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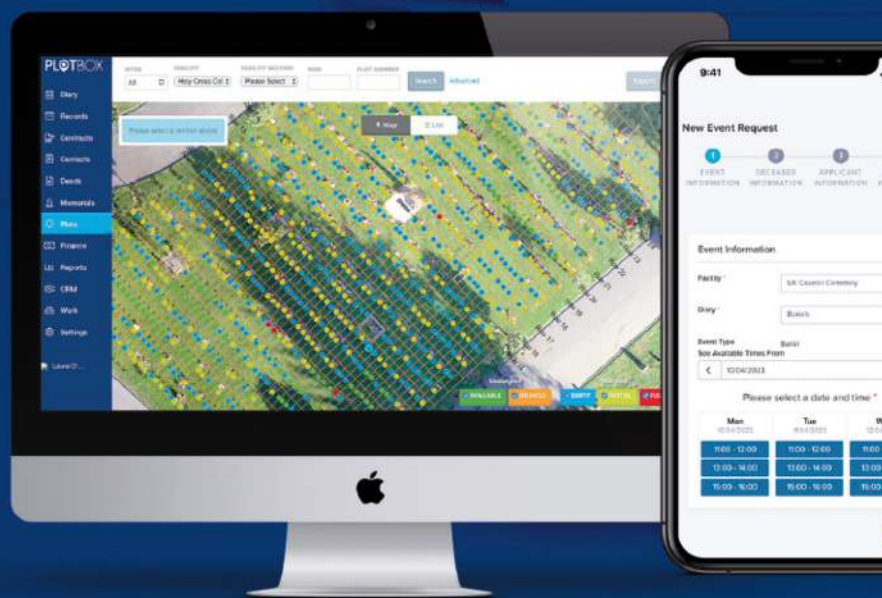
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Editorial



Mo Baines
Chief Executive,
APSE

Where was the local in the local elections?

The English local elections 2024 were keenly watched for reasons most in local government will find frustrating! At a recent Solace South conference, I was delighted to join a panel to discuss the question 'what is local government for?' There was an array of answers and opinions, but a thread of consistency valued the role of councils in delivering, and ensuring, good frontline local services, championing local community interests and supporting vibrant places to live, work and thrive.

That narrative is very different in the mainstream media. Local elections were once again demoted to a litmus test of national public opinion on the performance of the main political parties. If this 'public opinion test' could measure how political parties were responding to and developing their local government offering, one might forgive the distinct lack of the 'local' in local election coverage. However, most members of the commentariat assessed the elections against national issues.

For example, the impact of the 'Gaza' factor on the Labour vote and the internal wranglings of the

Conservatives on possible moves to oust Mr Sunak. The current Government's record on public services was also occasionally debated and dissected but the references were to performance in the NHS, Police, and the impact of welfare reform during a cost-of-living crisis. References to potholes, parks and bins remained relatively rare.

Quite tragically, local government finance barely got a mention despite the relentless campaigns of local government organisations. When it did, the limitations of that debate restricted the parameters to the cost of social care and council tax.

It is hard to see how as a sector we will ever 'make the news' on matters that support the furtherance of the interests of local councils and the people they serve when, even during what is the most 'local' of elections, the debate is centred on national issues. There is an immense opportunity to engage people in local issues, but councils and democracy are not well-served by the media circus that disregards the 'local'. It is hardly surprising then that turnout in local elections remains stubbornly anaemic.

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Report Back

A round up of APSE advocacy and events

The Annual Associates Away Day, another success!

On 18-19 April, Head of APSE Solutions, Andy Mudd, hosted the Annual Away Day for APSE's Associates in Oldham. The event involved discussions on emerging public policy issues and solutions for challenges within the sector. Speakers included Matt Ellis, Principal Advisor; Mo Baines, APSE Chief Executive; Abi Ademiluyi, Principal Advisor and Patrick Knowles, APSE Associate. The two-day forum was supported by Emma Taylor, our Executive Consultant who supports APSE members with their interim management needs, and Lucia Gervis, Client Coordination Officer.

APSE's associates offer ethical and practical support in all aspects of local government service delivery, performance and cost reduction. Visit the Solutions pages on the APSE website or email Emma Taylor on etaylor@apse.org.uk or Lucia Gervis on lgervais@apse.org.uk to enquire about interim managers or consultancy support.

The latest APSE briefings...

APSE has a dedicated team of Principal Advisors providing regular updates via briefings. Our latest include:

- Street Cleansing Trend Analysis
- State of the Market 2024 - Parks and Greenspaces
- Parks and Open Spaces Trend Analysis
- National Good Food National Plan consultation
- Draft Circular Economy and Waste Route Map

APSE runs one of the largest briefings and research programmes in local government. All briefings can be accessed via the APSE website.

PPMA Conference

APSE's Mo Baines presented the latest research findings on the challenges facing local government workforce recruitment and retention at the PPMA annual conference held in Birmingham on the 26 May. The PPMA elected their new president Pam Parkes, who is currently serving as a Commissioner at Birmingham City Council. Congratulations to Pam and thank you to Gordon McFarlane for your service as outgoing president.

APSE at the YPO Food and Catering Show

On 1 May, Vickie Hacking, Principal Advisor, represented APSE at YPO's 50th Anniversary Food and Catering show at Elland Road stadium, Leeds. The event was attended by catering and related service professionals from across the public sector, along with a wide range of industry exhibitors showcasing their products and services with a focus on ensuring sustainability and social value.

Solace in the South

A highly successful conference hosted by Solace South took place in Winchester on the 18-19 May. Mo Baines, APSE's Chief Executive, joined a panel discussion with Professor Colin Copus, Mark Lloyd, formerly of the LGA and Adam Lent, of New Local with the panel chaired by Jess Gibbons, Chief Executive of Brighton and Hove Council.



Highways Innovation Awards finalists and winners, from left to right: Arron Pengelly (winner), Christian Maude, Cllr Archie Dryburgh (presenter), Emily Twyman, Ayrshire Roads Alliance (winner), Wigan Council (winner).

Announcing the winners of the Highways Innovation Awards 2024

APSE are delighted to announce the winners of the 2024 Innovation Awards for highways and winter maintenance services. These Awards celebrate outstanding local councils that use innovative ideas and solutions to tackle the current challenges facing their frontline services.

- Highways Maintenance Innovation Award: Ayrshire Roads Alliance
- Special Recognition Award for Winter Maintenance: Wigan Council
- Highways and Winter Maintenance Apprentice of the Year: Arron Pengelly - Cornwall Council / CORMAC

The winners were presented with their awards at the APSE Highways, Street Lighting and Winter Maintenance Seminar in Glasgow on 20 March.

The Tree Council in London

On 19 April, Matt Ellis, APSE Principal Advisor for Parks and Greenspaces, attended The Tree Council's workshop on 'Protecting important trees outside woodlands of environmental, social and cultural value'. This event explored ways to improve the protection of significant and important trees. The insights gleaned from the meeting will feed into recommendations to Defra for future policy development.

APSE in HortWeek

APSE's latest report into plant biosecurity - outlining the various measures, resources and strategies local authorities can employ to deal with biosecurity issues - received coverage in HortWeek magazine, in the form of an exclusive article by report author Wayne Priestley.

The full report is available on the APSE website, and Wayne will be delivering a presentation on the report at the Parks, Horticulture and Grounds Maintenance Advisory Group on Friday 24 May, via MS Teams. You can book your place at the event via the APSE website.

APSE Central Region Event

In response to changes in waste legislation, APSE Central hosted an event - free for APSE Central Region members - in Nottingham on 17 April. Speakers gave an overview of the Staffordshire Waste

Partnership, the 'Simpler Recycling' legislative changes, the Nottingham County Council Approach - including the implementation of weekly food collections, and the key findings from the APSE State of the Market survey.

APSE at RTPI

On April 25, Andy Mudd, Head of APSE Solutions, attended the 'Implementing the Environment Act' Royal Town Planning Institute seminar in Exeter. The event included presentations and discussions on the new legislation, particularly the potential impact of Simpler Recycling on planning, as well as waste processing infrastructure and how future developments will have to adapt.

Staff News

It's all (internal) change at APSE! Following Robbie Edwards' departure, Olivia Giles has made the move from her role as Training Coordinator to take over as Executive Support and Governance officer. Olivia Wright, who currently works in Business Support, will be replacing her in the Training Coordinator role. Well done to all!

Mo Baines appointed visiting professor

Mo Baines, APSE's Chief Executive, has been appointed as a Visiting Professor at Staffordshire University! As an expert in public policy and local government, Mo will be adding to the applied research strengths of the University's Centre for Business, Innovation and the Regions, which launched last year.

Scotland

Cllr Archie Dryburgh wins Role Model of the Year

We are delighted to announce that Cllr Archie Dryburgh MBE, APSE Chair of Highways and Street Lighting, Armed Forces Champion, and Prospective National Chair, won the Role Model of the Year at the 2024 Scottish Veterans Awards, held on 24 April. Congratulations Archie!



Solace / Improvement Service Transformation

Louise Melville, APSE Principal Advisor for Scotland, attended the Solace online event focused on an ambitious programme of reform for Scottish local government, supported by the Improvement Service. The transformation programme built on an Improvement Service report, published in 2022, that proposed a new vision for Scottish local government, titled 'Delivering a future for Scottish Local Authorities'.

Wales

Trees and Woodland Webinar

On 8 May, Matt Ellis, Principal Advisor for Wales, hosted a free online event for APSE Wales Members discussing the Welsh Government target to plant 86 million trees by 2030. A range of speakers presented at the webinar including Cllr Michael Michael, APSE Wales Neighbourhood Services Chair; Cllr Mark Wilson, Vale of Glamorgan Council; Jerry Langford from Coed Cadw, and Sabine Nouvet from RSPB Cymru.

Northern Ireland

Unpacking waste and resources

On 6 March, APSE Northern Ireland hosted a free webinar for NI members on the development of and transition to a circular economy, with a focus on the challenges facing waste and recycling teams. Presentations included: 'Rethinking our resources: Measures for climate action and a circular economy in NI' - Rachael Hook, Head of Resources and Waste Strategy, DAERA; 'Progress on developing a circular economy for NI' - Heidi Redmond, Circular Economy Adviser, Strategic Investment Board; 'Sustainable resource management for a circular economy' - Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability, Antrim and Newtownabbey Council; 'Food waste action week' - Jackie Bailey, Senior Campaign Manager (Food), WRAP.

Richard Hudson, Technical Manager, at the CIWM, provides an overview of the changes to waste legislation brought on by the 'Simpler Recycling' legislation at the APSE Central Region event in Nottingham





APSE Chief Executive, Mo Baines, appointed as Visiting Professor to Staffordshire University

An expert in public policy and local government, Mo will be adding to the applied research strengths of the University's Centre for Business, Innovation and the Regions which launched last year.

Commenting on her appointment, Mo said: "APSE has always led an innovative research programme bringing together policy into local government practice. Staffordshire University is a leading institution in developing research that informs public policy development and practice-based outputs as well as demonstrating the value and benefit of research to local government and local governance.

"I am delighted to receive this appointment and look forward to continuing APSE's remarkable collaboration with our academic colleagues and working with Professor Steven Griggs and the Staffordshire team to enhance the voice of UK local government and to strengthen the case for local governance and democracy."

Centre leader Professor Griggs said: "We are delighted with Mo's appointment. Mo has considerable experience of working in public policy and local government and is passionate about delivering excellence in public services. We are confident that in her role as Visiting Professor, she will help to further the influence and impact the university has in this specialism."

The Centre for Business, Innovation and the Regions aims to reflect the University's civic mission and is carrying out research focused on inequalities, employment and welfare, economic development and regeneration. It has developed collaborative partnerships with a number of public and private sector organisations including central government departments, the World Health Organisation and APSE.

As part of its partnership with APSE, the Centre will soon publish the findings of its national survey of councillors. The research, led by Professor Steven Griggs in collaboration with colleagues from De Montfort University, Leeds Beckett University and the University of Essex, is the third in a series of surveys going back to 2003.

Professor Griggs said: "The study demonstrates the challenges of being an elected councillor in the current, economic and social context. It also underlines the need to address the issues which have prevented more people from seeking election as local councillors and which risk a crisis in local political representation."

"We are delighted with Mo's appointment. Mo has considerable experience of working in public policy and local government and is passionate about delivering excellence in public services."

Professor Steven Griggs, Centre for Business, Innovation and the Regions, Staffordshire University, co-author of APSE's upcoming 'Striving to Thrive' councillor attitudes report.



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Aviemore Preview '24



Now running for over 30 years, the APSE Scotland Fleet, Waste and Ground Seminar has become a fixture in the Scottish local authority calendar. Louise Melville, APSE Principal Advisor for Scotland, provides a preview of the speakers, topics and themes of this year's edition...

Thanks to our sponsors...



Against the stunning backdrop of the Cairngorms, local government specialists in fleet, waste and grounds services will gather with the UK's leading suppliers to explore new and exciting innovations within the industry and debate the future of these vital services.

On Thursday 18 April, the Scottish Government announced changes to its climate change targets, with the target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 75% by 2030 dropped. However, there is still a strong commitment to achieve net zero in Scotland by 2045 – 5 years before the UK Government's target of 2050. These changes have brought climate change and all associated policies and targets into sharper focus within Scotland.

This year's APSE Scotland Fleet, Waste and Grounds event taking place in Aviemore from 21-24 May will enable local government colleagues from across Scotland to hear from a wide variety of expert speakers - covering many areas of policy areas which directly feed into the Scottish Government 2045 target. These include the decarbonisation targets for fleet, Scotland's Circular Economy and Waste Route Map to 2030 as well as Scotland's National Litter and Flytipping Strategy.

Scotland's Circular Economy and Waste Route Map to 2030 second consultation covers a wide range of policy changes, a number of which are covered over the course of the event. We will hear from Scottish Government directly in terms of the second consultation including where we are now and future developments, as well as presentations covering increasing food waste recycling, extended producer responsibility, using smart technology within street cleansing, and looking at how we tackle the problem of single use e-cigarettes.

Parks, Grounds and Streets services are also covered in abundance with presentations providing a focus on the actions from the National Litter and Flytipping Strategy, biodiversity and biosecurity.

The seminar also features Scotland's largest trade exhibition of its kind with over 120 exhibition stands confirmed. Delegates will have the opportunity to interact with suppliers and inquire about their latest products and pricing.

Session One – sponsored by Stertil Koni Ltd

The seminar will open with the keynote session 'The route to net zero and the importance of compliance and enforcement',



reflecting the priority of decarbonisation across the local authority fleet sector. Following the official event welcome and opening by APSE Chief Executive, Mo Baines, delegates will receive an update on the key Net Zero fleet objectives and targets of the Scottish Government by Jamie Dunsmore, Head of Low Carbon Fleets and Infrastructure. Jamie will be joined in session one by Gordon Thomson, Head of Vehicle Testing and Approvals Service for the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency, who will detail the latest changes to MOTs and enforcement. Phil Lloyd, Head of Engineering Policy, Logistics UK, will wrap up session one with an update on the guide to maintaining roadworthiness and the implication for local authorities.

Session Two

Following lunch and exhibition viewing, delegates will have the opportunity to attend the Litter Managers Network discussion forum and converse with representatives from Zero Waste Scotland and Keep Scotland Beautiful on the National Litter and Fly-tipping Strategy. Alex Quayle, Circular Economy Division, Scottish Government, will then present the findings of the second consultation of the circular economy route map to 2030. Kimberly Anderson, Team Leader – Cleaner Communities at East Ayrshire Council, will be up next, speaking on the introduction of food waste recycling in her council and the importance of communication and engagement with local people in its implementation. Ian Martin from South Ayrshire Council and Catherine Pendreigh, Food Systems Team, Zero Waste Scotland, will close session two by providing an overview of South Ayrshire’s experience with their food waste project.

Session Three

The use of smart technology within the street cleaning sector will be the topic of discussion for our expert panel in this session. Sandy Anderson, Service Manager – Waste Operations at Fife Council, will provide an overview of the council’s trial of solar bins and their integration with smart software. Sustainable solutions for major public events will be the focus of our next speaker Paul Dougall, Co-ordinator – Neighbourhood Services, South Ayrshire Council. Our final speaker of the session, Mark Garvey, Chief Executive of Whitespace will present on Fife Council’s digitisation of street cleaning using new digital solutions and improvements.

The Seminar will take place at the MacDonald Aviemore Highland Resort on Tuesday 21 to Friday 24 May 2024. It is an extremely valuable resource for local authorities and is not to be missed

The annual event features Scotland’s largest trade exhibition of its kind with over 120 exhibition stands confirmed. Delegates have the unique opportunity to question suppliers about their latest products and pricing

Session Four

Delegates interested in parks, grounds and green spaces will be invited to look at their services through the lens of sustainability and climate change. Callum McLaren and Hannah Crow, Ecology and Biodiversity Officers from West Lothian Council, will explain their approach to maintaining biodiversity and integrating it throughout council projects. Plant biosecurity and its significance to local authorities will be the topic of the next speaker - Fiona Sutton-Wilson, Head of APSE Training.

Session Five

Session five focuses on the range of challenges and opportunities facing local authority fleet services, with Clare Sherry, Programme Manager -Change Management, Improvement Service, giving an overview of the ambitious programme of reform for Scottish local government. Ruth Kydd, Insurance Manager, City of Edinburgh Council, will be up next to discuss the impact of drug and alcohol policies on insurance risk and the benefits of having a testing programme in place. The final speaker of our session, Simon Hyde, Chief Executive Officer, ENGINIUS FZ (UK), will investigate the impact of electric hydrogen fuel cell technology on fleet transformation.

Aviemore is far more than just an exhibition. The Seminar – kindly sponsored by ACL Hire – draws in a rich variety of highly influential and knowledgeable speakers; offering those in attendance a fantastic opportunity to network and bounce ideas around other members of local government

Session Six – sponsored by REEN

For the final session of the seminar, we return our attention to waste and recycling services. First up, delegates will be brought up to speed with upcoming environmental policy changes by a representative from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. Next up is an issue that has dominated news headlines recently – the issue of single-use vapes. Duncan Simpson, Chair of the Education, Training and Competency Working Group, SWITCH Forum, will look at the scale and impact of vapes on the recycling sector, as well as the changes in legislation needed to tackle the problem. The final speaker of the seminar is Alasdair Meldrum, Director of Albion Environmental, who will present on health and safety for automatic bin lifting equipment, including safeguards and interim solutions.

Besides providing ample opportunities for learning through our Seminar sessions, APSE Scotland's Fleet, Waste and Grounds Seminar is a key event for local government decision-makers and heads of service to come together and share best practice while providing the opportunity – via the largest Scottish trade exhibition of its kind – to get to terms with the latest technological developments in fleet, equipment and ancillary supplies; from salt spreaders to asset management software. It is a space in which new partnerships can be developed to transform and enhance local government frontline services.

Discussion forums

- Litter Managers Network
- Transport
- Waste
- Parks, Streets and Grounds

Delegates will have to opportunity to debate and discuss with experts across a range of service areas in these interactive sessions.

Striving for Excellence Awards - Sponsored by Bucher Municipal, Econ Engineering, and Zero Waste Scotland

APSE Scotland is once again delighted to announce we will be hosting our Striving for Excellence awards at this year's Scottish Fleet, Waste and Grounds services seminar in Aviemore.

These awards will recognise the hard work and success of local authority services in Scotland and provide an excellent opportunity for those within the related service areas to put forward their most deserving initiative which demonstrates innovative ideas and solutions to tackle the current challenges facing our services.

Categories include:

- Waste and Recycling
- Parks, Grounds and Street Scene
- Fleet

Entry to the awards is now closed.

The Seminar will take place at the MacDonald Aviemore Highland Resort from Tuesday 21 to Friday 24 May 2024. It is an extremely valuable resource for local authorities and is not to be missed.

- *To learn more about the APSE Scotland Fleet, Waste and Grounds Seminar, please visit the APSE website or contact Louise Melville on 01698 459051*

Transport Seminar 2024**Speakers include:**

Rob Bailey, APSE Principal Advisor

Caroline Hicks, Head of Enforcement Regulatory Services and Transformation, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency

Robert Saunders, Manager - Member Advice Centre, Logistics UK

Emma Thompson, Designate Executive Director, Society of Operations Engineers

Keith Budden, Head of Business Development, Cenex

Robert Yates, Product Support Engineer, Faun Zoller Limited

Ian Wilkin, Integrated Transport Services Manager, Lancashire County Council

Bob Bowdler, Ex Dudley Council and APSE Interim Manager

Simon Turner, Campaign Manager, Driving for Better Business

**Thursday 20 June 2024**

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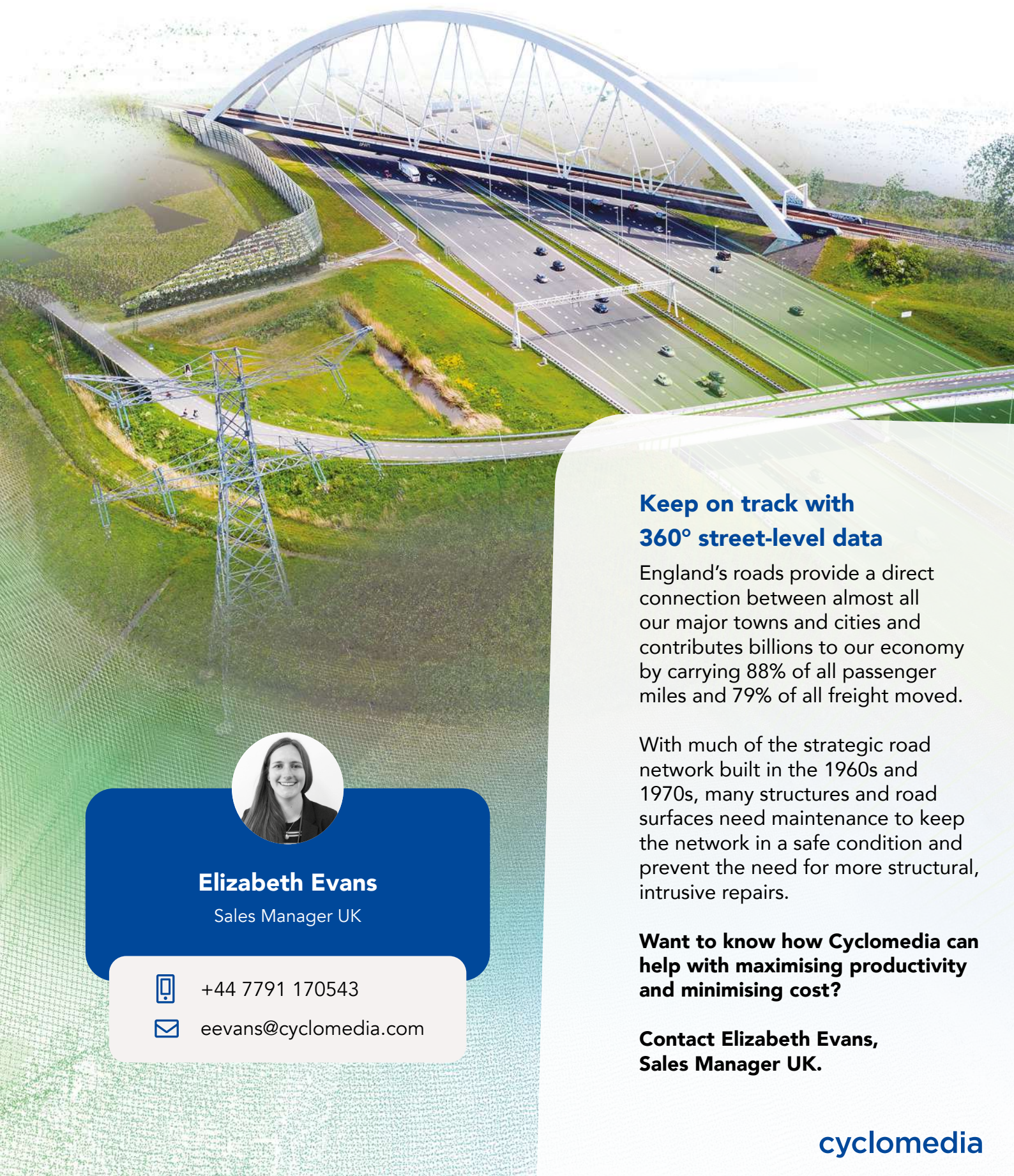
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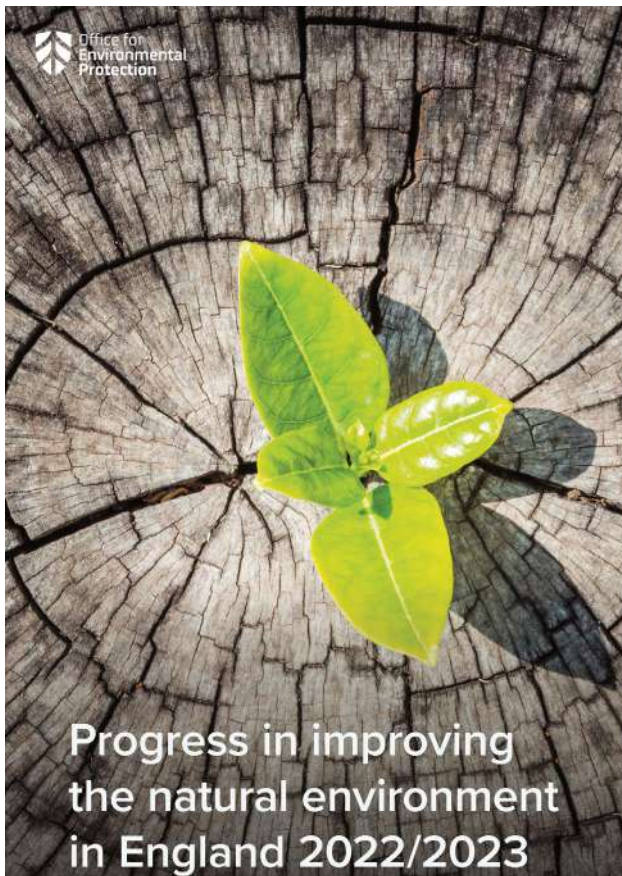
Natalie Prosser, Chief Executive of the OEP explains why connecting people to nature is essential for achieving the EIP's goals.

It was a delight to speak at the APSE Parks Seminar in Manchester, introducing the work of OEP and our recent assessment of the government's progress in improving the natural environment.

I enjoyed hearing from local leaders who are passionately committed to protecting precious green space, using entrepreneurial initiatives to tackle the difficult job of adapting government priorities into successful and financially workable community projects.

What is our environmental assessment function?

The OEP is a new public body with the principal objective of contributing to environmental protection and improvement of the natural environment. We were created under the Environment Act 2021 and we hold government and public authorities to account. We are part of a new post-EU exit governance framework that underpins environmental protection and improvement in England and Northern Ireland.



Government has an ambitious vision to leave the environment in a better state for future generations. The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (EIP23) is the means to achieve that vision. Each year we assess the government's progress against the targets and commitments it has set in our EIP progress report.

What did our annual progress assessment tell us about the need for public engagement?

Viewed against the government's long-term vision, our summary assessment is that while some progress has been made, very substantial challenges remain and that the government is largely off track to meet its ambitions, targets and commitments.

However, these prospects are not fixed. There are many clear opportunities to change trends, make progress towards targets and deliver significant environmental improvements.

The EIP23 has ten goal areas and recognises the interconnected nature of actions to improve the environment. The first goal "thriving plants and wildlife" is presented as the apex goal which all other goals help to achieve. The tenth goal "enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment" is presented as benefiting from the achievement of the other nine goals.

Improving people's connection with the environment and their understanding of the importance of the environment to the economy, society and people's wellbeing is fundamental to building societal support for actions to improve nature. In our view, the tenth goal should be seen as the foundation goal which supports the achievement of all the other goals. Currently, this is not the case.

Throughout our assessment of progress, the importance of enabling non-government stakeholders to play their part in protecting and improving the environment was apparent. While the specific actors and how they can contribute varies, the necessity of their involvement is common across all goals.

What is needed?

Time is not on our side when it comes to the environment and things must change.

We know that improved quality, access to and engagement with nature have positive impacts for people. Yet, there is an absence of actions to increase public awareness of the importance of the environment for health and well-being. Progress has stalled on key government commitments, such as green social prescribing, that link environment, health and wellbeing and deliver multiple benefits.

Dedicated actions aimed at increasing buy-in and involvement from wider society are fundamental to achieving EIP23 goals. A greater focus on green choices, particularly building acceptability for change, presents opportunities to support progress. This requires government to take the lead in creating a society that is greener by design and enables action at all levels.

The OEP will continue to play our part to bring about the change needed to protect and improve the environment – here is our full EIP23 report, findings, and recommendations.

• *Natalie's presentation from the APSE Parks Seminar is available to download via APSE's website.*



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Bodmin Moor Peatland Partnership Volunteers - Cornwall Council



Dolphin in the River Fal - Alicia Shephard



Cornwall's Nature Recovery Strategy

Mark Holmes, Head of Environmental Partnerships and Climate Change, Cornwall Council, discusses how the Council's nationally recognised response to biodiversity loss is leading the way for Local Nature Recovery Strategies across the UK.

In November 2022, the Council became one of the first local authorities to declare an ecological emergency, recognising the urgent need for action to bend the curve of nature decline in the region. This combined with our 2019 Climate Emergency declaration acknowledges the challenges our environment faces and the need for a systems-wide response to help reduce carbon, adapt to a changing climate and grow nature.

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Recovery Strategy

A Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is a spatial strategy providing a blueprint to focus action for nature. It is a statutory requirement of the 2021 Environment Act and contributes to national efforts to halt species decline. We are also using this process to support our local ambition for at least 30% of land, rivers and seas in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to be protected and well-managed for nature by 2030.

As one of five pilot areas nationally to deliver a draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Cornwall Council is now well-placed as one of the 47 Responsible Authorities across the UK to develop the new strategy.

Our approach

Cornwall Council work closely with the Council of the Isles of Scilly and Natural England who are the Supporting Authorities for LNRS development, helping to guide and shape it. With the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership and representatives from our National Landscapes acting as the Steering Group. The Board brings representation from key partners including the local Wildlife Trusts, The National Trust, the University of Exeter and the University of Plymouth, and key sectors including farmers and landowners.

The steering group agreed on six guiding principles to help shape the LNRS, in that it should:

- Prioritise nature but support wider environmental benefits.
- Build upon progress to date with a high level of ambition.
- Be deliverable over perfect.
- Emphasise collaboration and co-production where possible.
- Create one strategy that is useful for the whole region.
- Embed marine considerations through a Voluntary Marine Extension.

Emphasising the need for a voluntary extension of the LNRS was seen as vital for a region surrounded by hundreds of miles of coastland and separated by 30 miles of open water.

Developing the strategy through engagement and intelligence:

In developing the LNRS, we wanted to understand what, where and how nature can be recovered which required knowledge and engagement from a range of sources including the local community and regional experts.

In Summer 2023, we launched an initial consultation aimed at key sectors and the wider public and received over 2,700 engagements through in-person and online responses. Analysis helped identify key themes from this engagement and priorities, and we will now

A Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is a spatial strategy providing a blueprint to focus action for nature. It is a statutory requirement of the 2021 Environment Act and contributes to national efforts to halt species decline.

Cornwall Council is working with the University of Exeter to create our nature recovery opportunity maps to identify where we can make nature bigger, better and more joined up.

work with local experts, delivery partners and landowners to refine these themes into a set of priorities ready for consultation.

In addition, Cornwall Council is working with the University of Exeter to create our nature recovery opportunity maps to identify where we can make nature bigger, better and more joined up. To do this the University are taking a species-led conservation planning approach. They have engaged with local taxonomic and species experts to help inform which wildlife and habitats to focus on and are developing prototype maps to use in engagement exercises before developing the final mapping.

Facilitating LNRS delivery

Whilst Cornwall Council are the Responsible Authority developing the LNRS, from the outset we were clear the LNRS will not be delivered by the council alone and we are working with partners to embed the strategy in their ways of working.

For example, Cornwall's National Landscapes team have been using the foundations of the LNRS to help projects under the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) fund define their goals and ambitions, score project proposals and help steer project development. This fund is designed for farmers and land managers to enable projects that support nature recovery, mitigate climate change impacts and help audiences discover, enjoy and understand the landscape.

That said, we are leading a number of initiatives which enable LNRS delivery at both the landscape and community scale including the Forest for Cornwall, Making Space for Sand, Urban Greenshoots and the Climate and Nature Fund.

The Council have also been working on the Local Investment in Nature Cornwall (LINC) programme. LINC is a national pilot which aims to create a framework to enable private investment in nature. The Council was awarded £1m of revenue funding by Defra to identify mechanisms that pave the way for more investment in nature across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

The LNRS aims to bring together an approach for nature recovery, coordinating existing strategies and providing a blueprint for action. By working with existing partners, new collaborations, creating innovative funding mechanisms and building on technological advances, we are well on the way to delivering a strategy to help coordinate action for nature across the region.

For more information, please contact grow-nature@cornwall.gov.uk.



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Coventry's Strategic Energy Partnership: a first of its kind

Coventry City Council has joined forces with E.ON to form a pioneering 15-year strategic energy partnership to transform the city's approach to carbon reduction whilst helping people to save money and boosting the local economy. APSE caught up with the Council to find out more.



Coventry City Council has joined forces with E.ON to form a pioneering 15-year strategic energy partnership to transform the city's approach to carbon reduction whilst helping people to save money and boosting the local economy.

It's well documented that cities consume 78% of the world's energy and contribute to poorer air quality for those living in them. This means local authorities must play a critical role in tackling fuel poverty, air quality and poor health in areas such as transport, housing and renewable energy generation while, of course, embedding community benefit in that transition.

Local authorities often don't have sufficient capital, resources, or expertise to tackle such a complex and wide-ranging issue on their own. That's why Coventry set up its own Independent Climate Change Board to bring together key organisations from across the city on the scale and scope of its response. That culminated in September when the City Council joined forces with E.ON on the groundbreaking partnership.

Cllr Jim O'Boyle, Coventry City Council's Cabinet Member lead on climate change, outlines why such a partnership is so vital, and how it is already proving successful. He said: "Major investment and resources are needed to reduce our emissions and cut energy bills while unlocking opportunities across the city, and that's why we have set up a Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP).

"Working with the private sector will allow us to develop infrastructure projects with environmental, commercial and community benefits across the city. It's a logical approach."

The first of its kind in the UK, the SEP is providing the capacity, expertise, and investment needed to support Coventry's green economic growth, using public sector infrastructure assets – not to mention local knowledge and priorities – to develop projects, deliver value for money and provide opportunities to generate revenue and include social value to benefit local communities and people.

Cllr O'Boyle added: "We now have a contractual joint venture strategic energy partnership. It's a step change to decarbonisation in Coventry.

"This is not a glorified delivery mechanism or a commercial customer and supplier relationship, this is a true partnership, a collaborative approach both at the executive level and also involving a public and private team co-located in the same city centre office.

"One thing we do really well in Coventry is innovate and we also have a process in place where either side can initiate and develop projects, which then establishes a solid case for investment"

The model enables long-term and sustainable infrastructure planning, with investment to support green economic growth, helps maximise the resources across the city council, cutting down on procurement time and cost and providing an opportunity to re-invest any revenue generated to further grow the city's decarbonisation programme.

Four strategic themes are driving the partnership approach: increasing the volume of locally generated renewable energy; green jobs and skills that bolster the local economy and develop sustainability-related skills of the future; a sense of innovation and scale with the ability to test new technologies and prove their community benefit; and supporting local people and communities, bringing real value to the city and its citizens along the way.

The SEP is changing the way infrastructure projects are funded and delivered – with value for money an integral part of the partnership approach. Funding for ventures is determined on a project-by-project basis and models can include fully or partially grant-funded, external capital funding and income from third parties.

To achieve the SEP model, the council brought together an internal project team allied with external advisors who designed a two-stage procurement process to focus on the needs of the city and a partnership approach. This took several months but with robust project management, the SEP was established in September 2023 – significantly less time than other similar processes have taken in the past. Of course, where Coventry has led, other local authorities can follow and the city is keen for others to replicate the Coventry model and achieve a partnership of this nature using the learnings of the SEP.

On the private sector side, E.ON was perfectly placed to support the creation of the SEP, both in terms of its scale and its legacy of innovation in city-wide solutions, but equally in geographical terms as Coventry has been their UK headquarters for three decades.

A Midlands local, Chris Lovatt, Chief Operating Officer for E.ON's Energy Infrastructure Services division, sits on Coventry's Climate Change Board and co-chairs the Coventry SEP executive committee.

He said: "The energy transition is a way to regenerate local economies and we're convinced we can make a difference in and with our home city. We are already delivering forward-looking energy concepts across Europe, in cities such as Berlin and Malmö, and proving how the partnership approach is indispensable for green economic growth, more secure energy supplies, and the affordability of energy.

"We want to play our part in getting on and delivering on Coventry's energy ambitions – making improvements across the city that people want and need. That could mean better insulation

for homes, more energy-efficient public buildings, shifting from fossil fuels to locally-produced renewable energy and, perhaps most importantly, creating thousands of good jobs. These are exciting times."

The SEP is progressing well. The first six months have been busy with more than sixteen projects currently in progress, ranging from public sector building and fleet decarbonisation, solar for schools to electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The partnership is also exploring opportunities around innovation which simply would not have been possible before.

Social value is embedded within the SEP and will ensure long-term community benefit and sustainable impact. This approach is integral to delivery beyond business as usual.

Cllr O'Boyle said: "It's going well but there is lots more we want to do. The Council, with E.ON, is hoping to address the needs of the city, ensuring that local people, communities, and businesses benefit – by increasing economic prosperity, creating jobs, improving outcomes and tackling inequalities."

- Representatives from the Strategic Energy Partnership delivered a presentation at the APSE Big Energy Summit in February, their presentation is available on the APSE website.

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How the UK Infrastructure Bank has evolved to support local authorities with the transition to net zero



Lorna Pimlott, Local Authority Managing Director at the UKIB, details how the Bank has evolved its support

for local authorities in the face of current economic challenges, offering independent advice alongside the lowest lending rate.

Local authorities have set ambitious targets for local infrastructure investment in support of net zero and driving long-term local economic growth. With 30% of UK greenhouse gas emission reductions relying on local authority involvement, including decarbonising buildings, greening local transport, and generating more renewable energy, it's clear that councils and combined authorities are central to delivering a successful transition to net zero. But it is no secret that many local authorities are developing and delivering their infrastructure plans in an increasingly challenging economic context.

Delivering the infrastructure investment required to achieve net zero requires sustained vision and leadership from local authorities, sufficient resources, access to commercial, technical, project management and, of course, financial expertise. Set up by HM Treasury in 2021, the UK Infrastructure Bank can provide this support and act as a critical friend to local authorities.

Our offer is clear:

- 1) UKIB has £4bn of lending capacity to provide the lowest cost source of finance for local authorities on flexible terms.
- 2) The Bank provides independent, financial and commercial advisory services at no charge.

In response to mounting economic pressures, our lending rate was also reduced by HM Treasury to gilts +40bps, ensuring that UKIB has the lowest cost finance for local authority infrastructure projects.

To date, the Bank has completed 18 advisory engagements and four lending deals totalling over £600m. Through many of these engagements and our wider conversations, we have found that authorities are experiencing a combination of challenges in relation to resourcing constraints, introducing new technologies alongside existing infrastructure, developing innovative new funding models and identifying how to maximise the value of partnerships with the private sector.

This is where we can help. We have built a team of experienced individuals from across the private and public sector to provide advice on financial and commercial challenges. We are working with local authorities across the UK on common challenges such as identifying how projects can be delivered on an 'invest to save' basis or through partnership with the private sector.

The Bank recently provided advice and support to Bristol City Council with its City Leap project, a joint venture with Ameresco which aims to deliver around £500 million of low carbon energy infrastructure by 2028. UKIB helped the Council develop its thinking and governance arrangements to maximise the impact and benefit of the private sector partnership.

Partnerships like these can help local authorities find the most effective way to finance and structure the major infrastructure projects that will enable more people to enjoy the regional and local economic benefits of the net-zero transition.

UKIB can play an indispensable role in helping local authorities make their net zero ambitions a reality. We want to help. If you would like to discuss your infrastructure project and explore how UKIB may be able to help, we'd encourage you to get in touch.





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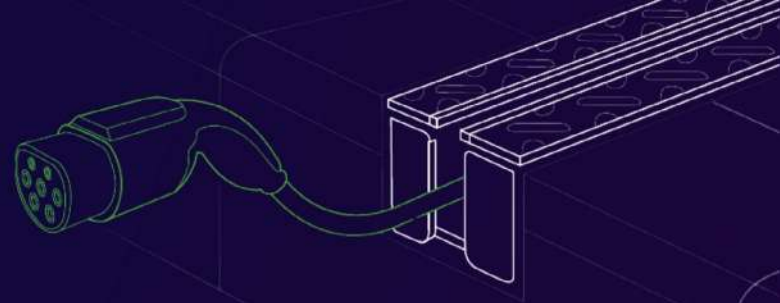
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Inclusive PPE in the public sector

Katy Robinson, Senior Project Manager at East Riding of Yorkshire Council, looks at inequalities in relation to personal protective equipment and how her council is working to improve safety at work for everyone.

What's the problem with PPE?

Personal protective equipment, or PPE, is utilised throughout the public sector. Whether it be for healthcare professionals in the NHS, body armour in our police force, or high visibility clothing for our refuse workers, the list goes on.

But did you know that men and women require different fits of personal protective equipment?

A recent survey from the National Association of Women in Construction for Yorkshire found that 59.6% of employers were not providing women's specific PPE, resulting in women having to wear PPE designed for men, and therefore having to suffer with ill-fitting PPE.

Ill-fitting PPE affects the user's experience at work, whether it be through damaging their self-confidence, but can also impact their feeling of belonging within an organisation or industry.

In addition to this, ill-fitting PPE also increases the risk of health and safety issues, such as slips, trips, and falls from ill-fitting safety boots or oversized high-visibility trousers. But it can also lead to more long-term health issues, with badly fitting safety boots leading to Morton's Neuroma, Plantar Fasciitis and Tendinitis.

In some instances, ill-fitting PPE can be deadly by compromising the user's safety; ill-fitting harnesses can result in falls from height, ill-fitting body armour can lead to damage to internal organs, and ill-fitting face masks cause the user to be exposed to hazardous chemicals and bacteria.



What is The PPE Campaign?

The PPE campaign aims to address these widespread inequalities in PPE provision and design for minority groups, across the construction industry, and beyond.

As a woman working in construction in the public sector, I've also focused the campaign on how we can address these issues in the different areas of the public sector and local government too.

Through my work at East Riding of Yorkshire Council, we have successfully implemented inclusive personal protective equipment into our procurement catalogue and encouraged it with our supply chain through our construction framework; YORhub.

By implementing inclusive PPE – PPE that takes into consideration the user's individual requirements and Protected Characteristics – it not only makes us a more inclusive organisation, but improves the health, safety, and welfare of our employees too.

In the construction industry, we recently worked with the Considerate Constructors Scheme, a construction site accreditation, to mandate the requirement for women's specific PPE across all of their registered activities. We continue to work with professional bodies and industry-leading organisations and associations to raise awareness of the issues with ill-fitting PPE, and encourage the provision of inclusive PPE.

Call to Action

One way in which I've worked with East Riding of Yorkshire Council to elevate the issue was through a motion on notice, proposed to all council members in February 2024.

East Riding of Yorkshire Council members voted unanimously in favour of the motion, meaning that the Council will write to the Government to urge them to mandate the requirement for inclusive PPE into the PPE at Work Regulations 1992.

In March 2024, Sandwell Council also unanimously passed the inclusive PPE motion too.

These motions help support the campaign in a number of ways:

- Urges the UK Government to address the widespread inequalities in PPE provision and design among minority groups.
- Mandates the requirement for inclusive PPE within the Council, across all of their service areas.
- Actively encourages local businesses and supply chains to mandate the requirement too.

I would urge all readers to consider working with their local council members to propose similar motions. It is a simple way to make a big difference to the health, safety and welfare of employees working in our sector.

Links:

<https://www.nawicyorkshire.co.uk/campaigns/womens-ppe>

<https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/news/article/?entry=65d5c31e3a14a4cd2fb9d3db>



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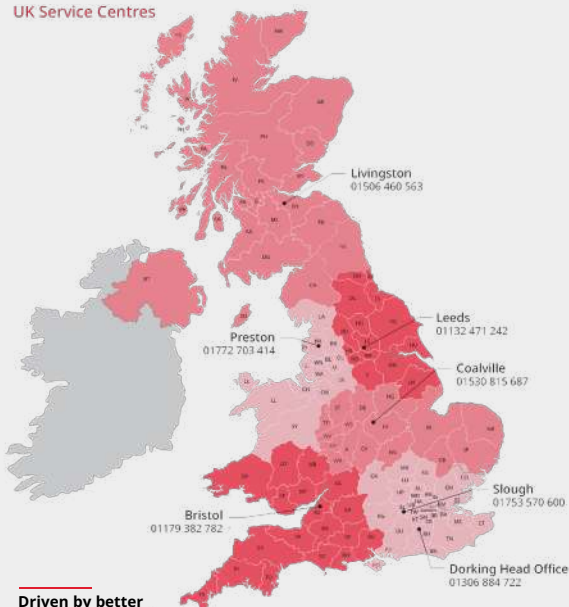
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Pro-active flooding management in a changing climate

– Opportunities, challenges and discussions

Kataia Rajovic, Flood Risk Management Technician, discusses how Dumfries and Galloway Council are working to manage flood risk in an increasingly unpredictable climate.

Managing flood risk in a changing climate is a complex task as it needs to be done in a way that promotes the resilience and well-being of communities and enables economic and environmental health. Dumfries and Galloway has been affected by adverse weather events on multiple occasions, which have resulted in communities being flooded, road closures and damage to assets.

Following the publication of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009, which defines responsibilities for the management of flood risk, Dumfries and Galloway Council as a responsible authority established the Flood Risk Management Team. To implement the legislation, the Council, along with other statutory bodies, were required to prepare a Local Flood Risk Management Plan (LFRMP). This Plan details how and when actions to manage flood risk will be delivered.

Amongst these actions, is the development of flood schemes. Examples of schemes currently in progress include the Whitesands and the Newton Stewart schemes. Other actions which have been carried out by the Flood Risk Management Team include the Flood Subsidy Scheme, through which property flood resilience equipment is available to the community at a subsidised cost, and the deployment of the Flood Pod, which is moved to affected communities at times of flood, equipped with items such as floodgates and sandless sandbags which can be used by affected individuals.

Given the fact that our climate is changing, extreme weather events are predicted to become more common, with more frequent flooding expected, the focus now is to create climate change-resilient places. This is addressed in the National Flood Resilience Strategy which is being progressed by the Scottish Government and should be published later this year, and will act as an important reference for our future actions.

Sea level rise is yet another effect of climate change which will impact the way we manage flood risk in the region. The current Dumfries and Galloway Shoreline Management Plan, published as a requirement of the first Local Flood Risk Management Plan, compiles information on future coastal flooding and erosion risk for the area and indicates that more extensive future erosion is expected along the Dumfries and Galloway coastline than previous estimates had shown. This will directly impact our coastal communities, transport, key infrastructure, recreation and businesses. Therefore, the challenge of adapting to future changes will need to be embedded

into all decision-making for the coast. The next step for Dumfries and Galloway Council is to build on the work that has already been developed in the form of the Shoreline Management Plan to produce a Coastal Change Adaptation Plan, based on guidance recently published by the Scottish Government. Through the new plan, it will be possible to identify actions to manage risks in the short term and the longer term, as well as identify possible changes to enable a transition between the two.

The urgent need to adapt to coastal flooding impacts is already being experienced in the region. The A716 is the main road for the South Rhins, south of Stranraer and it runs adjacent to the shoreline and is frequently affected by coastal flooding with substantial debris being thrown up by the sea.



Upon the issue of a flood warning, the road is closed and can remain so for 12 to 18 hours, which leaves properties cut off. Works have been undertaken to maintain the road and its coastal defence assets, meaning that a substantial expenditure has been incurred over the years, but this can only address erosion and will not address rising sea levels. The key challenge in this scenario is how to effectively make investment decisions to ensure both the resilience of assets and that money is spent more usefully.

To help councils adapt to climate impacts from rising sea levels, the Scottish Government has provided local authorities with a coastal change adaptation fund as part of the General Capital Grant and Dumfries and Galloway Council was allocated £160,000. This grant was used to fund improvement works on the B7065, a local road which is used as a diversion route at times when the A716 is closed. The works involve the creation of passing places and drainage enhancements. This is in line with the Shoreline Management Plan recommendation for this stretch of the coast, as it suggests that a sustainable longer-term solution would be to upgrade the alternatives to the A716 as part of a future Managed Realignment policy in the face of the predicted erosion which is expected to affect this area.

Finally, along with making effective investment decisions, to prepare for the inevitable changes that will be required as we adapt to a changing climate, it is important to ensure that engagement with the affected communities is at the heart of the process, with clear communication on how the predicted changes will impact on their lives, whilst providing the opportunity for the community to help shape the future of their areas to achieve positive changes.



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Scottish Housing Regulator launches revised Regulatory Framework

Helen Shaw, Director of Regulation, summarises the new regulatory framework for housing in Scotland, with a particular focus on the social housing sector.

We recently spoke at the APSE Scotland Building and Housing Seminar about the changes we were planning to make to our Regulatory Framework.

Following extensive consultation, we have published our revised Regulatory Framework and the new Framework came into effect on 1 April 2024.

When we started to review our Framework, the clear message we got was that given all of the other challenges that regulated bodies were facing, there was not an appetite to make substantial changes to the Regulatory Framework. And generally the feedback was that the existing Framework worked well and was fit for purpose.

So our focus in the review was very much on making changes which reflected our experience of regulating over the previous five year and taking into account stakeholders' views on how this was implemented. There are some key issues in the new Framework which landlords will want to consider.

Firstly, while all social landlords will continue to provide us with an Annual Assurance Statement by October, we have amended our guidance to allow us to ask landlords each year to provide us with specific assurance on particular areas of compliance where we have identified gaps in the regulatory information we collect. This year we have written to all social landlords to confirm that their statements this year should include specific assurance about their compliance with obligations in relation to tenant and resident safety.

We have also recently published further information on the work we plan to take forward this year to carry out a comprehensive review of the Annual Return on Charter (ARC). This will involve relevant experts including people from the social housing sector. We will establish an advisory group to work with us to consider all of the indicators in the ARC.

We will feed into this work, some of the feedback we got in our consultation on the current indicators we collect and we will also work with the group as we develop appropriate and meaningful indicators for tenants and resident safety, including on damp and mould.

We will also aim to include in this exercise the development of appropriate indicators for the Social Housing Net Zero Standard following the conclusion of the Scottish Government's consultation on the proposed Standard.

We will then consult formally on the revised ARC indicators later this year, with the new ARC being in place for collection year 2025/26 and landlords providing us with the first revised return in May 2026. We will continue with the existing ARC until then.

Finally, we have shifted the language around Significant Performance Failures to call these "serious concerns". We have also enhanced clarity on when and what tenants can bring to us and how this fits with the other routes for tenants to complain to their landlord and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Our new Regulatory Framework will help to support social landlords to deliver good quality, safe homes at rents which tenants can afford.

• *Helen's presentation is available to download from the APSE website.*





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Plant Biosecurity: delivering a healthier future for the UK's plants and trees



Fiona Sutton-Wilson, Head of APSE Training, outlines the various measures, resources, and strategies local authorities can employ to deal with biosecurity issues.

What is plant biosecurity and why is it important?

The term "Plant Biosecurity" incorporates a set of precautions which aim to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful pests and diseases which threaten the health and survival of indigenous plants and trees, across the UK.

Plant biosecurity has a crucial role in protecting these valuable natural assets. We need plant ecosystems to sustain life on Earth as we know it. Preserving them is vital in the production of medication, in helping to protect against the impacts of climate change and in sustaining natural habitats for our wildlife and insect populations as well as providing food for humans!

The problem we face is caused not only by the natural spread of pests and pathogens, but more recently by the trans-global movement of non-native plants resulting in the introduction of widespread plant pathogens, such as fungi and bacteria. When introduced into new geographical areas, these disease-causing pathogens often have no natural predators and quickly threaten the native plant ecosystems that have taken millions of years to develop.

Many of these non-indigenous species find themselves within local authority parks and green spaces. This being the case, local authorities need to work as agents to ensure plant pathogens, diseases and invasive non-native species can be avoided in the future.

Tackling the scale of the problem has financial implications - outlined in APSE's recent research, *Plant Biosecurity*.

In addition to Ash Dieback, what exactly are we struggling to control? Dutch Elm Disease, Oak Processionary Moth, Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan balsam and Giant Hogweed are just some of the challenges which often land at a local authority's door.

So, what can local authorities do about this?

As place shapers and environmental champions, local authorities are in an ideal position to raise awareness and be exemplars of good practice. According to APSE's Chair, Cllr Jacqui Burnett: [Plant Biosecurity is] an area of responsibility which impacts not only on current and future generations, but also the very survival of humans as a species."

Alongside key challenges such as climate mitigation, climate adaption and biodiversity net gain, we need to take urgent action by adopting plant biosecurity measures. If we don't, our children and future generations will be living on a very different and impoverished planet than the one we have today.

The long-term aim is the prevention of pests and their damage. In our research report, APSE Associate Wayne Priestley explores a combination of methods, such as mechanical, biological, and chemical options, as well as habitat manipulation, change of cultural practices, and the development and use of resistant plant varieties. The report is rich with robust analysis and examples of potential actions to protect parks and green spaces, as well as providing a potted history of plant diseases and non-native invasive species and the legal framework created to deal with them.

It's clear that local authorities will need to have a full understanding of the practices required to adopt coordinated plant biosecurity measures. As diseases, pests and invasive species don't operate within administrative boundaries, this will inevitably include working in partnership with other local authorities, enabling authorities to ensure better protection for their trees, plants, and wider greenspaces, both now and in the future.

"The relatively recent outbreaks of Ash Dieback have shown not only the environmental and biodiversity consequences of plant and tree diseases, but with estimates currently running at £15 billion to deal with this disease across the UK, the financial impacts can also be significant."

The Plant Biosecurity and Invasive Non-native Species strategies published by the UK Government in 2023 advocate strong partnership working, between authorities, industry and the public to reduce and manage the risks posed by plant pests, pathogens, and invasive non-native species (including animals and marine life). The strategies advocate preventing, monitoring and eradicating where possible to create healthy and sustainable UK plants and trees. They also highlight the importance of facilitating the safe trade of plants, as well as the continuous monitoring of both existing and newly planted trees and plants. This approach is crucial in helping to determine appropriate actions.

“Alongside key challenges such as climate mitigation, climate adaption and biodiversity net gain, we need to take urgent action by adopting plant biosecurity measures. If we don’t, our children and future generations will be living on a very different and impoverished planet than the one we have today.”

How can APSE help?

APSE has noted a growing interest in plant biosecurity measures, from its extensive network of frontline services. Themes emerging from our Ash Dieback seminar to network queries and parks and greenspaces advisory groups indicate a desire for increased awareness and implementation of plant biosecurity measures used in managing trees and plants. In APSE’s recent Plant Biosecurity Survey, only 36% of responding authorities were aware of the UK Plant Biosecurity Strategy (2023 – 2028). 10% reported having a plant biosecurity policy of their own. Over 20% of respondents were monitoring the presence of pests and diseases, with some developing localised action plans and building plant biosecurity measures into contract specifications. There is good practice to learn from, but more needs to be done.

To support authorities, APSE is developing a new training course to support local implementation of the national strategy, engaging in discussions to develop a best practice toolkit of local solutions, including health and safety, resources and funding.

If this is of interest to you, and you would like to be notified when the training “goes live” or would like to be involved in shaping the pilot course please contact training@apse.org.uk.

For those attending the Scotland Fleet Waste and Grounds seminar, we’ll be discussing this, APSE’s new course and other related topics at this year’s event in Aviemore.



The full Plant Biosecurity report is available to download on APSE’s website.



Upcoming training sessions

- 14/05/24 (AM) + 15/05/24 (AM) - The Bereavement Journey (ICCM)
- 14/05/24 - Insourcing Public Contracts: Rebuilding Capacity
- 15/05/24 (PM) + 16/05/24 (PM) - Enhancing Customer Experience on the Frontline
- 16/05/24 - Principles of Contract Management
- 23/05/24 - Supervisory Skills for Team Leaders in the Frontline Services
- 30/05/24 - Building a Climate Business Case



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Bradford's greenspaces partnership

Dr Saira Ali, Team Leader - Landscape Design and Conservation at Bradford Council, discusses her council's award-winning approach to designing greenspaces.

Bradford is a great northern city located within a wider Metropolitan District with a diverse population of over half a million. The district is almost two-thirds rural, with large towns, smaller market towns and villages, set within the landscape of the southern Pennine hills. It is a beautiful place, with a stunning architectural heritage, home to enterprising and creative people, and strong and productive businesses.

Almost a quarter of our District's population is aged under 16, and one in four people identify as British of Asian origin, and our communities are affected by significant public health inequalities. Women born in the most deprived areas can expect to live on average nine years less than the UK average and for men, the figure is 11 years less. Urban inner-city wards have the lowest life expectancies, whereas the outer rural wards have the highest life expectancies.

In Bradford, more people are overweight, exercise less and eat less fresh fruit and vegetables than the national average. However, personal behaviour is only one aspect of our health and well-being, and not always the most fundamental. Well-being is also shaped and constrained by, the quality of their homes, and the local environment.

The quality and accessibility of public transport and infrastructure to support active modes of travel support or constrain people's ability to be physically active every day. Good access to green blue infrastructure also supports physical activity and helps to reduce social isolation by providing places and ways to see people every day.

Bradford is looking to remove the barriers in the urban environment that detract from community health and well-being by enhancing and expanding the districts creating blue-green infrastructure.

Bradford envisions a successful healthy city with a distinctive centre where the urban population can access an attractive environment. Our urban landscape needs to be transformed to enable sustainable modes of transport that are attractive to all communities and provide economic opportunities to residents. People will be at the heart of this transformation. Innovative design and delivery will be key, as well as collaborative working and capacity building to ensure a holistic shaping of the city's future. It will be a bottom-up approach starting with people.

The Landscape Design and Conservation Team within Bradford Council are a small team of dedicated Landscape Architects inspired by the environment we live in and our community partners to create healthy green spaces. The approach of the team

has increasingly focussed on delivering a range of benefits through the development of the district Blue Green Infrastructure. Given the issues with health in the district delivery of improved health outcomes has become a key driver of projects.

Working with partner organisations ensures our design approach is consistent and encompasses the latest thinking on public health and open space. As a result, the team have designed and delivered a range of blue-green infrastructure projects which place health at the heart of the design process.

Born in Bradford is one of the largest research studies in the World, tracking the lives of over 30,000 Bradfordians to find out what influences the health and wellbeing of families. We use the findings to develop new and practical ways to work with families and health professionals to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities. Parts of the research conducted by the Bradford Institute for Health Research have confirmed that the local environment has a large impact on childhood development and public health outcomes. Family play in green spaces from an early age is a critical part of childhood development and overall health.

As a nation, we are leading increasingly sedentary lifestyles which is having a detrimental effect on our health and wellbeing.

The link to community health research being conducted by the Bradford Institute for Health Research through Born In Bradford represents a unique relationship between scientific analysis of the determinants of public health in our urban environment and the delivery of green spaces. The effect green space interventions are making on the health and wellbeing of our citizens is being measured, and then models for how to achieve the best public health outcomes and sustainably deliver projects are being created. Bradford is helping to build a model strategy for how to achieve better public health outcomes through the considered use of blue-green infrastructure.



Primary school play equipment installed by the Better Place project.

Collectively our green space intervention projects use co-design and co-creation to deliver community engagement and a sense of ownership in what is being achieved, as well as empowering people with the knowledge of how active lifestyles in the great outdoors can help their long-term health.

Creative consultations give local people the opportunity to talk, share ideas and make friends - allowing community groups to be quite creative and hands-on.

In Bradford, we are putting our children, especially girls at the heart of this work, by using innovative design, delivery and policy, as well as working collaboratively and building capacity to ensure that the community and stakeholders are able to help shape it. A bottom-up approach that starts and ends with our communities. It's also an opportunity for communities to 'give something back', and more importantly, to build a lifelong relationship with outdoor spaces.

We are changing behaviour by understanding the capability of our communities, what motivates them, and for those delivering outdoor spaces that promote active lifestyles, what opportunities can be created. We are building confidence by creating ownership and empowerment to encourage behavioural change by enabling local leaders/role models.

We find out what matters to our communities and how will spaces be used. We are also building resilience in the community from a young age, linking to other local services.

Regular engagement starts creating pride in where we live. It's important to find the right sites - underused sites with potential. Sites that connect, where we can deliver a series of linked green spaces and routes to encourage active play/travel.

Better Start Bradford works with expectant families and families with children aged 0-3 in South Bradford to help give children the best possible start in life. To do this Better Start developed and commissioned a range of innovative projects with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund.



The Scotchman Road pocket park developed by 'ju:mp' Bradford.

The Better Place project is identifying and overseeing a range of improvements to local parks and open spaces to provide a healthier and happier environment for babies, young children and families.

To support the delivery of Better Place, the Landscape Design and Conservation Team have placed a Landscape Architect who is helping to project manage the delivery of projects within the Better Start Bradford Team.

JU:MP (Join Us: Move. Play.) is the Bradford Local Delivery Pilot, led by Active Bradford and funded by Sport England, that aims to help children and families in North Bradford to be more active. Movement and play doesn't only improve children's physical health, but also their emotional wellbeing, meaning that children are more confident and happier.

The Landscape Design and Conservation Team have engaged with campaigns such as Making Space for Girls, which is working for parks and public spaces to be designed for girls and young women, not just boys and young men, and ensuring that the voices of girls and young women are heard in the planning process.

Well Bradford is a community health programme hosted by Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to re-energise and reconnect links between our hospitals and the wider community. Well Bradford is in the unique position of being able to turn some of that research into reality by improving and creating new green spaces so communities have a focal point to live healthier lives.

The Bradford Council Plan has established priorities for the District including 'Better health, better lives', 'Safe, strong and active communities', 'A sustainable district', and 'An enabling council'. One of the principles that underpin the Council Plan is that "we will work to make it easier for people in the district to adopt healthier lifestyles".



Bradford Council's Landscape Design and Conservation Team strongly believe that projects co-created and co-designed with the local community enable a sense of agency and ownership. With our partners, we are seeking out opportunities to practice this vision, and to construct green spaces from wasteland that encourages social interaction and outdoor activity to support healthier lifestyles and social cohesion.

- Understanding our community and its needs. Working with local schools, community groups, mosques and madrassas. A Multi-agency approach and working with existing and new organisations in the area.
- Listening to and involving people about what matters to them
- Enhance the streets and neighbourhoods by increasing greenery and nature
- Make it easier for people to understand routes into and around the neighbourhood from nearby residential areas
- Increasing urban green and blue infrastructure
- Increasing people's ability to walk short journeys by improving routes
- Improving safety at crossings and making crossing points and key routes arena and more attractive
- Increasing accessibility by providing more places to stop and rest on key routes
- Making our urban environments safer and more 'playable' to encourage families to go outside and stay longer

In recognition of the work Bradford Council's Landscape Design and Conservation Team has been delivering, we have been awarded the Landscape Institute Award for Excellence in Public Health and Wellbeing 2023 and the President's Award for the Best Landscape Scheme of the Year 2023.

- Saira spoke at APSE's Parks Seminar on 14 March, her presentation is available to download via the APSE website.

Northern Region Meeting and Annual General Meeting 2024

Speakers include:

Cllr Tracey Dixon, Leader of South Tyneside Council and APSE Northern Chair

Mo Baines, APSE Chief Executive

Anita Brown, Stockton Council and LACA National Chair

Andrew Whittaker, Corporate Lead for Town Centre and Foreshore, South Tyneside Council

Rob Bailey, APSE Principal Advisor and Lancashire County Council

Adrian Selby, Director of Commercial and Operational Services, West Lindsey District Council

Glynn Humphries, Former Corporate Director - Communities, Environment and Climate Change, Wakefield Council



Wednesday 12 June 2024

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Wigan Youth Climate Summit



James Jefferson,
APSE Energy
Research and
Project Officer,
gives an overview

of Wigan Council's engagement with young people through its Eco Schools programme.

Wigan Council has long had strong links with local schools and colleges through its Eco Schools programme and the Climate Response Team now lead on all aspects of climate education and engagement within local schools. This team works closely with the Wigan & Leigh Youth Cabinet, who had outlined tackling climate change through enhancing the voice of young people as one of their top priorities. This focus on youth voice led to the decision to hold a youth-led borough-wide event focussed on climate change, this event would become known as the Wigan Youth Climate Summit (WYCS).

The inaugural summit was held on 28 September 2022, the event attracted over 120 students from local schools and colleges. The event was fully hosted by the Wigan & Leigh Youth Cabinet, to ensure that the event had a youth-led voice, with the Council's Climate Response Team project managing the event. Despite the Council playing a key role in planning the WYCS, a number of decisions were taken to the Youth Cabinet for sign-off, to ensure that the decision-making process involved input from young people.

The event was sponsored by three businesses – Kraft Heinz, Murphy Group and FCC Environment, who all have a strong commitment to net zero and environmental practices, and all held stalls in the Green Careers Fair to showcase careers within their sectors.

The WYCS was opened by the Youth Cabinet, followed by Aneeshwar Kunchala, a 7-year-old conservationist and Britain's Got Talent finalist, who provided an inspiring poem and Q&A session for attendees. The morning session continued with presentations from several schools and colleges who outlined their own climate action.

The event also involved age-appropriate workshops from groups such as the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Transport for Greater Manchester and the Royal Horticultural Society, these workshops aimed to get attendees practically involved in climate action, in suitable and engaging ways. A green careers fair was also set up to showcase local and regional businesses and organisations that are combatting climate change or working towards achieving strong environmental and net zero targets.



Finally, around 14 local organisations set up stalls at the WYCS's Eco-Marketplace, these organisations ranged from CICs representing human rights, and animals, to local businesses and education services. The young people attending the summit had a lot of time to visit the stalls and learn about the varied connections that they had to different aspects of climate change.

Through leading the delivery of the Wigan Youth Climate Summit, the Council has created momentum surrounding improved access for youth voices in climate action and policy within Wigan borough. The Summit closed with the Youth Cabinet declaring that they would be creating a Youth Climate Strategy which will be designed and consulted by the Youth Cabinet and delivered by Wigan Council.

The Council received 'incredibly positive' feedback on the Summit, 79 young people provided feedback and answered questions on what they had learnt from the Summit, and all respondents agreed that they would like the WYCS to become an annual event.

The Summit brought together a wide range of businesses, community groups and other organisations from across the Wigan borough, with the event fostering relationships that are continuing now and into the future. Eight of the stall holders from the WYCS including small and large businesses, and human rights groups are now part of the Council's Wigan Climate Coalition, a group of 26 organisations and businesses from across the borough who are coming together to tackle the climate emergency together. As a result of the Summit, over 30 primary and secondary schools have requested lessons and assemblies both from the Council and other organisations to raise awareness on various climate topics.



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In 2023 we launched our latest award-winning device, Harness ON to the industry, an intelligent anchor point which is permanently shackled to the MEWPs anchor point and wired into the function controls. Driving compliance, the machine will only operate when the carabiner clip from the operator's lanyard is clipped into Harness ON. Harness ON is now available on all our boom lifts, setting industry standards.

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fleet supports the Jet Zero strategy objective towards a more sustainable future.

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The robustness of our ESG initiatives, provides complete assurance of our commitment to environmental, social and sustainability issues. With our enhanced Carbon reduction targets, we are committed to improving people's lives by ensuring we have a positive impact on the society and the environment to deliver sustainable and innovative solutions. We are Ecovadis accredited and partners of Supply Chain Sustainability School.

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Measure your progress on climate change: A free tool for APSE members



Debbie Johns, Head of APSE Performance Networks, gives an overview of their new climate change measurement tool.

Monitoring the impact of climate change is a global issue and one which local authorities are taking a leading role in managing.

Self-monitoring of your climate change adaptation measures can be beneficial, but the real power lies in comparing the results with others and learning from them.

That is why APSE is launching a new module to enable you to accurately monitor how your council's emissions are changing and compare with others.

We will group councils that have similar characteristics, taking into account your local natural resources, carbon challenges and socio-economic factors. This will enable you to benchmark your performance with like-for-like authorities. Even though the model enables comparison, it will not be used to produce league tables and the data will not be made available outside of those councils participating in the exercise. Measuring how well your authority is adapting to the climate emergency is the first step in improving it.

Benefits

Participatory councils will be able to:

- Compare with similar UK-wide authorities in your family group.
- Select your own list of authorities to compare with.
- Identify good practice.
- Raise the profile of any groundbreaking innovations.
- Compare emissions.
- Demonstrate your progress over time and how you compare with peers.
- Drill into the individual service areas which APSE already monitor.
- Receive comparative reports.
- Become part of a community within networking groups.

This brand new, critical module is free of charge to APSE members, APSE performance networks members and APSE Energy members for the trial year.

Measures captured

The new climate change module collects and compares easy-to-obtain data on the following aspects although local authorities don't have to complete every section:

- Climate emergency
- Carbon budget
- Emissions
- Buildings
- Energy efficiency (in whole building stock)
- Vehicles

- Energy usage
- Renewable energy generated
- Energy purchased
- Climate adaptation
- Ecological emergency
- Ecological / carbon sequestration
- Carbon Offsetting
- Water
- Single-use plastics
- Climate awareness and education

The pilot

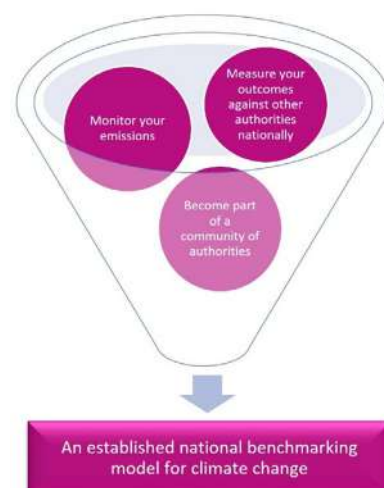
An initial pilot meeting containing 10 local authorities from throughout the UK was held in October 2023. The pilot authorities successfully trialled and tested the data collection exercise for the 2022-23 financial year and submitted their responses by mid-November 2023.

From these results, we provided a summary of feedback to the APSE performance networks annual seminar in December 2023 and liaised with DESNZ about this (please note: individual data results pertaining to specific local authorities will not be shared beyond the participating authorities). We then held a working group meeting in January 2024 to review and revise the questions. The pilot authorities engaged in this session to further refine and enhance the model based on their experiences.

The launch

The full model was launched at the APSE Energy Summit in Warwickshire in February 2024. This means that any member of APSE, APSE Performance Networks or APSE Energy can get involved in this exciting project free of charge.

The deadline for returning this completed template is Friday 31 May 2024. [Click here](#) to register your interest in this. Over the next couple of months, the new reports will be designed and we will hold a working group meeting in June 2024 to discuss the results, view the draft reports and discuss the plan to roll this out further in 2024.





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Carbon Literacy for Local Authorities

Connect and Catch-up Workshop

Join the Carbon Literacy Project for an online networking event aimed at councils, authorities and organisations that are delivering or exploring the delivery of Carbon Literacy (CL) using the Local Authorities Toolkit.

On Wednesday 5 June at 2pm, the Carbon Literacy Local Authorities team will be joined by a guest speaker from Warrington Council.

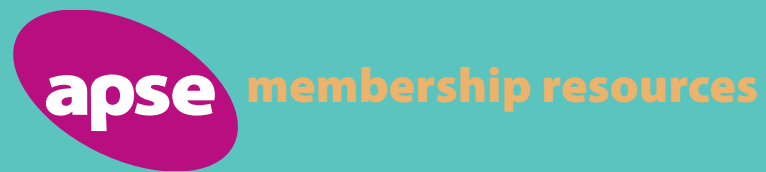
- **Hear more about how Carbon Literacy training is working across the sector.**
- **Hear from Robyn Lees at Warrington Borough Council about an Innovate UK-funded project working with their Carbon Literate 'alumni'.**
- **Chat and connect with other sector professionals, swap tips and resources.**

Scan to book your place:



Wednesday 5 June 2024

Online via MS Teams



Enviro NI and AGM

A FREE event for APSE Northern Ireland member councils

This event, held in collaboration with APSE Energy, is designed to help those on the frontline stay on top of the latest legislative and technological developments. Whether via:

- **Waste management strategies**
- **Investment in renewable energy**
- **Action on biodiversity**
- **Transitioning to alternative fuel fleets**

This event will also incorporate the *APSE Northern Ireland Annual General Meeting*. This short session provides an invaluable opportunity for APSE Northern Ireland to review its activities over the last year. This meeting will also provide a critical role in ensuring that any identified future goals and objectives of the Association continue to be directly linked to the views of the membership moving forward. *We encourage all APSE Northern Ireland members to attend.*

Book your place now!



Thursday 6 June 2024

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Penn Road Cemetery



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*Shirebrook Crematorium
(in construction)*



Layston Cemetery

*Huntingdon Cemetery
and Crematorium*





The bottom line for workplace wellbeing



Matt Bazeley, CSSC CEO, makes an urgent call for a national strategy to address the national health crisis and tackle absenteeism.

2023 had the UK's worst employee sickness absence ever. There are 11.2M interactions between the public and the NHS each week, and 1 in 4 adults will have to deal with a serious medical condition. Obesity is becoming the national norm. The health of the nation is in crisis, and it is only going to get worse.

Something's got to change. The Government has recently announced its National Activity strategy. A somewhat underwhelming effort to increase activity (the nature of which is not defined) in 2.5M adults and 1M children by 2030. But without a focused, structured and resourced approach, this will struggle to deliver even modest change.

So what is the impact on businesses and why must they step up? The annual cost of absenteeism is increasing year on year. Whether it's due to physical illness, care responsibilities or mental health issues, the financial implications are staggering and go beyond the balance sheet, it also takes a toll on morale, engagement and overall wellbeing.

At CSSC (Civil Service Sports Council), we provide the opportunity for our 130,000 members, from across the UK's Civil Service and Public Sector (the nation's true champions) to enjoy

and benefit of sports, exercise, well-being, leisure and savings on a wide range of goods and services. This February we ran our annual Active Wellbeing event. This saw over 13,000 members participate in a month-long activity challenge, designed to remove everyday barriers to exercise.

But we're just scratching the surface in terms of health impact. Where's the national effort? We need a clearly defined and measurable approach across the public, private and third sectors, with the adoption of a collective and resourced programme, for all.

Employers need to work with the Sports and Physical activity sector to enable and support employee access. We need a working population that is 'up, out and active', with a focus on removing all barriers to individual and collective movement. There is a lot of evidence that an employee who feels healthy and active, is happier, better connected, requires less time off for sickness and is more productive.

At the same time, the Sports and Physical activity sector needs to find mechanisms, facilities and resources, within a cost model that encourages access and take up. It will only be through such a collaborative approach that the nation can hope to see a scale of employee engagement and activity that revives the health and wellbeing of the nation. A win for the individual, the NHS, the economy and their employer.

• CSSC is a not-for-profit, membership, organisation for over 140,000 colleagues from the civil service and public sector. They provide free days out, fantastic sports, health and wellbeing benefits, together with savings, discounts and offers on a huge range of retail and leisure opportunities.





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