

# 8. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Communities are banding together to green their own areas. Projects include food growing, renewable energy generation and travel initiatives. In many cases, a bit of support from the local authority is all that's needed to kick off a community project and help it attract external funding.

## Local authorities and council members can:

- Find out which community groups are actively working on sustainable living projects in their locality: talk to them to find out what type of support might be useful
- Provide letters of support, or act as a guarantor or accountable body for funding applications
- Help to build the capacity of the organisation by assisting with specific issues, such as funding bids or contacts
- Help to raise the profile of the activity of the group and provide visible backing from a reputable organisation
- Include sustainability requirements and support of the local sector in procurement of programmes, products and commissioned services

## SUSTAIN EDEN



Sustain Eden is helping residents of Penrith and Eden to tackle climate change and make greener choices. Participants can get involved in learning about energy efficiency, renewable energy projects, woodland management, food growing, building local flood resilience and active travel. The scheme also supports residents in fuel poverty and has set up an electric bike network. Local authority support was essential in developing the initial project and bidding for funding, but the programme is led by Cumbria Action for Sustainability, working with a host of community groups, partners and individuals. It was funded through Big Lottery's Communities Living Sustainably Fund.

[www.cafs.org.uk/projects/sustaineden](http://www.cafs.org.uk/projects/sustaineden)

## L8 LIVING SUSTAINABLY

L8 is an initiative in Toxteth, Liverpool to promote local food growing, energy generation and to educate people on the impact of climate change and the measures they can take to improve their lives. It focuses on two areas with high levels of welfare dependency, high unemployment and low educational attainment. The projects include a Patchwork Urban Farm, a Neighbourhood Power Station, and promotion of home energy efficiency measures. It is led by Granby Toxteth Development Trust, a community anchor organisation. Liverpool Vision, Liverpool City Council's economic development company, is one of the project partners.

[www.l8ls.co.uk](http://www.l8ls.co.uk)

## CARBON CO-OP

Established in 2008, the Carbon Co-op is a group of Greater Manchester residents who began by making changes in their own houses and communities. They support residents to improve the energy performance of their homes, providing advice based on local knowledge and evidence of what works, and cheaper energy improvements based on group purchasing.

The not-for-profit co-operative teamed up with Greater Manchester authorities and a local sustainable design consultancy to access the Green Deal Communities Fund. This project is retro-fitting twelve private homes to achieve an 80% reduction in carbon emissions and demonstrate the methods suitable for local homes.

[www.carbon.coop](http://www.carbon.coop)



## FURTHER READING & SUPPORT

### Communities Living Sustainably:

<http://www.communitieslivingsustainably.org.uk/>

### Transition Network:

[www.transitionnetwork.org](http://www.transitionnetwork.org)

### Green Deal Communities:

[www.gov.uk/local-authorities-and-the-green-deal](http://www.gov.uk/local-authorities-and-the-green-deal)

## COST-EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY

Local authorities across the UK and abroad are proving that taking a sustainable approach to their operations and services delivers multiple benefits, such as improved performance, lower costs and better outcomes for their communities.

Climate change or sustainability themes are embedded in national policy and appear in different guises and services areas. Recent changes have threatened to push climate change, carbon reduction and sustainability off the priority list, as authorities handle the cuts agenda, tackle public sector reform and fight to deliver critical services with fewer resources. But actively addressing sustainability in corporate plans supports cost-effective service delivery – it is not just a “nice to have” that can be discarded when budgets are tight.

This series of briefings demonstrates how many local authorities are benefitting from actively considering sustainability in their operations and services:



1. Save Carbon – Save Money	6. Transport Infrastructure
2. Generating Energy and Income	7. Economic Development
3. Decent Affordable Housing, Health & Fuel Poverty	8. Supporting Communities
4. Improving Public Health	9. Reducing Risks
5. Travel Choices	



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