

Case Study: Building capacity and collaboration on climate change in West Yorkshire for the Association of West Yorkshire Authorities

CAG Consultants designed, managed and facilitated the West Yorkshire Leadership Academy on Climate Change which laid the foundations for a cross-party statement on climate change.

The Leadership Academy, which was commissioned by the Association of West Yorkshire Authorities aimed to build the capacity of local government councillors to respond to the current and future implications of climate change. The project was part AWYA's West Yorkshire Capacity Building Project, which is funded through the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership for local government.

Councillors, officers and stakeholders from across the five West Yorkshire authorities (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield) took part in the Leadership Academy which was held between October and December 2008. The three sessions focused on the three National Performance indicators for climate change:

1. Community leadership on climate change (NI 186)
2. Reducing council's emissions (NI 185)
3. Adapting to climate change (NI 188)

With a focus on learning from, and collaborating with, other West Yorkshire councils, the three sessions combined short presentations from councillors and local experts, with small group workshop exercises and plenary discussions.

The sessions enabled councillors to hear the experience from other West Yorkshire authorities; discuss the priorities and practicalities that councils and councillors face in leading action on climate change; and identify opportunities for collaboration across West Yorkshire on action to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Commenting on the first session, one councillor said that it was a **"very useful session. For me, crucial challenge is to build, not just West Yorkshire co-operation, but the whole Leeds city region brand/concept, both amongst the partner authorities and across our wider communities"**. The outputs from the Academy will be used to develop a cross-party statement on tackling climate change across West Yorkshire.

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