LOCAL AUTHORITIES,
BIG SOCIETY AND
ADAPTATION TO
CLIMATE CHANGE
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The LGiU is an award winning think-tank and local authority membership organisation. Our mission is to strengthen local democracy to put citizens in control of their own lives, communities and local services. We work with local councils and other public services providers, along with a wider network of public, private and third sector organisations.

Through information, innovation and influencing public debate, we help address policy challenges such as demographic, environmental and economic change, improving healthcare and reforming the criminal justice system.
This project was funded by the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and commissioned by the Local and Regional Adaptation Partnership (LRAP); a partnership comprised of central and local government and other representatives. LRAP is managed and supported by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

The specific outputs identified at the beginning of the project were:

- Develop a self-help toolkit to support community involvement in, and ownership of, local adaptation.
- Devise business models for how local authorities can work with local communities to deliver adaptation.
- Beyond NI 188, develop an accountability mechanism, or strengthen an existing one (eg public scrutiny process), for local authorities and communities to assess and evaluate the delivery of local adaptation that is accountable, democratic, effective and fair.

As the project evolved the outputs were modified to reflect the progress made on Big Society and adaptation. Instead of proposing a new toolkit, the research identified existing toolkits and proposed a framework within which these tools can help build a strategy or plan. The accountability mechanism developed along two lines.

First, an approach was suggested that helps local authorities better understand how to provide their communities with useful information. Second, an assessment framework based on qualitative descriptions of progress towards decentralisation, transparency, finance and philanthropy (the methods of delivering the Big Society). The research identified existing business models and suggested a set of questions to help construct new ones based on resources, accountability, decision-making and capacity.

This research was conducted over five phases:

1. Desk research
2. An online survey of councils
3. Interviews with representatives of Big Society organisations
4. Workshops
5. Site visits
The research found that although the Big Society and climate change adaptation are complex issues affected by context and uncertainty, it is possible to identify some principles that enable a community to develop a plan or strategy.

The Big Society is a vision and a commitment to shifting power away from the state and towards people, communities and the voluntary sector. It can be taken forward through four ‘methods’. These methods are: decentralisation; transparency; finance; and philanthropy. In each of these methods it is possible to outline a progression from the current state centred model to one where power, information and resources are owned and managed by the community.

In a local context, climate change adaptation can be viewed from the perspective of environmental impacts, public service delivery, geographical area or vulnerable groups.

When establishing a model for delivering Big Society and climate change adaptation, communities will have to consider the resources available, the accountability mechanism they establish, their mechanisms for making decisions and the capacity they have and the capacity needed within the community and within the local authority. The governance models identified included mutuals, cooperatives, social enterprise and Community Interest Companies.

The workshops considered new financial models such as social impact bonds, tax increment financing, joining up mitigation incentives to adaptation and factoring in the monetary valuation of ecosystem services.

A Big Society approach to assessment of climate change adaptation can be summarised in a five-step approach:

1. Identify what a local community wants from the local authority with regards to data and assessment
2. Agree priority areas with the community and relevant stakeholders
3. Agree how the data will be presented
4. Join the data to national data sets
5. Encourage the community to add to the data sets

In addition to areas where further work is needed, this research also identified a series of opportunities and challenges to this agenda.

**Opportunities**

- There are some issues that are so complex that government can’t tackle them alone; adaptation to climate change is one of these areas and requires the input and involvement of communities and individuals in order to tackle it. The Big Society approach opens up the opportunity to delivery adaptation differently and in a way that includes communities and encourages them to take responsibility for this agenda.

- There is great potential for the Big Society approach to deliver services in a more efficient and effective manner. There are also opportunities for new social enterprises to be formed.
The Localism Bill includes a general power of competence for local authorities, which will enable them to prioritise adaptation if they wish. The Bill also includes the right to challenge and right to buy, both of which will enable communities to take control of local adaptation.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Floods and Water Management Act 2010 provide drivers for looking at elements of local adaptation.

There are existing partnerships between local authorities and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to build upon.

There exist a group of CSOs that already have an interest and expertise in adaptation. These could be environmental groups that build strong community support or community groups that recognise the importance of adaptation.

New locally applied financial mechanisms are being explored by government such as Feed in Tariffs, Tax Increment Financing, Social Impact Bonds and biodiversity offsetting.

New technology such as social media present opportunities to build new communities of activists.

**Challenges**

- Different areas will adapt differently, choosing different strategies and moving at different speeds, depending upon their capacity.
- Should local authorities talk about adaptation or climate change or in the language of the Big Society group they are working with.
- Changes to central funding resulting from the austerity measures.
- The extent to which the Big Society can influence decisions and delivery and eventually work independently of the local authority.
- Appropriate governance structures should be developed to make Big Society groups accountable.
- Local authorities and CSOs will have to develop new capacity to take full advantage of the Big Society.

**Unknowns**

- It is not clear whether enthusiasm exists across communities to participate in the Big Society.
- It is not clear what the impact of recent local authority restructuring will be on support for adaptation as it is a non-statutory service.
- Which adaptation plan is most valid and representative; those of the local authorities or the community?
How should communities and local authorities balance the climate change impact, the local services affected, the area affected or the vulnerable groups affected when building an adaptation strategy?

Despite the difficulties, this report suggests that it is possible to develop a broad framework for climate change adaptation and the Big Society.

There are implications for government and local authorities. New forms of finance should be examined, administrative barriers should be removed, new technology used, ways of supporting Big Society groups should be improved, better coordination of climate change policy and new incentives or rewards developed for communities that improve their resilience.

Each community may adopt a different Big Society approach and model to tackling issues in their areas. This will be entirely contingent on local circumstances, communities and local priorities.

The broad framework outlined in this report should not be prescriptive but guide communities to consider the main issues and indicate some of the existing tools they could use. The framework builds strategies by considering a local vision, challenges and opportunities, community building processes, business models, delivery plans, reporting and communication.
Introduction

This project was commissioned by the Local and Regional Adaptation Partnership (LRAP), which was made up of central and local government and other representatives. LRAP have supported and championed local responses to climate change through funded projects and support of the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) and the network of climate change partnerships.

The government is advocating a vision of providing services and promoting community action called the Big Society. This government is also strongly committed to localism which means not just greater powers for local authorities but also the communities they serve. When the impacts of climate change are considered such as flooding, heatwaves, sea level rise and extreme weather events they are recognised as having a global significance but happening locally.

The government recently reviewed its priorities for the delivery of adaptation advice and support and concluded that local authorities remain a priority audience for support. It also noted that capacity building was vitally important in the short and medium term to address the changes in regional structures and local government. In November 2010 the government removed the requirement to report under National Indicator 188 (adaptation), as part of a wider process of removal of reporting burdens. Despite the removal of formal assessment processes, it is clear that a framework of some kind is needed to enable local authorities to measure their progress on adaptation, particularly the impact of their actions.

The Decentralisation and Localism Bill aims to devolve greater powers to local authorities and communities. For example, communities will be given the rights to bid to takeover local state-run services and instigate referenda on local issues as well as have more financial autonomy. Local authorities will also be given the general power of competence.

In response to the challenges of localism, the Big Society and financial efficiencies, the LGiU has previously consulted its networks of local authorities to call for information on the types of support local authorities need to adapt to climate change.

The responses were varied and insightful, including:

- piloting and championing new adaptation approaches
- providing support on self-help for community-based adaptation
raising community and elected members’ awareness and understanding of adaptation

strengthening partnerships with local partners

demonstrating long-term savings.

The responses from local authorities and the government’s priorities demonstrated the need for a new delivery model for adaptation.

This project aimed to respond to the needs of local authorities (identified in the LGiU’s call for information) and the government’s priorities by developing a model of delivering adaptation using the Big Society approach, which hopes to:

- realise the Big Society agenda and address local authorities’ spending cuts.
- strengthen local authority support to local organisations and community groups to deliver adaptation.
- raise community awareness of adaptation and unleash their potential in developing and delivering local adaptation.
- support and strengthen the capacity of communities and local authorities’ members and officers to ensure accountable, democratic, effective and fair delivery of adaptation.

The specific outputs identified at the beginning of the project were:

- develop a self-help toolkit to support community involvement in, and ownership of, local adaptation
- come up with business models on how local authorities work with local communities to deliver adaptation
- beyond NI 188, develop an accountability mechanism, or strengthen an existing one (eg public scrutiny process), for local authorities and communities to assess and evaluate the delivery of local adaptation that is accountable, democratic, effective and fair.

As the project evolved the outputs were modified to reflect the progress made on Big Society and adaptation. Instead of proposing a new toolkit, the research identified existing toolkits and proposed a framework within which these tools can help build a strategy or plan. The accountability mechanism developed along two lines.

First, an approach was suggested that helps local authorities better understand how to provide their communities with useful information. Second, an assessment framework based on qualitative descriptions of progress towards decentralisation, transparency, finance and philanthropy (the methods of delivering the Big Society). The research identified existing business models and suggested a set of questions to help construct new ones based on resources, accountability, decision-making and capacity.

This research was conducted over five phases. Initially, desk research was undertaken to establish the current understanding of Big Society and adaptation and to help place this...
research in the wider context of climate change adaptation in the UK. The second phase was to conduct an online survey of members of the LGiU's networks. The 31 respondents were predominately local authority officers and members. The online survey asked questions about the awareness and engagement of local authorities in the Big Society and climate change adaptation.

In order to obtain the perspective of civil society a series of interviews were conducted with charities, membership organisations and green campaigning organisations. In total seven 30 minute interviews were completed. As a way of joining up the discussions a series of half day workshops were conducted across England, one each in Newcastle, Bristol and London, and two in Manchester. The workshop in London was a full day. Delegates from local authorities and civil society organisations were invited to all the workshops and they helped establish some steps towards the Big Society as well as highlight the challenges and the need for capacity building. At the London workshop there was also an opportunity to develop a timeline for transition to climate change adaptation and the Big Society.

Finally the research was supplemented by two site visits in the North East, to a school and a community centre.

Chapter 1 of the report interprets policy approaches that can be taken when considering climate change adaptation and the Big Society, in doing so it proposes policy aims that could be followed by a local community. In Chapter 2 the report explores the strategic approaches open to local authorities and their communities. Chapter 3 looks at the way that local policy can be formulated and the things to consider when developing new business models. Chapter 4 explains the role that assessment can play in ensuring quality and driving performance. Chapter 5 pulls this all together to suggest a framework for gaining insights into the effectiveness of local initiatives and how central government can help.
How will climate change impact upon local authorities and communities?

The importance of this report to communities is starkly articulated in the paper from the Adaptation Sub-Committee of the Committee on Climate Change: “Climate change is the most significant environmental threat facing the world today”.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which is the body providing the scientific evidence, has calculated that the world has a 50 per cent chance of warming by 20°C or more by the end of the century. The scientific consensus is that the changes to the atmosphere are man made.

In the UK the climate is already changing. Average annual temperatures have risen by about 10°C in central England since the 1970s. The impacts of a changing climate are difficult to predict but there is increased likelihood of flooding, heatwaves, sea level rise and extreme weather events. As an example of the extent of the impact, the floods of summer 2007 affected 55,000 homes, killed 13 people and cost £3.2bn.

The Met Office uses mathematical models and projections. Its results are showing that by 2080 there will be increased likelihood of warming across the UK, higher rainfall in the west and lower in the east and sea level rise in London of 40cm. In addition floods, droughts and heatwaves are likely to increase in frequency.

Whether or not a particular locality will welcome or dread climate change depends on where they are in the country and their local geography. Analysis of the effects of climate change will be greatly different for communities on the coast, or in floodplains, densely populated urban areas or deprived communities.

However, it isn’t just location which is important. The real effects of climate change are not the floods or droughts but the impact they have on our daily lives. For communities this means work, rest and play and for local authorities this means delivery of services and enhancing the wellbeing of the community.

Regardless of whether it’s a risk avoided or an opportunity taken these communities will have
to be adaptable and adaptive. In other words they will have to respond to the consequences of climate change and develop a mindset that enables them to keep responding.

**How can the Big Society help?**

**What is the Big Society?**

The Big Society is the driving political vision of the coalition government and a commitment to shifting power away from the state and towards people, communities and the voluntary sector. It is both a way of delivering public services and also a set of relationships between individuals and communities. As Prime Minister David Cameron has described it:

> ‘the Big Society is about a huge culture change where people, in their everyday lives, in their homes, in their neighbourhoods, in their workplace don’t always turn to officials, local authorities or central government for answers to the problems they face but instead feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities’.

There are many reasons to think that the Big Society approach to public service provision is timely and necessary. Greater citizen engagement, collaboration and responsibility have been advocated for some time, by all political colours. Additionally, budget cuts within the public sector and specifically to local authorities means that models for service delivery have to change; both to respond to increased consumer demand, and also to cut costs.

Furthermore, long-term trends such as an ageing population and climate change can’t be tackled without the input and involvement of communities and citizens. At the Bristol workshop the view was expressed that adaptation to climate change cannot be delivered without the Big Society. The Big Society approach to delivering services offers citizens and communities the opportunity to transform their areas and how they work in order to tackle long-term trends such as climate change.

**What does the Big Society look like?**

In short, it will look different from place to place. The Big Society is a grass roots, bottom-up movement that will be shaped by the communities that will deliver it. This is a very important element of the Big Society; in order to get community ‘buy-in’ and support for the initiatives that citizens and communities will deliver, it is important that they take a role in shaping it.

In practical terms, there are common mechanisms for delivery of the Big Society that local authorities may choose to adopt. These may include social enterprises, co-operatives and mutuals, co-production and co-design. All of these mechanisms offer models of delivering local authority services in a different way. There are also a series of provisions in the Localism Bill that will make it easier for communities and the voluntary sector to get involved in local service delivery – and give local authorities the freedoms to enable this to happen. Provisions will include:

- The General Power of Competence:
  - If a local authority wishes to take responsibility for a particular service or problem they can do so unless specifically prohibited by the Localism Bill.

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The Community Right to Challenge:
☑ If a community thinks someone else or themselves can deliver a service better than the local authority they can challenge the local authority.

Community Right to Buy:
☑ If a community asset (e.g., a pub) is for sale the community have a right of first refusal.

Arrangements for parish local authorities to nominate buildings and assets of community value.

In taking forward the Big Society local authorities and communities will have to answer questions regarding:

- What services are appropriate for Big Society delivery models?
- Who will make decisions on which services should be delivered by the Big Society?
- How will these decisions be made within the local authority and wider Big Society community?
- Who will facilitate the decision-making process?
- Is the process fair (since we held the workshops for this project four tests have been developed by IPPR North)?

The Big Society and adaptation to climate change

It is likely that some services will be deemed too ‘essential’ to be delivered entirely by the Big Society – but these are decisions that will have to be made locally and take into consideration the particular priorities and needs of the local area. At the Newcastle workshop the point was made that for things like large flood defence schemes you need well resourced and managed professionals not enthusiastic amateurs.

We already know that climate change adaptation is an aspect of activity that local authorities are co-delivering with communities. Graph 4 (page 23) demonstrates that 32 per cent of local authorities who responded to the survey are proactively working with civil society on delivery of adaptation to climate change.

Examples given for addressing the impacts of climate change include building community resilience and raising community awareness of the risks of climate change. This could be through strategic partnerships and task and finish groups.

The big question facing local authorities and communities on the adaptation agenda now is; can the Big Society take these models of co-delivery further and offer new ways of addressing the impacts of climate change?

Big Society and adaptation models

In the model of the Big Society used by the Department of Communities and Local Government (see Figure 1) the most tangible elements are the ‘methods’ used – decentralisation, transparency and finance. As a result of work undertaken in the LGiU’s Big Society Learning Network a fourth method ‘philanthropy’ has been added which captures volunteering and giving. The models for delivering improved adaptation to climate change in a manner consistent with the Big Society are presented using this framework.

![Figure 1: The Big Society Vision](image)

### Decentralisation

The models that emerged from this research can be seen to fit on a progressive scale. This scale starts with the traditional model of the local authority prioritising adaptation, allocating resources, developing plans and delivering programmes. The next stage is partnership working which comes in many forms. Following this is the movement of adaptation services from the local authority to some other body through outsourcing and creating new businesses. The Localism Bill throws up many opportunities within a new framework for local democracy and surfaces important issues about accountability and governance structures. At end of the scale the state withdraws first from control of information and eventually from decision-making and delivery.

None of the delegates at the workshops or interviewees saw the traditional model as being compatible with the Big Society, though many did point out that central initiatives such as NI188 did provide useful information and show the way to mechanisms for delivery.

Most delegates argued that a lot of the partnership working they were undertaking was compatible with the Big Society. Partnership working has sub sets depending on its nature. Some partnerships are in effect contracting relationships with CSOs or community groups, others are closer to real partnerships. Most are led by the local authority but some are collaborations in which the local authority is a junior partner. A good example identified by delegates was the North West Coastal Forum.
North West Coastal Forum

The North West Coastal Forum is a multi-agency partnership bringing together stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sectors working to promote and deliver integrated management for coastal areas to ensure their long-term sustainability. The Forum is a unique regional organisation, which has been promoted as a model of good practice in the UK.

At the North West Regional Coastal Conference 2010, the winners of the inaugural North West Awards for Coastal excellence were announced. These awards go to voluntary groups and individuals. The Conference is held biennially and in 2010 over 110 delegates attended at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool.

http://www.nwcoastalforum.co.uk/index.php

There was some debate about the outsourcing of local authority adaptation teams, though currently there was not much appetite from local authority staff or CSOs. However, new models were discussed such as social enterprises, cooperatives, staff led mutuals or paying business to manage adaptation. In practical terms it was recognised that any new organisations involving staff from a local authority would need an established tapering work programme to help manage the transition from public to the private sector or civil society. It should be noted that of more immediate concern to the delegates was that there may not be any staff or capacity left to outsource as teams were rationalised or cut.

The Localism Bill provided opportunities for decentralising decision-making in many ways such as neighbourhood plans, micro local authorities and development trusts. Right to buy may provide communities the opportunity to buy land that helps adaptive resilience such as a wood or water meadow. There could be a much enhanced role for parish councils allowing existing ones to grow and forming new ones but they will need a transfer of powers and resources.

Some local authorities have used the power of wellbeing to step in and help with adaptation. In the Localism Bill the wellbeing power has been upgraded to the general power of competence. One use of this new power could be to help the community adapt. This approach would allow the local authority to prioritise adaptation, develop new policies and channel resources.

There was considerable debate about the threshold of the Big Society. Most local authorities are happy for CSOs and communities to participate in gathering information and ordering that information but there was a reluctance to let the Big Society take over the decision-making responsibilities of the local authority.

There are issues over governance structures where taxpayers money is being used. New more flexible light touch accountability regimes need to be developed linked to long-term funding. Delegates recognised that good governance costs money and needs upfront investment. The Big Society will require more trust by local authorities and an emphasis on supporting CSO governance but not interfering with the outcomes of the work. There will need to be a new contract developed that protects taxpayers money without constraining the CSO or community group and cheap accessible insurance will probably be needed.

It was recognised that if things went badly wrong referendums can be used but they are usually after the event and so of limited use.
Adaptation is not a core service, which means that there is not a strong professional community nor a recognised statutory requirement to carry it out. This means that local authorities are one player in a relatively new game working with the same limited database as everyone else. Therefore, there is a genuine credibility to adaptation plans developed by non professionals such as schools or community groups. These plans should be rigorous but the fact that they don’t conform to a higher level strategy is not a reason to dismiss them.

Using schools as an example, the decision-making around adaptation can be widely different, but arguably just as valid. Schools tend not to use risk assessment or cost benefit analysis but choose based on opportunity or enthusiasm from pupils or parents. See the case study on Broadway East School.

**Broadway East First School, Gosforth, Newcastle**

The Head of Broadway East First School, Helen McKenna was personally committed to ensuring that her pupils understood the implications of climate change. During a visit in February 2011, the children, aged 7 and 8 years old, were examining soil profiles which had been prepared to show different climates in the past, an activity based on sediment cores. Teacher, Diane Murray, tested the children’s understanding and they were able to explain that the earth’s climate has always been undergoing change, but now was changing more rapidly as a result of human activity. They were also able to connect this lesson to local river flooding and the need for sunshades in the playground.

The children were very proud of the lead they have taken on climate change. They displayed letters of support from local leaders and even Prince Charles and conducted a tour of the school’s gardens. The children ran a Climate Change Schools Project ‘Adaptation Challenge’ open afternoon this year which included a quiz for parents and representatives from local businesses that tested their understanding of the difference between climate change adaptation and mitigation. The quiz and other activities were all part of fundraising activity for facilities that made the school more resilient to projected climate change impacts, while raising awareness of the need for adaptation in the community.

The school is a member of the Climate Change Schools Project which is a collaboration between the Environment Agency (via the Northumbria Regional Flood Defence Committee), ClimateNE (the regional climate change partnership), Science Learning Centre North East (operated through Durham University), the North East Strategic Partnership for Sustainable Schools, One World Network North East and the Association of North East Councils. The Climate Change Schools Project, winners of the National Climate Week’s inaugural ‘Best Educational Initiative’, works with 70 schools around the North East of England. It helps schools put climate change at the heart of the national curriculum and makes schools ‘beacons' for positive action on climate change in their local communities – the ‘Adaptation Challenge’ forms a key part of the project’s community engagement activity.

Broadway East First School has achieved a lot and intend to do more. They have been very inventive about the way that they have raised money to fund local physical adaptations on the schools grounds and hosting events to share their adaptation expertise with the wider community, sometimes relying on the council and other times working with keen parents and local businesses.
It was also recognised that many communities held expertise in elements of adaptation beyond the expertise held in the local authority. This local expertise was recognised as having two forms: academic and experiential. The academic expertise could be vested in retired landscape gardeners or other relevant professionals. The experiential expertise rests with members of a community who have lived there long enough to have experienced floods or heatwaves and know what some of the consequences actually were.

In many cases the community will just lead and the primary role of the local authorities is to facilitate or get out of the way eg tree planting schemes. It means that local authorities should try and anticipate some community activity and have a prior understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Participants felt that there were already communities of interest that could help the UK adapt – wildlife trusts, RSPB members, mountain rescue groups. These should be the first option for strategy and delivery then the state fills the gaps. ‘Faith for Change’ uses the faith community for food planning and learning. Traditional community centres also have an important role to play integrating climate change adaptation into everyday community work. See Cedarwood Trust case study below.

Cedarwood Trust

The Cedarwood Trust (CT) runs a community centre at 43 Avon Avenue, Meadow Well, North Shields. The centre has a drop-in four mornings a week, represents tenants, gives financial advice, provides pastoral care to prisoners and their families, supports a credit union, parents’ group and local residents group. Running for 30 years CT is an example of a community based organisation that is building environmental management into its social mission, driven by the hard choices the community has to make about energy use – ‘heat or eat’.

The need to reduce energy costs and create jobs in the community meant that the CT saw opportunities in climate change and the green agenda. CT was already working with Acorn Computers a small Community Interest Company (CIC) that recycled computers and was moving into wood and furniture recycling. The Trust were also keen to install energy efficiency measures under the green deal and put in solar photovoltaics to obtain the Feed in Tariff (FIT). CT hoped that by doing this themselves they would be seen as a positive example to the community.

CT is at the heart of the community meaning that its convenient for local residents to go in for a conversation rather than ‘communication by leaflet’. In the widest sense it was helping to build community resilience. In deprived areas like Meadow Well the impact of a flood or heatwave could be great especially after the emergency phase and during recovery, so CT offer advice on insurance.

CT vividly illustrated that progress on Big Society and climate change adaptation is not necessarily dependent upon new bodies but on the development of existing community-based bodies that wish to try new models such as CICs or using FIT money. The most cited example given of people acting for themselves was snow clearing in the winter. The local authority did the main roads and when people realised that the side roads wouldn’t get done, they did it themselves. Participants suggested that a statement from the local authority making responsibilities clear would have sped this up.
Transparency

It has long been understood that for any exchange to work whether it be goods or ideas the more information available to all stakeholders, the better. The workshop delegates felt that information about local adaptation to climate change is limited by the fact that it’s a new complex discipline, scepticism exists as to its existence and its impact and there isn’t much information about. In fact the UK is a world leader in climate change information.

Nevertheless, the workshops did identify differences in data availability and as yet untapped potential to do much more. The suggestions followed a progression similar to that for decentralisation. Starting with local authority or government owned data sets available only to state bodies that used this data to make decisions that were subsequently hard to scrutinise.

The next step was for local authorities to make more data available and be open about the decision-making process, then there were opportunities for CSOs to contribute data to local authority information sets and in some cases those data sets were built and owned independently by the CSOs and the local authority would contribute. At the far end of the scale CSOs would develop their own data sets that allowed people or communities to take action without any interaction with local authority.

All participants at the workshops recognised that data and decision-making transparency were important but also knew of situations where some information was not openly available.

The free flow of data around adaptation is improving. The Environment Agency is becoming more open but there are data sets that are owned by the private sector (eg water companies) that are considered commercially sensitive. Local authorities will be publishing spend data that will include expenditure on adaptation.

New technology especially social media was identified as a way of opening up services, data and relationships between stakeholders. New technology can produce maps which are interactive and data can be put onto them. Social media can create new communities of interest. In some cases such as biodiversity, CSOs and individuals own valuable data and make that available publicly through; for example, back garden surveys.

New collaboration models can be used such as those developed for car sharing or accommodation swapping. Possible uses in adaptation might be people offering rooms in the event of a flood, flood wardens or people offering to keep an eye on the elderly in a heatwave. New technology could also be used as a way of accumulating funding for preventative technology, time banking or capturing bartering opportunities.

Crowd sourcing has recently been used in Japan to measure levels of radiation around Fukushima. Ordinary citizens post the data on a website and inform themselves and the state. This technology could be used to map all sorts of information. As a direct analogy an often neglected element of adaptation is the post event activities, keeping an eye on the clean up after a flood or noting how many premises are not repaired or rises in the cost of insurance after an event, all of these could be noted on a website through crowd sourcing.

New technologies such as twitter allow the rapid transference of information, which might be particularly useful in an emergency so long as the web infrastructure continues to function.
Finance

The government recognises that it won’t be able to deliver the Big Society without the
development of funding sources alternative to the state. It was also clear that the majority of
participants in the research thought that the cuts would hamper development of the Big
Society.

Workshop suggestions developed from traditional models which used local authority funds to
support projects through asset transfers from local authorities to community groups. Other
ideas that developed from existing practice were using developer contributions or bidding into
mainstream funding with an eye to adaptation.

There are also opportunities for CSOs to work together to accumulate funds, possibly through
sponsorship, and gain savings from bulk purchasing. At the more innovative end of the scale
there are new funding mechanisms that release capital based on future income streams,
there are models which are part cash and part vouchers or part time.

There is a lot of interest in valuing the services provided by the natural environment and
finally there is the value that a community puts on adaptation evidenced by local fundraising
efforts.

The dominant existing model is the state funding of research and awareness raising. This was
thought to still have value though it was recognised that there would be considerably less
funding available in the future, especially at the local level and particularly as the impetus
provided by NI188 had gone.

Though smaller and fewer in number there will be contracts for work on adaptation. There
was a concern that these contracts would be won by large commercial consultancies and that
CSOs did not have the skills and capacity necessary to win contracts. Voluntary collectives or
CSO umbrella groups can commit the resource to raise funds. They can also achieve savings
through bulk purchasing possibly with credit unions and other partners.

In circumstances where local authorities don’t have cash they may still have assets that are of
value to communities or businesses (eg transferring ownership of Sustainable Urban
Drainage Systems (SUDS) to water companies in return for them managing them).

There are two approaches available: selling off assets which can be used as leverage by
CSOs to release funding for an adaptation scheme or specifically earmarking assets that can
help adaptation such as water meadows or woodlands that can be transferred to CSOs or
communities.

Local councillors in many wards have funds that they can allocate locally (sometimes known
as neighbourhood or ward budgets). Quite often the local community have identified green
space as a worthy recipient.

Section 106 money or Construction Infrastructure Levy (CIL) could be used. It was argued
that the community should not just be involved at the individual development level but at the
strategic decision about CIL and how it could be used.

There are funding streams that are intended for planning or infrastructure or regeneration that
should have an adaptation element to them eg in Augustenborg, Sweden the residents took
control of an estate regeneration project and built adaptation into the housing.
Augustenborg, Sweden

The Augustenborg district of the city of Malmö in Sweden was built in the 1950s and was initially considered a highly successful mixture of housing, employment and social facilities. By the 1970s the 32-hectare neighbourhood was falling into decline. Annual flooding from an overwhelmed sewage system also led to further problems for residents, with disruption and damage to vehicles and private property. The estate suffered a spiral of decline as more people moved out, flats remained unoccupied and the residual population became marginalised with a high level of unemployment.

In the early 1990s the city local authority set out to improve the area by working with the MKB Housing Company, the housing landlord and local residents. This initial partnership led to a wide-ranging regeneration project, known as Ekostaden Augustenborg, which began in 1998.

The initial focus of the project was on innovative environmental improvements, focusing on flooding, waste management and biodiversity. The project has successfully introduced a wide range of social benefits, such as a community car pool and an after-school youth club. The estate management company also offers employment opportunities to local young adults. The neighbourhood is now once again an attractive and thriving place, with a lower turnover of tenancies and no long-term vacant properties. The innovative approach taken to water-management has resulted in greater resilience to flooding. During a major flood in 2007, which was of a scale that occurs once in 50 years, Augustenborg coped much more successfully than nearby districts.

www.cabe.org.uk/case-studies/ekostaden-augustenborg

There are examples of sponsorship by the private sector (eg Barclays and the London Bike Scheme). Sponsorship could take the form of tree planting or a water company providing a SUDS scheme. United Utilities has managed their reservoirs with the help of the RSPB (see project SCaMP). This tends to be a better option in areas where a large company operates.

SCaMP

The Sustainable Catchment Management Programme (SCaMP), has been developed to apply an integrated approach to catchment management in two key areas of United Utilities (UU) land, Bowland and the Peak District area. It was developed in association with the RSPB. SCaMP 2 planned to deliver across the two remaining UU estates (30,000 ha) in the Lake District and West Pennines.

The aim of SCaMP was to be recognised as the best approach for drinking water catchment management. This was interpreted to mean that the government’s targets for restoring sites of special scientific interest will be met by 2010, treatment costs would be reduced following habitat restoration and UU tenants could continue to make a viable living. The project emphasised the importance of wide consultation including statutory bodies, land managers, charities, trusts, campaign groups, local groups, archaeological groups, local access groups and Local authorities. In addition, voluntary groups were engaged in clearing waterways and tree planting.

http://www.unitedutilities.com/scamp.aspx
Some adaptation projects show a positive cost/benefit. If that positive value can be captured then this will provide funds. The example in mitigation is the feed in tariff which pays property owners to generate their own electrical power. Carbon emitted is a nice simple unit and its hard to find an adaptation alternative. However, the economists already know that money spent on adaptation now will be cheaper to spend than later, so future spend avoided could be used as an incentive.

It was suggested that a portion of the tax income from the climate change levy could be earmarked for adaptation initiatives (this is the case at the international level). It was also suggested that the Green Infrastructure Bank could have a future role in improving resilience particularly where there are win/win opportunities for mitigation and adaptation eg advice to property owners on flood protection at the same time as energy saving.

One model discussed was the Social Impact Bond. If a cause and effect relationship can be established between an action and a future cost avoided by the state, then the state can offer to use that future revenue stream as a way of incentivising private capital. A variant on this is Tax Increment Financing (TIF) which is being explored as part of funding for flood protection. The capital to build flood defences will be paid back through increased business rates income in the future. The recently announced Enterprise Zone policy may make this easier.

Delegates pointed out that people like immediate rewards and they like fun. Semi financial incentives such as vouchers or discounts are already being used to promote behaviour change in recycling. In some local authority areas those households that recycle their waste receive cinema or Marks and Spencer’s vouchers. Though in its early stages it looks as though this scheme has boosted recycling rates. An example of how this might work elsewhere is in insurance deals that include vouchers from DIY companies if the householder has installed flood prevention aids.

Barter type schemes are rare but seem to work well such as Cumbria mountain rescue sharing the facilities and fuel of the emergency services. In Lancashire and Pendle farmers help with snow clearing, there are contracts and small payments.

The government is looking at the costing of ecosystem services which will put a value on biodiversity and green infrastructure. The ASC is looking at marginal adaptation costs a way of using cost benefit analysis to judge the value of projects.

Neighbourhood partnership funds were suggested where communities fundraise in order to afford adaptive infrastructure eg trees for shade. This is a step on from project-based local fundraising to something more strategic (probably associated with neighbourhood plans). It could be linked to assets the local authority has handed over such as a community centre or it could be a totally independent process.
2. Strategic choices: ways to approach the Big Society and climate change adaptation

What is the role of local authorities?

Local authorities are providers of important services. It is a primary responsibility of local authorities to keep these services running efficiently and effectively. In some cases these are available when needed such as care and in other cases it’s an opportunity for regular contact with constituents such as waste collection. The survey asked respondents to identify all the services affected by floods, heatwaves and extreme weather. Graph 1 below shows that waste and highways scored the highest with central services and business and regeneration scoring low.

Graph 1: Services affected by climate change

‘Adaptation to climate change can be complemented by considering geographical area, environmental impact and vulnerable groups’
Local authorities are also the tier of government closest to the people. As such they have a role in representing their electorate and providing leadership when new challenges present themselves. They also provide the main connection between communities and the government.

In the interviews and workshops participants were asked which local authority services would be affected by climate change. Most replied that every service would be affected in some way but four distinct perspectives emerged. Organisations with a primarily environmental perspective focused on climate change impacts, types of service or geographical area. Organisations with a primary focus on community support, focused on vulnerable groups, see Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Services</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
<th>Area based</th>
<th>Vulnerable groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelter – housing and planning</td>
<td>Flooding</td>
<td>Catchments</td>
<td>Older people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and roads</td>
<td>Heatwaves</td>
<td>Local authority area</td>
<td>Disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools disruption and closure</td>
<td>Sea level rise</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Drug and alcohol dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison with emergency services</td>
<td>Severe weather events</td>
<td>Landscapes</td>
<td>Mental health service users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>Drought</td>
<td>Nature reserves</td>
<td>Black and minority ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable drainage</td>
<td>Increased wildfires</td>
<td>National Parks</td>
<td>Asylum seekers and refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>Disease migration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Homeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Changes in atmospheric composition</td>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Psychological impact of extreme events on the community</td>
<td></td>
<td>Isolated single people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace evacuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public safety</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Alice Wilcock from the Community Development Foundation (CDF) thought that the main value that local authorities can add is through good quality communication. This can be
advice and help before during and after an emergency. She felt that traditional town hall meetings and leaflet drops could be complemented by the use of social media such as facebook and twitter.

Matthew Smerdon explained the work that the Barings Foundation have been doing with charities. The report, *An Unexamined Truth*[^4], found that many charities that provide key services had not considered the impact of climate change on those services. When climate change is considered it becomes clear that it will affect their ability to deliver services and have a direct impact on the beneficiaries of their services.

Alex Hunt from the National Trust agreed that all services will be affected in some way but stressed the importance of the unique qualities of climate change that require consideration of how services are integrated and long-term thinking. Local authorities were good at reacting in crises but they were less effective at addressing long-term problems which required anticipation and prediction.

The survey asked what local authorities are doing to address climate change. Graph 2 shows that the responses related to core local authority activities or responsibilities, so there were high scores for planning related actions and scores were slightly lower for those activities that required the community to act such as conserving water use or taking up insurance.

**Graph 2: Local authority actions on climate change**

![Graph showing local authority actions on climate change](image)

In summary, local authorities connect to climate change adaptation in many ways, primarily through frontline outdoor services. However, a lot depends upon the perspective of the council and considering adaptation to climate change service provision can be complemented by considering geographical area, environmental impact and vulnerable groups.

**Local authorities and communities working together to tackle climate change**

This section will explore the existing and potential ways a local authority can work with its community to tackle climate change. It is important to say that one of the most consistent themes to emerge from the workshops was that there is already a lot going on and there’s no need to reinvent the wheel.

The survey asked for examples of the way that local authorities were currently working with civil society. Graph 3 illustrates that the three most popular responses were associated with strategic planning while the less popular options were associated with delivery of projects and services.

**Graph 3 Local authorities and civil society**
There was a good percentage of co-delivery and co-funding of projects in graph 3 but 17 per cent of the responses supported the assertion that the local authority didn’t work with civil society on adaptation.

In fact the survey identified that only 32 per cent of local authorities were proactively working with civil society on delivery, and that the rest weren’t or were in the development stages. The survey also found that 64 per cent of CSOs were taking social action themselves.

**Graph 4 Civil society groups that local authorities work with on adaptation**

The ‘others’ category captured initiatives such as the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), community partnerships, transition towns and parish local authorities.

Graph 4 shows the types of groups that local authorities work with on adaptation. The picture is mixed at the top and made up of a combination of bodies that are part of the local government ‘architecture’ such as the emergency services or LSPs and interaction with community groups and business. The picture is clearer at the low end of the engagement scale with perhaps surprisingly little interaction with green groups and farmers groups.

Table 2 shows examples of activity led by civil society groups identified in the survey. It can be seen that there are more examples of taking action independently than taking on local authority services.

To summarise the results so far it could be argued that Local authorities are currently operating mainly at the strategic level, they are unlikely to be working with CSOs, and if they are they will be those associated with existing local government structures, while the CSOs themselves are concentrating on taking local social action.

In the workshops and interviews there were opportunities to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of local authorities working with the Big Society on climate change.
The main discussion themes were:

- **Perspective**
  - Should any adaptation plan start with services, geographical area or vulnerable groups.

- **Fairness and equity**
  - It was thought that there was an important distinction and that equity was far harder to deliver for climate change as different communities would experience different challenges.

- **Adaptation and mitigation or just climate change**
  - While the distinction was manageable for local authority staff many community workers felt that it was unhelpful and that people just about get climate change and don’t need the extra complication of it having two parts.
  - The government has developed a range of financial incentives to mitigate climate change. These include green deal, feed in tariff and renewable heat incentive, for

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**Table 2: Activity by civil society groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local authority services</th>
<th>Influencing decision-making</th>
<th>Taking social action</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Handed over service to Groundwork</td>
<td>LCLIP approved by LSP</td>
<td>All Parishes encouraged to have emergency plans.</td>
<td>Probation Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residents Groups</td>
<td>Peckham Power, Transition Town Peckham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAN Waste on waste management, Universities &amp; others on climate change strategy</td>
<td>Homeless groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Oxford (Environmental Change Institute and UKCIP)</td>
<td>The CREW Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Development of Flood Action Groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Active Community Flood Wardens in areas impacted by flooding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parish local authorities, so far about a third of our 100 or so villages have parish groups.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transition Town groups, Eco Teams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
many participants it seemed odd that these climate change instruments had no link to adaptation. In addition they were national schemes and so it was actually quite hard to innovate locally and link up income from mitigation to expenditure on adaptation.

- Opportunities exist in property refurbishment to link energy saving with resilience and reduce the overall costs.

### Local authority led, people led or NGO led

- The landscape of civil society is hard to grasp. Delegates wondered who was a legitimate Big Society participant. Was it the traditional green groups such as Friends of the Earth or newer more local groups.
- Delegates understood that even in the Big Society the local authority would have to show leadership and that the most basic leadership required local authorities to change their own policies and working practices to fully integrate adaptation.

### Suggestion for new ways of working

It was thought that local programmes could do the joining up for government. Alice Wilcock from the Community Development Foundation (CDF) suggested that programmes supporting urban microgeneration could be exploited as ways of opening up resources and enthusiasm for adaptation.

Prioritising action on adaptation requires some hard choices. It is best if these choices are informed but there are top down and bottom up ways of seeing the issues. Alice Wilcock suggested the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) model used in the NHS which is essentially a group of experts who give guidance on whether a drug is worth spending the money on. Alice thought that a NICE type model could be developed which grows out of the work done by UKCIP, it would have to be advisory only but still influential.

Some productive examples of partnership working identified centred on schools. Alice Wilcock suggested using young local ambassadors to take the message out of the schools into the community.
‘The Big Society offers a series of opportunities for local authorities and communities to address the long-term problems associated with climate change in a different way’

3. Business models

Developing new business models

The Big Society offers a series of opportunities for local authorities and communities to address the long-term problems associated with climate change in a different way. These could include:

- devising new approaches to adaptation through new delivery models
- encouraging and supporting community projects based around self-help, and new partnerships, co-operatives and social enterprises that aim to tackle climate change.

In looking towards developing new local business models that can be developed to deliver Big Society adaptation, there are a series of challenges and barriers that local authorities and communities will need to overcome in order to move forward. Many broad questions remain to be answered about the Big Society. How will communities be motivated to take up these opportunities? How will they be supported and how are they held to account? How can this be achieved without introducing more bureaucracy? All of these questions will need to form a central part of new delivery approaches.

As a prompt for local authorities and community groups that are looking to establish new business models to deliver services, a set of questions have been developed under the four headings:

- Resources
- Accountability
- Decision-making
- Capacity

Answering these questions should enable local authorities and community groups to work through some of the key challenges in Big Society service delivery and move towards new models of delivery.

Resources

The public sector is facing stringent austerity measures, which will have a significant impact for local authorities, communities and the voluntary and charitable sectors. While the Big Society could present a credible means to save money from the public purse, finance and resources
will also have to be invested in the Big Society in order to enable it to grow and flourish. This presents a difficult set of decisions for local authorities and communities regarding where and how resources are spent and how decisions about these resources are made.

However, it also opens up a set of opportunities to consider new and innovative models for the way in which local authorities can support the funding of voluntary and community organisations and the Big Society services that they provide. In developing new business and delivery models, local authorities should work with the voluntary and community sectors to understand:

- How can resources within other sectors (such as the private sector, charitable trusts, philanthropists and charities) be harnessed and maximised?
- What non-cash resources are available to support the voluntary and community sectors and how can these support the delivery of the Big Society?
- What revenue raising powers do the voluntary and community sectors have and how can this be utilised?
- How will local authorities transfer and release funding to community/voluntary groups? Can local authorities match funding raised by the community?

**Accountability**

As an increasing number of local authority services move to being delivered by the community and voluntary sector groups, the existing models for accountability that are in place may no longer be appropriate. Currently, local authority services are transparent to the wider community, outcomes are set and made clear and there are various mechanisms to ensure that accountability takes place when things go wrong, such as overview and scrutiny committees, and with the ultimate form of accountability being the ballot box.

New business models that are being developed to deliver services by the Big Society will have to develop their own mechanisms that hold them to account to the wider community and build on existing mechanisms that are already in place. When outlining these new models, local authorities and communities will have to consider various aspects of the accountability and transparency process, such as:

- Who holds the Big Society to account?
- How will service outcomes be set and monitored?
- How will the Big Society ensure that services are equitable and give fair access to all?
- Who will have full accountability for a service once it is transferred and what are the legal implications of this?
- What happens and who is held liable if a service fails?

There is no one size fits all approach to dealing with issues of accountability – these will all have to be worked through locally, depending on the particular services in question and local accountability mechanisms that are already present.
Decision-making

Local authorities will have to be clear about how decision-making will take place in the Big Society. Particularly, local authorities will have to set out how the wider community will be involved in decision-making processes, which should include:

- which local authority services could be delivered using Big Society models, who will make these decisions and how
- how the local authority will involve all (and/or the most appropriate) sections of the community in decision-making
- who will make decisions around commissioning and transferring responsibility to the Big Society
- once a service has been transferred, who will make strategic and operational decisions around the running of the service and who will take a lead on establishing any structures that need to be put in place.

Building capacity

There are a series of skills, capabilities and capacities that local authorities and communities will require in order to build and deliver the Big Society. These will be different from place to place, depending on the services being delivered and the delivery model being utilised.

The role of local authorities

The workshops revealed that most delegates agreed that local authorities and councillors should take a strategic leadership role in the Big Society, and particularly in assessing what skills are required and facilitating the process of making sure that they are present. It is important to stress that as part of this strategic leadership role, local authorities will need to understand their communities; what their priorities are, what their socio-economic status is and what issues will drive them to want to be involved in the Big Society. Clearly, this will require a set of skills and capabilities in itself.

There are a set of questions about how local authorities set priorities within communities; how they engage, consult and involve, at what point and with whom. However, these practices around intelligence gathering and community development and engagement are not new; local authorities have been doing this for many years. It is perhaps, helpful to view this process as a continuation of the work that was already taking place to involve communities, set priorities and understand need.

That said, local authorities now find themselves in a new context; one with fewer resources and a greater need to involve people in the delivery of services. In addition to existing responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to identify community risks there are new legal duties in the Floods and Water Management Act 2010 to manage flood risk. This will require a set of skills and capabilities that may or may not already be present.

As such, there are a series of questions specifically regarding skills and capacities that local authorities will have to work through in order to facilitate this process and prepare communities for the additional roles and responsibilities that they will have to take on board.
These questions may include:

- what key capabilities, skills and expertise local councillors and local authorities will need in order to take forward the Big Society and, in the case of adaptation, what specialist knowledge is required
- whether these are already present and how local authorities will determine if they are
- how local authorities will resource any capacity building that needs to take place
- how local authorities can make the most of the skills and expertise that other local organisations have.

In answering these questions, local authorities will need to think about how they assess what skills and capabilities are required internally and within the wider community. Again, this will be contingent on the service and community in question.

There is a significant question about how activity within the Big Society will be resourced and within this, how will capacity building be resourced. In the absence of dedicated budgets, local authorities and communities will have to consider how capabilities and capacity are shared and how this will contribute to wider outcomes for communities.

The role of local councillors

Local councillors are a particularly important part of Big Society delivery; they understand their communities, know who to contact and how to get things done. They will also have strong relationships with community groups, individuals and local organisations that will be part of Big Society service delivery. Local councillors are the democratically elected representatives for communities; people who can speak for their communities and who have the democratic mandate to make decisions but also to create the environment for participative democracy. As such, local councillors have a significant role in enabling communities to take up opportunities and more generally in facilitating decisions around the Big Society.

In order to do this, local councillors will need skills, capabilities and officer support. Things to consider should include:

- **Knowledge and intelligence**: for example ward profiles with data on population and key statistics
- **Skills/capabilities**: chairing, facilitation, conflict resolution, expectation management, public speaking
- **Resources**: officer time, budgets

All of these things will enable local councillors to facilitate decisions and action within their community about priority setting and service delivery. The Big Society gives local councillors the approach to engage more closely with communities and bring about real action and change.

However, it should also be recognised that the role of a local councillor will change and become more complex and they will need support in managing what could be impossible expectations from the community and also in passing difficult decisions to the community.
The role of communities

There is very a broad question about what expertise, capabilities and resources the community and voluntary sector will need to take forward the Big Society. Again, it is important to stress that this will be different from place-to-place, depending on the service in question and the needs and priorities of the particular communities that will be involved in the service delivery.

The point was made by the Local Government Association that civil society organisations vary greatly and therefore can operate at different social and spatial scales. For example, the National Flood Forum operates at the national level, Age UK has a county structure and then bodies like allotment societies are hyperlocal. Geography itself imposes some constraints on flexibility as for many biodiversity issues, landscape scale is the most appropriate unit.

When assessing what is required, it is important to remember that there are many community and voluntary sector groups that already exist and have been co-producing public services for many years. Their skills and expertise can be learned from, harnessed and shared in order to build additional capacity within the wider community to take on additional responsibilities.

When thinking about specific skills, this may involve a series of very practical and more generic capabilities, such as: financial management, bid writing and managing volunteers. It may also include things such as: chairing and facilitation skills, public speaking and conflict resolution.

The workshops also revealed that there would be a set of very specific expertise that would be required depending on the service in question. For example, if a community were to take responsibility for flood defence, they would have to understand some of the technicalities associated with different types of flooding, how to manage them and environmental and emergency response concerns. With such specific expertise, groups will want to consider how they can harness the involvement of the private sector and professionals with specialist knowledge.

Taking this on board, local authorities will have to consider how they work with the community and voluntary sector to ensure they have the right skills and capabilities. In doing so, they will also need to consider a series of concerns that delegates raised as part of the workshops. These include:

- **Equity**: is the Big Society accessible to different types of communities and will the capabilities that communities need be different as a result of their socio-economic status?
- **Capacity**: will people and community groups have the time and motivation to adopt the roles that the Big Society requires of them? Is there a danger of ‘burning out’ volunteers?
- **Sustainability**: how can these groups be supported in the long term? How can continuity of skills and capabilities be ensured as time moves on and people move away from their volunteering roles?
- **Strategic focus**: how can we ensure that groups retain a focus on strategic outcomes that meet needs of the wider community and the priorities of the local authority?
The role of the private sector

It is clear that the private sector has much to offer; in terms of skills, capabilities, resources and support. During the final workshop, delegates took some time to consider how communities and local authorities can go about attaining this support. Two areas of consideration were made: corporate social responsibility (CSR) and self-interest. Delegates agreed that many firms within the private sector made considerations based on CSR and this provided an opportunity to involve them in Big Society service delivery; either through direct financial arrangement or through ‘in-kind’ support.

There was also a feeling that the private sector would be enthusiastic about being involved in the Big Society and service delivery if it were to further the aims of their organisation. As an example, a company wishing to locate to an area may assist with community flood defence if it were to benefit their own resilience and ability to operate during the time of a flood. The important thing for communities to understand therefore, is who are the ‘big players’ in their areas, what are their interests and how can they use these to harness their involvement.

Scenario example: an exercise in flood defence

Delegates at the London workshop were set an exercise to complete on Big Society flood defence. This exercise in ‘back-casting’ was designed to get the delegates to think through the steps that needed to be taken in order to achieve a Big Society delivery model for flood defence. Delegates considered the key steps that needed to be taken across: resources, accountability, decision-making and capacity using the key questions as a guide.

The following table gives a précis of the key themes that were drawn out and the considerations that delegates made. The exercise has continued after the workshop and LGiU has expanded upon and added further issues that would need to be thought through. The table follows the chronological steps that will need to be taken in order to deliver Big Society flood defence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Decision-making</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local authority funds all flood defence related activity</td>
<td>Local authority has complete responsibility for flood defence and is held accountable through usual channels</td>
<td>Local authority and community group work in partnership to make decisions about flood defence</td>
<td>People within the community who have an interest/stake in flooding meet to discuss issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions are taken with the local authority and community group around transfer of funding. An agreement and conditions are stipulated</td>
<td>Community group gains legal status, such as creating itself as a co-operative, mutual or social enterprise</td>
<td>The community at large is involved with the process of deciding which local authority services should be put out to the Big Society: flood defence is included in this</td>
<td>A community/voluntary sector group is formed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued...
Although the three groups outlined different steps that would need to be taken to deliver the Big Society flood defence, all did identify similar stages that would need to take place across the four key areas.

Resources: delegates agreed that some form of seed funding would be required to set up the service. This would involve some sort of formal transfer of funding from
the local authority to the community group to ‘kick-start’ service delivery. Over the longer term however, the community group would need to secure funding and in-kind resources from local business, philanthropists and other sources.

**Accountability:** delegates agreed that community groups would need to take on a form of legal status in order to be fully accountable, but that this should be supplemented by a link into scrutiny by the local authority and community. They outlined that it was important to set outcome measures by which to measure the delivery of the flood defence service.

**Decision-making:** delegates were mindful that the decision-making processes and structures should be open to all sections of the community and should also be clearly outlined and accessible.

**Capacity:** the groups identified that there would be set a set of generic skills and capabilities that would be required, such as accounting and management, but that in the case of flooding, there would be a set of highly specific skills and capabilities that would be needed for service delivery. There were also a series of challenges identified with capacity, namely, that there was a danger in the Big Society delivery model becoming overly bureaucratic, creating ‘mini’ local authorities and bodies that would require too many checks and balances to ensure that it was operative effectively. Also, there was concern regarding what happens to existing skills when volunteers decide to move on.

**Localism and strategic planning**

As the LGiU has previously explored in *People, Places, Power* (2010), there is a potential tension between competing ideologies that local government is being encouraged to pursue. Community Budgets (Total Place) are being advocated as a means to join together services at a strategic level in order to make efficiencies and deliver more effective services.

However, the Big Society approach advocates a bottom-up approach to service delivery, which is more about allowing services to develop in a more fragmentary manner. This presents local authorities with a series of challenges that should be reconciled.

The LGiU’s Big Society Learning Network examined this particular issue in the February 2011 session. Delegates felt that these two approaches could work together, either by adopting:

1. **A parallel approach** in which some services are delivered through community budgeting and others through the Big Society; or

2. **A merged approach** in which:
   a) community engagement is included in a community budgeting approach; and
   b) a strategic view is taken of the Big Society

In either service delivery model, local authorities and communities will have to make decisions about which services should be considered for each approach to delivery and be clear about the outcomes.
To illustrate approach 1, it could be decided locally that flood defence, emergency planning and managed retreat are too big and specialised to be delivered using a Big Society approach and should come under a strategic community budgeting framework. On the other hand biodiversity data, tree planting and household flood repairs were activities that should be developed in a Big Society framework.

To illustrate approach 2, flood defence would be procured strategically but key decisions would be made by the affected community not local authority officers. The key decisions could range from cost of the scheme to aesthetic appearance. Conversely, bottom-up initiatives such as tree planting would demonstrate a fit with regional and local plans and follow good procurement practice.

Very similar distinctions were discussed at the workshops. There was broad support for approach 1 type strategies as some elements of adaptation to climate change are national or international in scope.

Approach 2 type strategies highlighted differences between local authority officers who have worked on regional and local strategies and community activists who questioned the relevance of these strategies and felt that civil service good practice constrained rather than improved. On the other hand local authority officers also questioned the ability of local communities or communities of interest to make informed decisions about big strategic projects when they may have views that only reflect their specific interests such as wildlife or a particular area in which they happen to live.
4. Assessment

There is no universal indicator of progress on adaptation to climate change. In the past there was a government indicator NI188 which encouraged the introduction of processes such as risk assessments, plans and strategic coordination across the local authority. While recognised as not being perfect it was felt by local government officers that it had helped raise the profile of adaptation and its absence reduces the argument for resources to tackle climate change. The interviews and workshops suggested that on the whole, community groups were unaware of the existence of NI188.

Coalition government policy is that local authorities should be accountable to their electorate and rather than picking which data to make available to people there should be a presumption to release as much data as possible and allow the electorate to analyse it. In its purest form this might result in indigestible tracts of numbers and symbols but data that is categorised and explained should become useful information.

The Adaptation Sub-Committee of the government’s Committee on Climate Change has suggested that there are five priority areas\(^5\) that the UK should concentrate on based upon an assessment of actions that result in immediate and future benefits, and have long lasting consequences. These are:

- land use planning
- national infrastructure
- buildings
- natural resources
- emergency planning.

Local government is a major contributor to the successful delivery of all of these actions and so it seems that the five priority areas could provide the focus needed for a new way of assessing progress towards adaptation by local authorities. They enable relatively simple questions to be asked by communities, for example:

- Does our local authority’s plan allow development on the floodplain?

- Is the local authority encouraging and/or constructing buildings that are resilient to climate change?

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Is the local authority working hard to ensure that we conserve water and keep flow in the local river?

What will the emergency services do when there’s a heatwave?

How much is being spent on preventing the impacts of heatwaves?

The local authority itself and central government may have different questions such as who is responsible for ensuring the local plan integrates climate change.

The main point is that the assessor decides the criteria, the local authority should work to understand what questions they may ask and present the data in a format that enables them to find an answer. Responsibility for the success of an assessment framework should be shared by the local authority and the community so the community might have to accept a focus on the five priority areas and appreciate that if the data is widely available they can access it without having to ask the local authority. In the fullness of time the community may well be the group that is actually generating and managing the data. Conversely, the local authority should accept that the information they provide reflects the needs of the community, not the needs of the local authority.

What this thinking gives is a series of actions for local authorities.

1. Collaboratively identify the questions that the community want to ask of the local authority to assess progress.

2. Agree the priority areas for adaptation with the local community.

3. Develop ways of presenting data that helps the community to analyse it and make sound judgements.

4. Encourage central government to use the same data rather than request new information, unless absolutely necessary.

5. Encourage the community to supplement the data to make it more useful.

This approach is also backed up by the Barings Trust which worked with four charities (British Red Cross, Equinox Care, Friends of the Elderly and the Royal National Institute of Blind People). It found that they got the greatest buy-in to climate change when they examined its effect on their beneficiaries and built their strategy around them.

Terena Plowright of the Greening Campaign agrees that communities should be equal partners in deciding on action and therefore assessment. The Greening Campaign advocates the development of local plans. In the Manchester workshop there was an interesting discussion about the relative importance of plans developed by local school children as opposed to plans developed by RDAs and local authorities. In particular, local groups prioritise actions in different ways. Local groups are unlikely to use risk assessment or cost benefit analysis, but more opinion driven views of what is locally important. At the visit to Broadway East school (see case study on page 13) it became clear that the ordering of sunshades, adaptation gardens and playground gazebos had very little to do with regional adaptation strategies and more to do with the enthusiasm of teachers, children and parents plus a bit of serendipity.
Alex Hunt from the National Trust admits that the National Trust doesn’t have agreed measures for adaptation and is stuck between measuring processes, outputs and outcomes. He does think that a peer review network could work as it will help capture and assess qualitative and quantitative information.

Carlo Laurenzi from London Wildlife Trust suggests the use of stakeholder mapping to identify interested parties in the community. Carlo also suggests the use of futures techniques to help people understand the issues as they develop.

The Bristol workshop suggested that street wardens could monitor progress on adaptation. The Newcastle workshop wondered whether there would be an appetite for evaluation of Big Society projects and linked this to the need for formal contracts that will have to be negotiated if taxpayers money is being spent.

At the Manchester workshop the use of risk and accounting methods to evaluate schemes and to judge progress was discussed. These were seen as necessary evils by local authority officers and it was acknowledged that they have little resonance with civil society groups.

Developing Big Society practice into an assessment framework

The development of NI188 highlighted how difficult it is to measure climate change adaptation. There is no simple indicator such as carbon emissions and resilience is dependent a host of local contextual variables such as employment, geography and local politics.

NI188 focused upon actions that could be taken by local authorities. Any subsequent assessment framework should focus more on outcomes and include organisations and people beyond the local authority.

By taking the suggestions from the interviews and workshops it is possible to see how the progression towards a Big Society can be described in general terms. In Table 4 this progression towards the Big Society is ranked ‘1 to 10’ with ‘1’ being a government led approach and ‘10’ illustrating the Big Society approach.

Table 4 is a suggested Big Society and adaptation to climate change generic overview. Table 4 was intended to be a prompt to develop good practice. However, it is possible that it can be used as some form of assessment. Any use for assessment would have to conform with the suggested assessment methodology in this paper ie agreed with communities not imposed upon them.

Graph 5 shows how the same information can be represented in a spider diagram. Spider diagrams have the advantage of showing progress in variables that may or may not be related to each other. A similar approach was taken by the Young Foundation when they developed their community wellbeing and resilience indicator.

In order to rank progress a council could make Table 4 available to communities in their area and ask them to assess the progress it’s making toward the Big Society. The scores on Graph 5 would be the average ranking given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Decentralisation</th>
<th>Transparency</th>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Philanthropy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Government decides priorities and allocates resources</td>
<td>Government own all data on climate change</td>
<td>Government fund programmes and projects</td>
<td>National volunteering schemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local authority decides priorities and allocates resources</td>
<td>Local authorities own data on local climate change</td>
<td>Local authorities fund programmes and projects</td>
<td>Local volunteering scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Partnership working led by the local authority</td>
<td>Local authorities make data widely available</td>
<td>Developer contributions (S106 or CIL asset transfer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Partnership working with local authorities, private sector and CSOs working together</td>
<td>Local authorities open up decision-making</td>
<td>Regeneration funding directed to adaptation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Partnership working led by the community</td>
<td>CSOs contribute data to local authorities</td>
<td>Bidding to funds by individual CSOs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bidding to funds by collectives of CSOs or communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Local authority adaptation service outsourced</td>
<td>CSOs own data and share it with local authorities</td>
<td>Sponsorship of CSOs or community projects</td>
<td>Corporate philanthropy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CSOs develop and control their own capacity and resources</td>
<td>CSOs own data and share it widely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>CSOs fully involved in decision-making</td>
<td>CSO, private sector and local authority data is combined and shared widely</td>
<td>New instruments such as Social Impact Bonds, Tax Increment Financing or Payment by Results</td>
<td>Individuals purchase bonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>CSOs deliver community priorities</td>
<td>CSO and local authority data is available in an interactive format enabling communities to use and contribute</td>
<td>Semi financial schemes which use vouchers or time incentives</td>
<td>Widespread volunteering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Communities work independently to add to the adaptation of their communities</td>
<td>CSOs and communities use data to decide actions and deliver solutions independent of local authority</td>
<td>Valuing ecosystem services and capturing that value</td>
<td>Donations gathered in the community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If tables are generated for each of the Adaptation Sub-Committee five priority areas in a locality they too can be represented together in a spider diagram, see Graph 6. It would also be possible to compare progress across different climate change impacts or local authority service areas.

Graph 6: Progress across five priority areas in a particular area

Table 5 on the next page is an illustration of how the generic rankings could be interpreted for a particular adaptation topic, in this case flooding.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Decentralisation</th>
<th>Transparency</th>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Philanthropy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Government decides priorities</td>
<td>Government own flood defence data</td>
<td>Government fund flood defence projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local authority decides priorities</td>
<td>Local authorities own local flood defence data</td>
<td>Local authorities fund flood defence projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Local authority convenes key stakeholders for flood defence work</td>
<td>Local authorities publish flood defence data including spend on their website</td>
<td>Developers contribute to SUDS and transfer those assets to the local community or the private sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The local authority, private sector and CSOs meet to discuss flood defence priorities</td>
<td>Local authorities allow CSOs and the community to have a say on flooding decisions</td>
<td>Regeneration funding directed to flood defence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The CSOs propose a plan for local flood defence</td>
<td>CSOs contribute data to local authority on hyper local flood defence problems</td>
<td>Funds are available to community groups to support information gathering, and convene experts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Local authority officers are seconded to the local flood defence group</td>
<td>The local community builds a database of local flood risks and shares it with local authorities</td>
<td>Community groups act together in a catchment to accumulate funds to support their work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The local flood defence group forms containing expertise and resources</td>
<td>The local community builds a database of local flood risks and shares it widely</td>
<td>Sponsorship of flood protection scheme by water company</td>
<td>Water company donates staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The local flood defence group leads the local debate about the type and nature of defences</td>
<td>The community website pulls together all the relevant data on flooding in an area</td>
<td>Tax increment financing is used by the local authority to release funds to the flood defence scheme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The local flood defence group engages contractors to build flood defences</td>
<td>Experts and enthusiasts in the community are able to add data to the website</td>
<td>CSOs and the insurance industry develop a voucher incentive scheme to encourage take up of insurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Community groups decide to improve local flood defences and work to clear ditches</td>
<td>The community website becomes the main resource for decision-making on flood defence</td>
<td>The value of the flood defence provided by local water meadows is factored into the cost benefit</td>
<td>Donations gathered in the community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. A broad framework for climate change adaptation and the Big Society

Given the uncertain and contextual characteristics of both the Big Society and climate change adaptation it would not be appropriate to suggest a rigid framework or process of local policy development. However, this research has identified the main variables and the way that they relate to each other in a way that helps to decide a strategy or plan.

There are some key themes that have emerged from the research and should be integrated into a framework. These are:

- communities should be properly engaged
- the long term and uncertain nature of climate change should be accommodated
- there will need to be significant innovation and capacity building.

Consequently, the suggested framework poses the questions a community and their local authority could ask as they formulate a plan and identifies techniques already in use but does not prescribe a method to follow.

What are the local challenges and opportunities presented by climate change adaptation and the Big Society?

A local community could identify what the local impacts of climate change might be probably building on the work of the local authority but also using local knowledge. The local authority or Council for Voluntary Services will have information on existing community groups.

- Climate change risk assessment
- Local adaptation plans
- Audit of Big Society groups
- PACT
- LCLIP

What is the community or council trying to achieve?

A community could convene town hall meetings to develop a plan or vision.

- Visioning
Community planning approaches
Decentralisation/transparency/finance/philanthropy mapping

What approach is most likely to deliver results in the locality?

The community could focus on vulnerable groups, impacts, geographical areas or affected services. How these approaches are chosen and relate to each other will have a big impact on projects and plans.

Community forums
Ward budgets
Councillor surgeries
Marginal Adaptation Cost Curve

How should the community organise itself?

A combination of capacity, accountability, decision-making and resources will inform the choice of business model.

Community interest company
Limited company
Charity
Trust
Coop or other mutual

How will the community deliver the actions?

Community groups will have to decide who does the work, when and where.

Skills audit
Project planning
Human resource strategy

How does the community know if it has been successful?

The community will develop an assessment regime that enables them to judge their progress and if necessary communicate progress to third parties.

Existing toolkits

During the course of the research five existing toolkits were identified.

Greening Campaign
Norfolk County Council
Climate Change Local Area Support Programme (CLASP)
Care
Adaptation Scotland workbook
Greening Campaign

The Greening Campaign is a UK based not-for-profit organisation that ‘hand-holds’ communities through a series of phases to teach them about how they can apply ‘Mitigation’ and ‘Adaptation’ around climate change to their own area. The Greening Campaign has now been trialled in over 200 communities.

The Community Adaptation Toolkit has been written as part of The Greening Campaign three phased programme and is particularly effective in getting the community involved.

The Community Adaptation Toolkit consists of a central or core process from which stem the specialist areas of research (Strands) such as: infrastructure, wildlife, water, buildings, community resilience, etc. Each strand looks at the impact of weather on their specialist area and then looks to the future impacts from a different climate.

Participants use the information from their community and their own local knowledge to support the research. The ‘strands’ then present their findings to the whole community and to each other at several events throughout the process – this allows others to comment and also allows the strands to cross-fertilise. Each strand has a booklet to support the research and an area on a website that links them to up-to-date reports and information.

The Information Packs hold direction on the entire process from start to finish and include guidance on running events, gathering and processing information, research information, decision-making, writing the plan, making sure action is taken after the plan has been written.

The toolkit uses the experience gained by the Greening Campaign from working with over 200 communities from across the UK on climate change mitigation, which has a very good record for community engagement. This has allowed the toolkit to be developed with experience underpinning the process rather than desktop study.

The Three Phases of the Greening Campaign are:

Phase 1 – Community Engagement
Phase 2 – Project work eg Community Energy
Phase 3 – Community Adaptation Toolkit

The Greening Campaign has worked alongside several councils in the trial to make sure that the Campaign is able to report and combine results and research with government structures and policy.

The websites are:

www.greening-campaign.co.uk, which will link through to www.greening-adaptation-toolkit.co.uk (this is a support site to run alongside the toolkit).
Norfolk County Council

The Climate Adaptation Tool (CAT) – developed by the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership and promoted by Norfolk County Council as the UK’s first practical tool designed to guide organisations through the full process of adapting to climate change is in two parts: an Excel spreadsheet entitled Climate Adaptation Tool © 2010 and the accompanying PDF guidance entitled Climate Adaptation Tool guidance © 2010.

CAT includes:

- climate change risk assessment framework for identifying, inputting and prioritising climate change risks
- adaptive decision-making framework for identifying and evaluating adaptation options
- cost benefit analysis framework for examining the business case for adaptation options
- review framework to audit adaptive options that are implemented.

CLASP Toolkit

CLASP have supported a new toolkit entitled Engaging Community Groups in Climate Change Adaptation (ECGCCA), its aim is to help engage community groups in climate change adaptation. The resource includes everything from presentations explaining the term “green infrastructure” to a game where participants develop a solid understanding of the difference between climate change adaptation and mitigation, a pledge of action after the training session motivates trainees to consider their own impact on their local environment in their daily lives.

The pack is made up of a training resource which helps groups to explore how street trees, private gardens, school grounds and other green spaces can help us cope with some of the challenges – and enjoy some of the benefits – that climate change may bring. The pack includes:

- packs of materials, images, games
- presentations
- full guidance notes
- planning toolkits
- site visit suggestions

The pack is intended to be used with or by “Friends Of” groups, resident associations, primary and secondary school groups, faith and low carbon community groups.

7 http://www.greeninfrastructurenw.co.uk/climatechange/training.htm
Care Community Adaptation Toolkit

Project context

- Describe the current climate hazards (events and conditions) affecting the target area. This could be floods, droughts, changing rainfall patterns or cyclones.
- Describe the changing trends in climate hazards that are being observed or predicted for the target area.
- Identify social or economic groups within the community that may be particularly vulnerable to climate change. Consider issues of gender and marginalisation, as well as reliance on agriculture for livelihoods, etc.
- Describe how current climate hazards affect livelihoods of different groups, and how this will change in the future based on climate change scenarios.
- Identify the policies and institutions which have the most impact in terms of facilitating or constraining adaptation.

Basic project description

- Establish a goal which focuses on reducing the vulnerability of the target population to climate change.
- Identify project objectives that respond to climate-related challenges identified in the problem analysis.
- Ensure that project expected results address the underlying causes of vulnerability, including gender and marginalisation.

Project design process

- Describe the analytical process that will lead to the design of the project. Note in particular the information sources and any participation of project stakeholders in undertaking and/or validating the analysis.
- Include detailed and participatory analysis of vulnerability to climate change for different groups as an inception activity. This should include analysis of relevant policies and institutions.

Information and knowledge management

- Note that the project will incorporate a strategy for building knowledge of staff, partners and target stakeholders on vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.
The Adaptation Scotland Climate Change Adaptation workbook provides a step-by-step approach to developing a planned response to the threats and opportunities presented by climate change.

The workbook is divided into five phases of work, each of which includes relevant worksheets and practical exercises. The workbook is not intended to be prescriptive, and is aimed primarily at organisations but Phase 4 concentrates on communities.

Phase 1: Getting started

The first phase involves learning about the key principles of adaptation, and the value of developing a network of contacts.

Phase 2: Investigating the impacts of climate change

The second phase develops an in depth understanding of the impacts of climate change. A key element of this investigation will involve undertaking vulnerability assessment and / or risk assessment work.

Phase 3: Developing a planned approach to adaptation

The third phase involves using information generated by investigations carried out in Phase 2 to develop a planned approach to adaptation.

Phase 4: Implementing adaptation actions

In the fourth phase, organisations will start to implement a planned approach to adaptation. The worksheet provides guidance on community engagement using examples from Highland Council and Perth and Kinross and an emphasis on building adaptive capacity.

Phase 5: Monitoring and reviewing adaptation work

Adaptation Scotland has produced an excel spreadsheet with templates and worked examples of tables suggested for use throughout the workbook.

Policy implications for government

Inevitably, there will be a call for financial resources to support climate change adaptation and the Big Society. While there will be a place for traditional funding streams the reality will be the encouragement of new financial mechanisms. In particular, government could explore:

- loans to help with capital costs
- identification of future costs that can be avoided by Big Society action and therefore used to reward communities
- freeing up restrictions on communities’ ability to borrow or take over assets.

While government and local authorities are central to the delivery of the Big Society there are circumstances where procedures can obstruct local innovation. Government could examine:

- services provided by local authorities that could be provided by communities
- facilitating new partnerships
- developing local services that support Big Society groups.

One of the criticisms of climate change adaptation policy is that it is poorly connected to mitigation policy and does not use the language that CSOs would use nor does it use the language of other government departments. So government could:

- improve coordination between mitigation and adaptation in Whitehall
- interpret adaptation for other government departments
- communicate adaptation in the language used by CSOs
- explore policies which join adaptation and mitigation financially
- explore policies that join adaptation to delivery of frontline services such as health and education.

Both climate change adaptation and Big Society are new areas and will require communities to take as well as manage risks. It would be helpful if government were to recognise the efforts of communities. This could mean:

- allowing greater freedoms to more resilient communities
- recognition on websites or awards or prizes.

New technology is expected to provide the ‘killer apps’ that will make the Big Society happen. Government could encourage entrepreneurs to consider how social media, user-generated content and other features of web 3.0 could be used.