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CLASP is the sector-led (NW focussed) public sector sustainability support programme, funded by the Environment Agency and NWIEP, and currently hosted by Liverpool City Council.

WELCOME

Welcome to an additional March edition of the CLASP bulletin.

In this digest we've summarised some key announcements from Wednesday's budget, plus the new Fuel Poverty Strategy and other recent developments. The digest includes:

- [DECC Budget Announcements](#)
- [Flood Defence Budget Announcements](#)
- [A Way Forward for SUDS?](#)
- [New Fuel Poverty Strategy](#)
- [Funding Results: HNDU, EDR](#)
- [GDHIF Re-opens](#)
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We'll be back in touch before the end of the month with a very important mailing to update you on the future of CLASP's services.

DECC BUDGET ANNOUNCEMENTS

The main DECC announcements in this week's budget include:

- **Building on the commitment to help vulnerable consumers, £1.3 million of funding will be allocated to run another year of the Big Energy Saving Network and Big Energy Saving Week Programmes.**
- Tidal lagoon energy could provide up to 8% of the UK's electricity and the Government is keen to explore its potential. As such they plan to enter into the first phase of bilateral negotiations on a Contract for Difference for Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon.
- £20 million of new funding will be used to support collaborative industry geoscience that will improve geological understanding of the UK Continental Shelf.
- To help reduce electricity bills DECC will introduce competitive tendering for onshore transmission assets. This could reduce the cost of building transmission assets by up to 12%. This in turn should see lower costs being passed onto consumers and will help to drive down energy bills.
- The National Grid and their Belgian counterpart have agreed to build a new 1GW electricity interconnector between the two countries. This will be operational by the end of 2018 and all costs will be met by the developers.
- Government will launch a consultation on lowering distribution network costs in the North of Scotland to ensure consumers are paying no more for electricity distribution than consumers in the next most expensive distribution area (North of Wales and Merseyside).

More info at: <http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDECC/bulletins/f71768>

A round up of built environment measures announced in this weeks budget include:

- A consultation into the compulsory purchase regime to make it clearer, faster and fairer for all parties.
- Two new enterprise zones to be created at Blackpool and Plymouth with the expansion of existing enterprise zones at Mersey Waters, MIRA, Humber, Manchester, Tees Valley (Prairie) and Oxford Science Vale.
- A new Help to Buy ISA to help first time buyers save for a deposit on their first home with contributions from the Government.
- Pilot schemes in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and in Greater Manchester and East Cheshire from 1 April 2015 to retain 100 per cent of any additional growth in business rates above expected forecasts.
- Transport for the North will shortly publish an interim report, committing to build on the concept of HS3 to development a network of high quality rail connections across the north.

A round up of wider budget announcements is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/budget-measures-will-deliver-thousands-of-homes-and-jobs>

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/briefing-room/news-releases/2015/march/budget-2015-crucial-that-we-begin-to-invest-again-in-local-planning/>

<http://neweconomymanchester.com/stories/1764>

FLOODING, RESILIENCE & SUDS

Flood Defence Budget Announcements

The Government is bringing forward more than £140 million of the £2.3 billion six-year flood defence programme announced in December to better protect more than 31,000 homes and businesses from flooding.

Within the North West more than £16 million is being brought forward to protect more than 2,700 homes. Two flood defence projects, as part of the long-term investment programme, will start earlier than previously announced:

- The development of Fairhaven and Church Scar coast protection programme has been brought forward by three years to ensure that around 2,100 homes are better protected from flooding.
- The development of the scheme at Broadgate and Lower Penwortham in Preston has been brought forward by a year and will protect 2,900 homes, of which around 600 are planned to be better protected by 2021.

More info at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/earlier-flood-protection-for-thousands-of-homes-in-the-north-west>

RICS View on Flooding

The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) has published an information paper which describes the nature of the current flood risk problem, the consequences of that risk and how a residential practitioner may take these into consideration when providing residential survey and valuation services.

You can find it at: <http://www.isurv.com/site/scripts/download.aspx?type=downloads&fileID=6437>

The following two articles are taken from UKCIP's latest news bulletin. You can sign up for it at:

<http://www.ukcip.org.uk/news/subscribe-eneews/>

A Way Forward on the Use of Sustainable Drainage Systems?

The Adaptation Sub Committee (ASC) of the Committee on Climate Change has outlined three proposals in an attempt to resolve its disagreement with the Government on increasing the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). In a firmly-worded letter to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the ASC suggests: Withdrawal of the automatic right of developers to connect to public sewers; making Lead Local Flood Authorities and water companies statutory consultees on new development; and, monitoring and evaluating the uptake of SuDS in new development.

- Committee on Climate Change: [Letter to Rt. Hon Liz Truss MP](#)
- Committee on Climate Change: [Consultation on delivering Sustainable Drainage Systems](#)

Adaptation Sub-Committee Recommends Improvements to Flood Re Scheme

The ASC has also been busy advising the incoming Chief Executive of Flood Re on improvements to the proposed insurance scheme. Flood Re aims to offer affordable insurance for existing homes at risk of flooding, but the proposed strategy remains the subject of criticism, some of it from the ASC. A letter from the ASC's Chair, Lord Krebs, reiterates five recommendations which were put to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in 2013. These include encouraging flood risk reduction actions and better targeting of Flood Re at the most vulnerable households.

- Committee on Climate Change: [Designing Flood Re to encourage flood risk reduction](#)

NEW FUEL POVERTY STRATEGY

The 3rd March saw the long awaited launch of the UK's new Fuel Poverty Strategy. The publication follows legislation which requires future governments to improve the properties of people in fuel poverty in England to a minimum energy efficiency standard by 2030.

A £3m funding package was announced for pilot schemes designed to tackle fuel poverty, including £1m released immediately for "warmth-on-prescription" projects, and £2m to follow for other pilots.

Under the Low Income High Cost (LIHC) definition a household is considered to be fuel poor where:

- They have required fuel costs that are above the national median level.
- Were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

Key points include:

- New regulations from April 2018 to ensure that private landlords cannot rent out energy inefficient properties (homes with Energy Performance ratings below 'E')
- Tackling the problem of fuel poverty in off gas grid properties with a new £25 million fund to help people install central heating systems for the first time

- Extending the ECO scheme to 2017, so that a further 500,000 properties will be made cheaper and easier to heat, building on the one million homes that ECO and the Green Deal have helped in the last 2 years

More info at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cutting-the-cost-of-keeping-warm>

National Energy Action (NEA) has responded to this with a call for an additional, long-term, funding stream to radically improve the energy efficiency of 2 million low income homes by 2020 and end the suffering caused by fuel poverty within 10 years.

This investment would complement current domestic energy efficiency schemes and should prioritise poor housing, occupied by low income vulnerable households in deprived communities. NEA is backing the use of infrastructure funds, VAT on energy bills, and carbon taxes to pay for the additional investment.

NEA has provided further details of what it hopes to see from the next Government within its Manifesto for Warmth which can be found at www.nea.org.uk/manifesto

ENERGY UPDATES

EDR Pilots Awarded

5 local authorities were successful in bidding for funding through DECC's Electricity Demand Reduction (EDR) pilot scheme in January, which allocated £1.28m in total to 22 projects across 18 organisations. 2 of the 5 authorities are from the North West (Cheshire West and Chester Council and Halton Borough Council). It is noticeable that all of the successful bids are for lighting projects.

You can find out more at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/organisations-benefit-from-uks-first-ever-auction-to-reduce-demand-on-electricity>

HNDU Funding Announced

The local authorities successful in accessing funding from Round 4 of the Heat Networks Delivery Unit Funding Stream have just been announced. The latest round includes Bolton, Cheshire East, Eden and Salford. The full information of awards from all rounds can be downloaded from : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heat-networks-funding-stream-application-and-guidance-pack> There are no further open rounds at the moment.

Ofgem Consults on Non-traditional Business Models

Ofgem (the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) have recently published a discussion paper on 'Non-traditional business models: Supporting transformative change in the energy market'. It is online at: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/non-traditional-business-models-supporting-transformative-change-energy-market>

The discussion paper has been published in the wake of a wave of new entrants to the energy market with many of these entrants offering new products or services to consumers. They are diverse, with a range of motivations and characteristics, but many have the potential to challenge traditional energy market arrangements.

Please send your response to this consultation, including any attachments, to: Jeffrey Hardy sustainable.energy@ofgem.gov.uk or by calling 0207 901 7111

GDHIF 3rd Round Opens

The third release of the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund (GDHIF) opened to applications on Monday 16th March 2015. Up to £70m is available in this round for either solid wall insulation and/or the “two measures” offer (two energy savings improvements from a specified list).

For more information please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/70-million-for-home-energy-efficiency-through-the-green-deal-home-improvement-fund-release-3>

EVENTS AND OTHER NEWS

DECC Announces Series of Roadshows on Heat Pumps

The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) today confirmed details of a series of free one-day training courses, designed to help potential heat pump customers in both the domestic and non-domestic sectors – such as businesses, developers and housing providers - understand how heat pumps can deliver lower energy costs, greater comfort and better buildings. The roadshows will offer people the chance to learn more about why heat pumps make sense, build their technical knowledge and understand the financing of heat pumps including unlocking the Renewable Heat Incentive.

The roadshows will be held on:

- Tuesday 16 June – London (non-domestic sector)
- Thursday 18 June – London (domestic sector)
- Tuesday 23 June – Glasgow (both)
- Wednesday 24 June – Newcastle (both)
- Wednesday 1 July – Exeter (both)
- Thursday 2 July – Cardiff (both)
- Tuesday 7 July – Manchester (both)
- Wednesday 8 July – Birmingham (both)

Places can be booked online at www.deccheatpumprtraining2015.eventbrite.co.uk or by calling 020 8469 1333. The roadshows are designed for potential heat pump customers, rather than installers or consultants. Priority will be given to target sectors when allocating places at each session.

Making Cities and Settlements Resilient and Sustainable

24th March
Manchester

A pilot test project of one of the new UN Sustainable Development Goals is currently underway. The goal being examined is the urban goal “Make Cities and Human Settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” and its proposed targets and indicators.

Greater Manchester is one of five international cities testing the goals, (the others are Gothenburg, Sweden/Kisumu, Kenya/Cape Town, South Africa/Bangalore, India).

A workshop is being held on Tuesday 24th March from 10.00am – 12.30pm (at the University of Salford) to introduce the project, agree the most important and relevant targets and indicators and co-design the pilot testing approach. If you would like to find out more about the project, or attend this workshop please contact louise@quantumst.co.uk

Free Interactive Webinars to Coincide with NHS Sustainability Day

26th March 2015

Three free interactive webinars on the latest developments in sustainable healthcare will cover:

- Recommendations and potential impacts of the Social Value Act following Lord Young's review.
- The development of sustainability strategies for 2015/16.
- Expert panel discussion on the role of partnerships in sustainable development.

The three sessions take place from 11.30 and each last one hour - you can register for as many of the webinars as you like. Click on the following link for more information: <http://walkerom.com/news/2/NHS-Sustainability-Day>

Carbon Co-op - Greater Manchester Open Eco-Home Weekend

28th/29th March

Greater Manchester

The weekend features bus tours and opportunities to visit a variety of eco-homes around the city region as well as workshops and a networking lunch at their retrofit 'hub'. Click on the following link to find out more and book a place: <http://carbon.coop/news/2015-03-11/carbon-co-op-greater-manchester-open-eco-home-weekend-spring-2015>

Global Carbon Emissions Remained Flat while Global Economy Grew in 2014

Data from the International Energy Agency (IEA) indicates that global emissions of carbon dioxide from the energy sector did not rise in 2014. This marks 2014 as the first time in 40 years where there was a halt or reduction in emissions of carbon emissions that was not tied to an economic downturn.

More info via SSN at: <http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/sustainable-scotland-network/news/global-carbon-emissions-remained-flat-while-global-economy-grew-in-2014/>

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