



PRESS RELEASE

Green Careers Week: Local leaders call on Government to ‘end the mess’ of ‘disjointed’ green jobs and skills support — UK100 poll and briefing

For Immediate Release

- **New UK100 polling reveals climate-ambitious local authorities need more support to develop the skills necessary to deliver Net Zero**
- **The polling coincides with the release of UK100's new “Skills for Local Net Zero Delivery” insight briefing that identifies the practical and policy barriers to developing Net Zero skills locally**
- **UK100 is calling on the Government to create a Skills for Net Zero Framework in partnership with local authorities to “end the mess” of disjointed, short-term skills funding pots**
- **The briefing also highlights the importance of domestic energy efficiency upgrades amidst the energy and cost-of-living crises and calls for urgent support for developing vital energy efficiency skills**

As Green Careers Week draws to a close, a new poll reveals more than 96% of climate-ambitious local leaders see green jobs and skills as the key to unlocking Net Zero, but they need more support from the Government.

More than 9 in 10 (97%) local authority officials, leaders and councillors polled agreed that local skills development is a priority for delivering Net Zero.

Every respondent either strongly agreed (83%) or agreed (17%) that they need "more support from Government to unlock Net Zero jobs and skills in our region."

In response to the poll, one councillor from a metropolitan district council in the north of England said: "We need all Universities, businesses and government to do less talking and more action, legislation, funding and support if they are serious about Net Zero jobs and skills."

The poll of UK100 members — the UK's only network of local authorities committed to Net Zero and clean air — coincides with the release of a new UK100 *Skills for Local Net Zero Delivery* insight briefing.

The briefing — released during Green Careers Week — explores the barriers to developing the jobs and skills identified by local authorities as necessary for delivering on the UK's Net Zero goal.



Through interviews with local authority representatives from councils from **Brighton & Hove City Council** to the **West of England Combined Authority**, **trade unions**, and **BEIS** and **DEFRA**, the briefing explores the short-term and overlapping government schemes for skills development to identify gaps and opportunities.

In an interview for the briefing, Kate Kennally, Chief Executive of Cornwall Council, says: "Local authorities have a unique and powerful role in developing skills for Net Zero. We are best placed to coordinate collective action by local businesses, educators, and communities. We need policy, frameworks and funding that recognise this."

The main barriers identified by the briefing include:

- Lack of business confidence and employer demand for skills
- Limited, short term and competitive local authority funding
- Lack of funding for Further Education

Interviewed for the briefing, one UK100 member from a Combined Authority said: "Ensuring green skills are actively considered across different policy initiatives and work streams at local level is like stitching a patchwork quilt. Change must be driven by government, through policy, through long term funding, through procurement modelling."

In the briefing, UK100 sets out a series of recommendations for national government, including calls to:

- Develop a Skills for Net Zero Framework for delivery incorporating local and national action
- Embed a long-term funding for Skills for Net Zero into local authority funding settlements
- Introduce a national energy efficiency strategy led by local authorities

The final recommendation addresses one of the most significant gaps identified in the briefing; the lack of skills necessary to deliver an urgent programme of domestic energy efficiency upgrades.

UK100 is currently running an "[End the wait. Insulate.](#)" campaign calling for an urgent social housing energy efficiency strategy to tackle the energy and cost-of-living crises to reduce household bills while accelerating Net Zero action.

When asked whether local authorities would welcome "long-term, non-competitive support to help us upgrade the energy efficiency of our social housing stock," 8 in 10 respondents (83%) to the UK100 poll strongly agreed while almost 3 in 20 agreed (14%). Not one respondent disagreed.



Commenting on the energy efficiency polling question, one councillor from a Metropolitan District Borough in Yorkshire added: "We need to be so much more joined up on this from a local, regional, and especially national level. There are big skills gaps in the traditional trades which we need for new green housing and retrofit."

While an official from a Non-metropolitan district council in the East of England said: "The grant applications for retrofit are an industry in themselves. They want so much detail, and it requires the input of so much time from numerous people there is no time left to do our day job. I cannot imagine how many people are employed by BEIS to review these enormous applications. If we do not win any money, we will have spent at least six weeks full time work - which is a waste. Imagine what we could do to progress other projects with that time. They need to allocate funding, give sensible clear guidance, and then have an auditor to work with all the projects to ensure fraud is prevented and quality projects are delivered. The key message is: TRUST your local authorities."

Commenting on the polling and briefing, Polly Billington, UK100's Chief Executive, says: "This briefing makes it clear that there is an endemic problem in the way Net Zero jobs and skills support is made available to local authorities. Local leaders are ambitious. They want to innovate, and they want to speed up delivery on Net Zero which can create jobs, save residents money and support the local economy. But they're hamstrung by a patchwork of disjointed skills programmes that don't help them or the workforce deliver what is needed. And, as the polling shows, they're frustrated by the short-term, resource-heavy competitive funding projects available."

"The UK is in desperate need of a unified Skills for Net Zero Framework for delivery, developed by the Government in partnership with local leaders, that puts an end to the mess of short-term, overlapping and competing skills funding pots."

On energy efficiency, Polly adds: "At the same time, the polling shows ambitious local leaders are keen to deliver a nationwide energy efficiency drive to upgrade social housing properties in order to help support some of their most vulnerable communities through the energy and cost-of-living crises. We again call on the Government to end the wait and insulate."

UK100 will release a new *End the wait. Insulate. Social housing energy efficiency and the energy crisis* report next week, ahead of the Autumn Budget.

ENDS

More information: Liam Ward, UK100, liam.ward@uk100.org +44 (0)7456 554103

Information on the polling

UK100 sent our membership mailing list a [Google Form survey](#) consisting of the following questions:



I am a local authority...

Officer/official

Councillor/Leader/Cabinet member/Politician

I represent the following local authority...

[Enter local authority]

As a local authority, we see local skills development as a priority to enable us to deliver Net Zero.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

As a local authority, we need more support from Government to unlock Net Zero jobs and skills in our region.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

With green skills in mind, we would welcome long-term, non-competitive support to help us upgrade the energy efficiency of our social housing stock.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Any other comments?

[Insert comments]

At the time of going to press, 29 individuals had responded, 18 officers/officials and 11 Councillors/Leaders/Cabinet members/Politicians.

The full responses can be found in a spreadsheet [here](#).

UK100 has 105 local authority members.

About UK100

UK100 is a network of the most ambitious local leaders working towards Net Zero as soon as possible but no later than 2045. We help them collaborate to take decisive action in their communities.



Our members represent more than 37 million people in towns, cities and counties across the UK.

We facilitate knowledge-sharing between members, partnership-building and leadership mentoring. And support them to harness their collective power to affect vital national change.

Warm homes, affordable energy, clean air, and healthy landscapes make thriving communities.

And UK100 members have pledged to deliver a Net Zero future that delivers for people and planet.

[UK100.org](https://www.uk100.org)



UK100 members across the UK

