

# STRATEGIES FOR EMBEDDING ADAPTATION



Clackmannanshire Council

## Case study: Clackmannanshire Council

Clackmannanshire Council have taken a number of initiatives to make progress with climate change adaptation. This case study looks at how they have aligned adaptation with existing strategies and policies, engaged and collaborated across the organisation, and embraced organisational learning and change.

### How will the climate change in East Scotland?

UK Climate Projections 2009 data for East Scotland suggests that, under a medium emissions scenario, by the 2050s the region may see:

- An increase in summer mean temperatures of around 2.3°C, and of winter temperatures of around 1.7°C;
- A 10% increase in winter mean precipitation and a 13% decrease in summer mean precipitation.



Source: <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk>

Adaptation  
Scotland  
supporting climate change resilience

### Aligning adaptation with existing strategies and policies

The Council's formal and structured climate effort has focussed primarily on reducing emissions rather than adapting to climate change. This project sought a more formal adaptation remit, while continuing preparatory work mandated by a Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy review.

The work focused on pulling different strands together to build adaptation into business as usual. This reflects the approach in the overarching Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy to embed climate change actions in people's day to day work, rather than as a separate consideration.

One route to this is providing information to enable staff to incorporate climate considerations into existing business planning and risk assessment processes. A risk "bank",

which brings together information on severe weather incidents with impacts and remedial actions, is being developed to help with this. Adaptation is also being built into broader 'Sustainable Ways of Working' guidance, and into proposed changes to the sustainability test to accompany Council reports.

### Engaging and collaborating across the organisation

Through a number of climate change initiatives, the sustainability team have engaged with colleagues in emergency planning, risk management, development planning and corporate planning. They are now seeking to work with teams within Development and Environment Services to pilot the risk bank.

Clackmannanshire Council is also in the early stages of working with external partners both through community planning partnerships, and landscape and biodiversity partnerships.





Strategies for Embedding Adaptation

## Encouraging organisational learning

The Council has increased its understanding of the adaptation process through using tools and resources and working in partnership. They have engaged in aspects of adaptation both consciously, such as through its involvement in Adaptation Scotland's Adaptation Learning Exchange, developing a Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP), and factoring climate change into the Local Development Plan, and also simply as a matter of good practice, through flood risk management and emergency planning.

Staff in the sustainability team have also used Adaptation Scotland's "Five Steps to managing your climate risks" guidance to provide structure to their work to and to gauge progress. Although only four of the fifteen sub steps of the Five Steps have been completed at this point, significant work has been done on all of them and also on all of the Policies and Proposals in the Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme for which local authorities are listed as responsible bodies.

## Embracing organisational change

Within the Council, the emphasis is shifting from "environment" to "people". Thus, while there is still a need to understand the meteorological and hydrological conditions that led to an old people's home being flooding, the emphasis now is on how those people have been affected, and how to reduce the harmful effects.

Impact upon communities is the overriding consideration as the Council works with partners to address upstream land use proposals to minimise future flood risk. It is therefore necessary to adjust our ways of communicating on climate change adaptation, to move away from the climate science and focus more on how severe weather events are affecting communities.

## Top learning points

1. Rather than developing a standalone set of climate change actions, the Council is asked to re-think the way it works. This is a big ask. Everything to make that process easier and more relevant to colleagues' day jobs is of value.
2. All public bodies are under financial pressure and there is a narrative that public interest in climate change has dwindled. Making the case for adaptation in terms that are relevant to colleagues and partners is paramount, such as presenting the case in relation to the Council's Priority Outcomes rather than just as an environmental issue.
3. As staff leave and are not replaced, there is a risk of losing knowledge in the organisation on previous weather events, vulnerabilities and workarounds that are not always systematically documented.

4. With climate change, what would once have been exceptional weather events are becoming normal. As such, it is increasingly important to incorporate planning for them into normal business planning rather than emergency planning.
5. In addition to the Council's own actions, plans need to consider how suppliers or services that the Council depend upon, and the customers or service users, might be affected.

## Next steps

Work on climate change adaptation is an ongoing process. The sustainability team will continue its involvement in the Adaptation Learning Exchange, setting and reviewing their goals periodically. The current objectives that have been identified and will be mandated by the Corporate Management Team are:

1. Establish robust and fit for purpose governance and leadership.
2. Finalise a climate adaptation framework that reflects the requirements of the Five Steps.
3. Review business/operational plans to take account of climate risks and impacts for a pilot group of services/teams.

## Further information

For more information about this project, please contact:

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## Adaptation support

The Adaptation Learning Exchange (ALE) is a programme to support organisations with adaptation planning, enabling them to address common adaptation challenges and explore opportunities. For more about the ALE, visit our website or contact [sophie@sniffer.org.uk](mailto:sophie@sniffer.org.uk)

[www.adaptationscotland.org.uk](http://www.adaptationscotland.org.uk)



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