

Case Study

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council partner with local schools to reduce carbon usage by 30%



Collaborative Low Carbon Schools Service

The pilot Collaborative Low Carbon Schools service in Solihull is on target to save £65,000 per annum.

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's 80 schools spend £3.27million on their energy costs each year and contribute to 72% of carbon emissions from the council's estate.

The council has aspirations to reduce their overall carbon usage by 30% and partnered with the Carbon Trust for the pilot Collaborative Low Carbon Schools Service in 2011/12 to reduce these carbon emissions and energy spend.

CLCSS

This year-long programme enables local authorities and schools to work together to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.

The Carbon Trust provide the framework, training, workshops and guidance documents to help local authorities engage and train their schools to make practical, quick and easy carbon savings.

The service covers seven key steps to effective school Carbon Management, while offering a flexible approach so that authorities can set and achieve their own goals for carbon reduction. Working initially with a number of pilot schools, the results of this work are extrapolated via Carbon Trust tools to create the figures behind a robust delivery plan, finalised by the

participating local authority. The final plan builds a compelling business case for investment as well as a roadmap to achieving these savings.

At the end of the year, local authorities have made significant savings in the schools far beyond the cost of taking part in the programme, they are also armed with the knowledge, tools and framework to deliver these and have analysed the potential to roll the programme out to the entire school stock.

The Solihull experience

A total of 13 schools, a mixture of primary and secondary schools, participated in the pilot and are now on track to save an average of 24% on energy bills, the majority of which will come from no cost measures. When rolled out to the entire borough Solihull Council could save as much as 3,812 tonnes CO₂ and £648,009 each year.

Framework

Although Solihull already had a schools service in place they found the CLCSS framework to be the perfect tool to drive project forwards – particularly the early focus on engagement, communication and senior level buy in.

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I welcome this initiative from the Carbon Trust. Improving energy efficiency in England's schools could save millions of pounds while reducing carbon emissions which contribute to climate change. Through this programme, local authorities and schools can work together on practical ways to save energy”

Lord Hill of Oareford CBE,
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
for Schools

Quick savings

Achieving financial savings early in the process assists participants to gain senior buy-in within their schools which is essential for the success of the programme. These quick-win savings are action approach was also a great incentive for schools participating in the programme and are reinforced by ongoing savings.

Building relationships

Throughout the 10-month programme staff from the Council and schools developed a team approach to their carbon management. The close knit, cross divisional approach has ensured the success of their work and it is a model that is now being embedded in the Council's work with the entire school and corporate estate.

Materials and support

The CLCSS programme materials are aimed at all level of participant and are of great benefit to both the Local Authority and school participants. In Solihull the materials built on the skills and experience of the boroughs already knowledgeable team and ensured all participants were at a similar level of experience.

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The CLCSS programme was timely and extremely helpful to Solihull in enabling us to develop a framework of support for our schools. Having a dedicated Carbon Trust advisor on hand to provide that professional input was invaluable to help take the project forwards and in the right direction to achieving our ambitious targets”

Cllr Ian Courts
Cabinet Member for Economic Development,
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Sharman's Cross Junior School

Participating in the pilot programme in 2010 Sharman's Cross Junior School has developed a whole school carbon engagement programme. Dedicated staff and students work together on the Eco-Committee undertaking behaviour change and stakeholder engagement activities.

Using guidance documents from the Carbon Trust and light meters the committee completed a survey of the schools lighting to identify excessive levels of illumination. Following Carbon Trust guidance and encompassing a strategy of labelling switches, bulb removals and

in some instances rewiring lights, the school was able to significantly reduce lighting related energy consumption.

The Eco-committee also monitor IT use in breaks and lunchtimes and award Eco points for good behaviour. Progress is monitored weekly and prizes are awarded each term for the best class. With savings achieved around 25% from these measures alone, the school demonstrates what can be achieved.

Collaborative Low Carbon Schools Service

Information about the Carbon Trust's Collaborative Low Carbon Schools Service please email publicsector@carbontrust.co.uk or visit the [Carbon Trust website](#).

“
We have enlisted the hearts and minds of the staff and children and hopefully impacted upon behaviours that may well yet save the planet!”

Gemma Carter,
Outdoor Learning and Eco Schools
