



communities regeneration sustainability

CAG Consultants E-News
October 2009, Edition 1

CAG News

Welcome to CAG’s inaugural ‘CAG News’! We hope to keep you up to date with interesting projects we are working on, topical news about the firm and forthcoming events. Happy reading...

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CAG Project Updates

1. Adapting to Climate Change in Liverpool

Climate change will bring new challenges for the City of Liverpool: the threat of more frequent flooding, storms and heatwaves, but also the prospect of outdoor lifestyles and tourism opportunities.

CAG Consultants is just starting the second phase of a project to help Liverpool City Council to assess potential risks and opportunities from climate change, supported by project partners AEA-Technology, Concept4Creative and Mud Island Marketing.

We are now helping council officers and partners to prepare detailed risk assessments and action plans across a number of council areas, including planning, infrastructure, environmental protection, green spaces, emergency planning, care services for older people and vulnerable adults, housing, neighbourhoods and corporate management.

Our stakeholder-led approach helps to develop ownership of the emerging adaptation action plans, and emphasises the importance of using the council's risk management and business planning processes to take these forward. With our support, Liverpool City Council hopes to reach Level 2 of the National Indicator 'Planning to Adapt to Climate Change' by March 2010.

For more about this project, please contact Dr Helen Chalmers on 01691 828 026 or at hc@cagconsult.co.uk.

2. Training for Planners in the South West - Planning Policy Statement 1 and Climate Change

Across the UK, local authority planners are dealing with new targets for renewable energy and sustainable buildings, getting to grips with the implications of emerging technologies and evolving government policies, including the forthcoming new Planning Policy Statement 1 on climate change. CAG Consultants have just been appointed by South West Councils to prepare training resources for planners on Planning Policy Statement 1.

This project will run in parallel with the AECOM consortium's work for South West Councils to prepare an online toolkit for planners, on sustainable energy and climate change adaptation. The training will be targeted at forward planning officers, development control officers and elected members involved in determining planning applications. It will be pitched at a range of levels, depending on participants' experience, and is likely to be made available online as well as through training workshops.

Please contact Mary Anderson on 01892 619070 or at ma@cagconsult.co.uk if you would like to know more about this project.

3. More sustainable waste planning

CAG is currently running the 'engagement' aspects of three large-scale waste planning processes - in North, South and West London. In each case a consortia of councils is developing a waste strategy to improve the way their boroughs deal with waste in future - specifically to deal with the waste stream more sustainably and minimise landfill.

In South London, for example, we have just finished running and reporting back on four 'drop in' sessions in Merton, Croydon, Sutton and Kingston where residents and other stakeholders looked at the proposed waste plan context, its policies and the considerable number of sites that have been identified as possible waste sites in future. Stakeholders were offered a number of different ways to give their feedback, including leaving 'stick on' notes on the policies and sites information panels, filling in a questionnaire and making video messages for the councils in a video booth.

This consultation process is the next stage after initial workshop style consultations run by CAG on "Issues and Options" last year. In North London, meanwhile, seven local authorities, Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest have joined forces to prepare the North London Waste Plan. In North London we are also currently running a series of seven consultation sessions in each of these boroughs to consult with people on the sites and policies for the plan. Similarly, in West London, a substantial round of consultation on possible waste sites will get underway in the next few months.

For more about any of these processes or our waste planning/consultation expertise more generally please contact Susan Parham on 020 7704 0018 or at sp@cagconsult.co.uk, or Gerard Couper on 01364 653003 or at gc@cagconsult.co.uk.

4. CAG's fuel poverty research nearing completion

Fuel poverty is a significant issue in the UK. A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if they need to spend more than 10% of their income on all fuel use whilst maintaining an adequate standard of warmth. The numbers fell to an estimated 4 million households by 2000, but are now rising significantly due to increases in energy costs. The [2007 figures](#) just released show a rise of almost 400,000 more households in fuel poverty in England.

CAG were commissioned by Consumer Focus Scotland to look at the way fuel poverty is addressed in the four UK countries. The research, which we are undertaking with Energy Action Scotland, is looking at two key issues:

- What are the reasons for the differences in fuel poverty rates between the four countries, and how much of this difference is due to differences in the way it is measured? Within the UK, rates vary from 34.2% in Northern Ireland to 11.1% in Wales;
- How well does the Scottish Government response compare to that of the other three countries?

The final report is currently being completed, and it will shortly be available. For further information please contact Gerard Couper on 01364 653003 or at gc@cagconsult.co.uk

5. Signposting sustainability through the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

Denny Gray from CAG has recently developed a briefing on sustainability in the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) that has been developed by the various public service inspectorates. The CAA is the new performance framework for local services, which started in April 2009, and sustainability is one of its underpinning themes. Denny is undertaking this briefing for the Improvement and Development Commission (IDeA) and the Audit Commission.

The briefing is aimed principally at local authority performance officers, although will also be useful for other officers, Members and Local Strategic Partnership partners. The briefing highlights how sustainability relates to the sub-themes in the CAA's area assessment, and includes 'prompts' to help local authorities and their partners to consider sustainability issues in the work they do.

You can find an online version of the briefing on the "Improvement Network's" website - a website which is sponsored by a number of bodies including the Audit Commission and the IDeA.

www.improvementnetwork.gov.uk/imp/core/page.do?pageId=1090833

It will also be available shortly as a PDF.

CAG Consultants News

1. Responding to the Needs of Faith Communities: Places of Worship

CAG Director, Dr Susan Parham, recently spoke at a London Civic Forum event on *Planning Places of Worship* where she discussed the findings of recent research carried out by CAG and associates LUC and Diverse Ethics for the GLA on planning for worship space needs in London.

Her keynote address was part of an event described by the Civic Forum as "to explore the problems experienced by non Judeo-Christian faiths and majority Black-Christian groups in London in relation to planning enforcement practices. This event looked at how the need for places of worship can be addressed by better planning policy and better policy implementation.

It also looked at what faith communities themselves can do to avoid these problems" (for a link to the event please see www.londoncivicforum.org.uk/events/archive-details/article/new-planning-places-of-worship-event/)

You might also be interested in reading CAG's recent reports on *Responding to the Needs of Faith Communities: Places of Worship* for the GLA, and *Faith Community Profile and Places of Worship Needs Assessment* for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. Both reports can be found by going to the link on our website: www.cagconsultants.co.uk/communities/stakeholder-involvement.html.

For more information about our work on faith planning and engagement please do contact Dr Susan Parham on 020 7704 0018 or at sp@cagconsult.co.uk

2. CAG Senior Consultant seconded to Department of Energy and Climate Change

We are very pleased to say that the expertise of CAG Senior Consultant, Denny Gray, has been reflected in his recent part-time secondment for six months to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC).

Denny is sharing his time between CAG and DECC where he is working as a senior adviser looking at the role local authorities might have in delivering the Government's new delivery model for heat and energy saving measures. In February 2009 the Government launched its consultation on long-term plans for heat and energy saving and later this year the Government will set out its strategy.

The Government's ambition is that by 2030 all homes will have undergone a 'whole house' package including all cost-effective energy saving measures, plus renewable and low-carbon heat and electricity measures as appropriate.

New CAG project

Carbon reduction strategy for Further Education

CAG has been commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council to develop a carbon reduction strategy for the Further Education sector. The project, which is being led by the Institute for Employment Studies, will establish carbon reduction targets for 2020 and 2050 and a strategy for meeting them.

The Government's Low Carbon Transition Plan explains, "every part of Government will need to drive the transition that is needed to live within the UK's carbon budgets". This project will help inform the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills' carbon reduction strategy and supports the Learning and Skills Councils commitment to sustainable development.

CAG will be leading the work with Further Education colleges and stakeholders to develop the strategy. For more information please contact Dr Helen Chalmers on 01691 828 026 or at hc@cagconsult.co.uk.

Recently published

Adapting to climate change: local areas action

The Local & Regional Adaptation Partnership Board have published a report by CAG Consultants which provides examples of how local authorities and their partners are adapting to climate change. The report draws on the experience of 27 local authorities and their partners across England who are preparing to adapt to climate change in line with National Indicator 188. The report highlights the importance of:

- Leadership;
- Raising awareness of climate change;
- Engaging people and working in partnership with others;
- Embedding climate change in decision-making;
- Resourcing action, and
- Delivering wider mitigation and sustainability benefits through adaptation action.

For more information please contact Dr Helen Chalmers on 01691 828 026 or at hc@cagconsult.co.uk.

And last but not least...

Public service regulation review

CAG has recently contributed to the Sustainable Development Commission's review of public service regulation. The review examined the degree to which the Audit Commission, Ofsted, and the Core Quality Commission are contributing to sustainable development. Senior Consultant Denny Gray provided CAG's advice and research for the review, which focused on the Audit Commission's contribution to sustainable development.

Subscription

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www.cagconsultants.co.uk/news/subscribe.html