79	60	72	100	<b>82 %</b>

Base: 188

## Section 5: the chief executive

### Guidance documents for chief executives

As Table 29 shows, three quarters of local authority chief executives were aware of the

guidance from the Local Government Association on climate change and over half (52 per cent) have read it.

**Table 29: Have you seen *Community leadership and climate change: guidance for chief executives* (published for England in June 2001, and for Wales in April 2002)? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes, I have read it in detail and taken action as a consequence	10	5	0	12	12	25	<b>7 %</b>
Yes, I have read this in detail	10	15	0	8	12	0	<b>12 %</b>
Yes, I have read skim-read or part-read it	5	34	25	56	35	75	<b>33 %</b>
Yes, I am aware of the document, but have not read it	30	20	50	12	29	0	<b>23 %</b>
No, I have not heard of this document until being asked this question	45	26	25	12	12	0	<b>25 %</b>

Base: 168

### How informed are chief executives?

Four-fifths of local authority chief executives (82 per cent) feel that they are informed about

climate change, at least to some extent, with 28 per cent indicating that they are considerably or fully informed.

**Table 30: how informed do you, as chief executive, feel about the ways in which climate change will affect our community? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Fully informed	5	4	0	0	7	0	4 %
Informed to a considerable extent	45	16	11	44	29	60	24 %
Informed to some extent	35	60	56	44	57	40	54 %
Informed to only a small extent	15	16	22	12	7	0	15 %
Not informed at all	0	4	11	0	0	0	3 %

Base: 162

### Chief executives' perception of authority effectiveness

Only five per cent of local authority chief executives consider that their authority is not tackling climate change at all. The majority view

(54 per cent) is that they are tackling climate change to a small extent, with nearly a third (32 per cent) taking the view that the authority is tackling climate change to a considerable extent.

**Table 31: how effectively do you, as chief executive, do you think your authority is tackling climate change? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Taking a leading role compared to other authorities	10	4	11	7	0	0	5 %
To best practice level	0	2	11	12	0	2	4 %
To a considerable extent	25	25	33	56	50	3	32 %
To a small extent	65	61	45	25	50	1	54 %
Not at all	0	8	0	0	0	0	5 %

Base: 161

### Assigning responsibility to individuals

Thirty nine per cent of local authorities have assigned responsibility for climate change issues to

a member (Table 32) whereas around two-thirds of councils (64 per cent) have assigned responsibility to an officer. (Table 33 overleaf).

**Table 32: has your council assigned responsibility for co-ordinating your response to climate change and developing a strategy to tackle emissions at member level? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	Total %
Yes	42	31	37	69	53	40	39%
No	58	69	63	31	47	60	61%

Base: 158

**Table 33: has your council assigned responsibility for co-ordinating your response to climate change and developing a strategy to tackle emissions at officer level? %**

	County council	District council	London borough	Met authority	Unitary authority	Welsh unitary	<b>Total %</b>
Yes	14	57	7	13	12	4	64%
No	5	45	1	2	5	1	36%

Base: 158

# methodology

## Background

The survey of local authorities on climate change came about for a variety of reasons. At the Institute for Energy and Sustainable Development (at De Montfort University), research was being undertaken, by Lee Allman, into the use of energy and emission modelling software tools by councils. This was to include a survey of local authorities conducted by MSc student Andrew Wallace as part of his dissertation (research project).

At the IDeA, coordination of the Councils for Climate Protection pilot project, with around 24 councils involved, had created interest in whether involvement in the project had encouraged progress on climate protection generally. IDeA had previously conducted a survey of local authorities regarding climate change in 2000.

At the LGA, Alison Miller was planning the LGA/IDeA conference 'Climate change: counting the cost - finding solutions' for November 2002. Among the key questions planned for the conference were - what action are councils already taking, where do they need to do more and what support is available? LGA were thus also planning a survey of local authorities during the summer of 2002.

## Generating the questionnaire

It was agreed that a survey would be jointly performed, to avoid duplication. Andrew Wallace of IESD generated the questions, with input from the other parties. Roger Sykes of the LGA research

team would format that into the house style for surveys. IESD created a web based version of the questionnaire, based on the paper version, and hosted it on their own website at DMU. The web version served two purposes - it allowed respondents who wished to do so, to enter responses directly into the survey 'database' as well as providing a means to key postal responses into the database. The web-based questionnaire was generated with the assistance of the IESD's ICT manager Paul Cropper.

The LGA's list of contacts was used for mailing out the paper questionnaires. The survey was promoted at an IDeA conference in Birmingham, July 2002. It was also promoted through email by the LGA and through press releases to the trade press by the IESD.

Some questions - that would have been relevant to climate change in detailed areas like waste and transportation - were omitted to avoid duplication because they had been posed by recent LGA surveys. Several questions were derived from the original 2000 IDeA survey, but the most obvious difference between the 2000 and 2002 questionnaires is that the respondents were asked to be slightly more specific. This is achieved by replacing many of the questions having just yes and no options with questions which require choice from, say, a set of five options.

## Response rate

Out of 410 local authorities in England and Wales, 207 responded:

Authority type	Total number of authorities in existence	Number of authorities responding	%
Counties	34	26	76.5 %
District councils	238	118	49.6 %
London boroughs	33	14	42.4 %
Metropolitan authorities	36	20	55.6 %
English unitaries	47	21	44.7 %
Welsh unitaries	22	8	36.4 %
<b>All types</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>50.5 %</b>

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