

# Tackling climate change

By **Jonathan Mackie**, Enterprise



If the road to salvation begins with acceptance that you have a problem, then we are already on route. Consensus that climate change is happening is widespread, even the most ardent of climate change sceptics would be hard

pressed to deny something is happening as the UK baked in Mediterranean sunshine during mid May, only two months after parts of Scotland were buried under un-seasonal snow.

Global action against climate change depends on countries like the UK taking a lead. The paradox is that tackling a global challenge will be achieved by local action. And action at a local level depends on Local Government promoting sustainable energy and climate change objectives.

Local Government's community leadership role means taking proactive steps to embed sustainable climate change objectives within their communities. That means reducing the carbon footprint of their own services and implementing initiatives that will achieve sustainability.

Organisations like Enterprise have an important role to play. We cannot be interested bystanders. If we are to be agents of the public sector then we need to bring forward initiatives and take actions to minimise the impact our delivery approaches have on climate change.

We have been proactive in minimising our impact on the environment. The services we provide; waste collection, street cleansing, road maintenance and the like are carbon intensive, but being frontline services they have the opportunity to adopt a leadership role, inspiring others to take positive steps to help tackle the causes of climate change.

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## **Good environmental management of service delivery does not have to compromise service quality**

We recently conducted a review of our waste collection round efficiency for one of our clients. We have been able to half the weekly mileage, saving 45 tonnes of carbon from each vehicle every year and extending the operational life of the vehicles. Some collection days were changed, but that minimal disruption is more than off-set by significant reductions in emissions.

Elsewhere, Enterprise has implemented a neighbourhood approach to service delivery. By combining all waste collection and street cleansing services we are able to complete a one-pass service, which is delivering real environmental benefits. Reductions in vehicle mileages have contributed to savings in carbon emission levels.

The way we collect waste also has an affect on climate change. More waste streams collected usually means more vehicles and higher emissions. We have been able to off-set that by smarter round designs and are looking to further address the impact of our services by neighbourhood energy recovery. Good environmental management of service delivery does not have to compromise service quality either. Our neighbourhood delivery model has helped raise public satisfaction levels, by making services more easily understood and accessible.

Local Government has a key role in tackling climate change. We are seeing more and more Councils look to embed climate change objectives into contractual terms, something that Enterprise warmly welcomes.

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