


CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE GROUP

# Unlocking Scotland's response to the climate emergency:

**4 immediate actions to fast-track  
delivery for the Scottish Government**

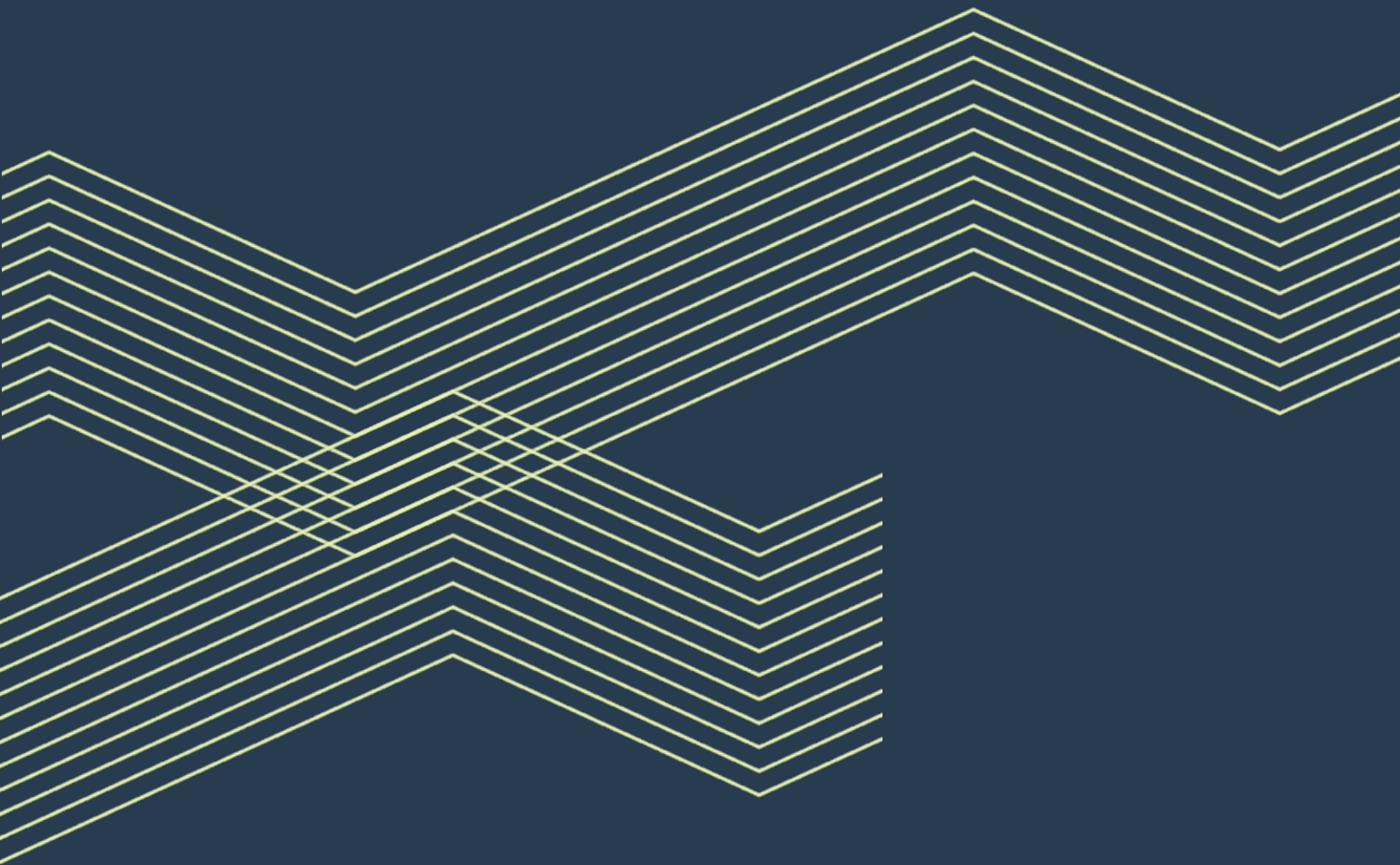
August 2022



# Summary

## Unlocking Scotland's response to the climate emergency:

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# Introduction

**With an energy crisis and sky-rocketing cost of living, now is the time to double down on tackling the climate emergency and realise the many benefits of the transition. Further delay will only lead to higher costs in the future, which will hit harder on those with lower incomes.**

The Climate Emergency Response Group's (CERG) report sets out practical, immediate actions that can and must be taken now to avert the worst impacts of the climate crisis. There has been some progress from the Scottish Government, but Scotland must do more, and faster. CERG has identified four areas which must be 'unlocked' to make progress across the board:

- Require a 'Net Zero Test' for policy and investment decisions
- Unite local and national governments in the climate emergency response
- Accelerate the shift from cars to active, public, and shared transport in Scotland's cities
- Invest in advice and skills for farmers and crofters to support a just transition

These proposals should be taken forward in the Programme for Government 2022 because they will cut emissions, and they will reduce energy demand, provide long-term energy security, and help with the cost-of-living crisis by reducing energy bills and upskilling and training people for low carbon jobs, now and in the future.

The Programme for Government 2021 included a welcome set of climate commitments linked to delivering a just transition. With the energy price cap currently predicted to rise by as much as 65% in October against April's price, the Programme for Government in 2022 must supercharge the transition to a net-zero economy. Action in 2022-2023 will be the real test of this administration and its ability to flex its powers and work with business, citizens and the third sector to tackle both the climate and cost of living crises.

## **The Climate Emergency Response Group**

The Climate Emergency Response Group (CERG) is a collection of like-minded leaders spanning Scotland's private, public and third sectors, delivery organisations and membership bodies. The group aims to inform and influence the Scottish Government's response to the climate emergency by producing reports with practical solutions that can be implemented now.

CERG also produces annual progress assessments, holding the Scottish Government to account on their commitments. The group's 2021 assessment concluded that while government has made good progress against its recommendations, there is only limited evidence of the emergency thinking called for – i.e. rapid targeted action, unlocking barriers to delivery and a shift from sectoral to systemic solutions.

## **Summary of the 4 immediate actions**

All four proposals set out immediate actions for the next 12 months (2022-2023) with indications of further actions that will be required in the medium term. CERG chose just four priorities because they are critical to enabling delivery of existing commitments, and to allow more time for stakeholder engagement in developing the proposals, as well as following up our previous recommendations.

# 1 **Require a Net Zero Test for policy and investment decisions**

## **What**

Develop a mandatory Net Zero 'Test' for public sector decisions on policy, planning, and investment. The 'test' would involve a layered approach from screening to assessment as required by the policy or project. The Net Zero Test would:

- Apply to individual projects as well as at an overarching programme level - aimed at ensuring compatibility with Scotland's 2030 and 2045 climate change targets.
- Inform policy and investment in the future as well as existing policy and infrastructure plans so they can be amended as required to align with net zero goals.

## **Why**

Decisions are being made every day by the public sector which could support our response to the climate emergency or at worst lock us into a high carbon pathway. Without a coherent approach it is unclear how alignment of policy and spend decisions with Scotland's net zero goals will be ensured. The current patchwork approach also risks significant waste of public sector resources with multiple agencies and departments developing their own approaches which cannot be compared.

The Net Zero Test will facilitate coordination and scrutiny across government and provide solid evidence of the 'value for money' of climate policies through time-saving decisions and avoiding costs of stranded assets or retrofit later.

## **Immediate actions for the 2022 Programme for Government**

- Commit to a mandatory Net Zero Test for policy and public spending with implementation from 2023
- Provide guidance, training, and capacity building, including a central source of expertise.
- Build on work for the Joint Budget Review, carbon assessment of the City and Growth Deals, and others – there is no need for 'new' tools.
- Support public sector policy or spending decisions only when aligned to net-zero.

**“Decisions are being made every day by the public sector which could support our response to the climate emergency...”**

## 2 Unite local and central government to tackle the climate emergency

### What

Negotiate and agree a joint net-zero delivery framework between national and local government identifying roles, necessary funding, and resources, including practical solutions to overcome barriers to delivery and make the most of existing potential.

### Why

30% of emissions reduction depends on local government action; it is where delivery happens, decisions are made, and where people live, work, and move. It is also where many of the opportunities for a just transition lie – new jobs, economic innovation, and the creation of healthy, liveable places.

The lack of local authority resources – funding, expertise and capacity – means Scotland’s ability to meet its targets and deliver on national flagship policies is at risk, e.g. decarbonising heat, renewable energy, 20-minute neighbourhoods, 20% reduction in car kms. Scotland is also not well-placed to develop large-scale business cases for net zero programmes in partnership with the private sector, without experienced regional and local authority teams focused on this work.

### Immediate actions for the 2022 Programme for Government

- Develop a specific framework on delivery of net zero programmes as part of plans to ‘reset’ the relationship between national and local government in a ‘New Deal’ for Local Government.
- Undertake a rapid gap and opportunities analysis. Identify how to fill the gaps through aligning limited public sector resources to get the job done through shared hubs of expertise, redeployments, reprioritisation, closer collaboration with agencies and FHE sector, as well as additional funding.



### **3 Accelerate the shift from cars to active, public, and shared transport in Scotland's cities**

#### **What**

Work closely with local authorities and their regional partners to overcome funding, procedural and governance barriers to enable them to accelerate delivery on the ground. Government investment, incentives and regulation need to align to enable the rapid delivery of locally agreed plans where place-making, active travel, public transport, shared mobility, and actions to discourage private car use come together to deliver emissions reduction with multiple benefits for the local economy, health, and society.

#### **Why**

Achieving Scotland's ambitions for emissions reduction and a reduction in car mileage requires the transformation of places and transport systems so that walking, cycling, and public transport become more convenient, affordable, and cost-effective than the private car. To coordinate services, maximise the benefits and avoid competition for road-space, provisions for active travel, public transport and shared mobility need to be delivered in an integrated way. A gap exists between Scotland's ambitious sustainable travel hierarchy, transport policy targets and plans and the reality in Scotland's cities, where the car is still king. Scotland's seven cities are best placed to be first movers to reduce car dependence by investing in infrastructure and introducing measures which can deliver widespread benefits for the local economy, public health, social inclusion, and the environment.

#### **Immediate actions for the 2022 Programme for Government**

- Shift to multi-year, non-competitive funding agreements with local authorities from 2023.
- Speed up consenting for new infrastructure and strengthen enforcement of priority measures by the end of 2022.
- Support more rapid decarbonisation of the bus sector in 2023.
- Engage with citizens to agree practical, workable solutions (national and local) from 2023.
- Stronger leadership and regional action on car demand management.

**“Government investment, incentives and regulation need to align to enable the rapid delivery of locally agreed plans...”**

## 4 Invest in advice and skills for a just transition for farmers and crofters

### What

Publish comprehensive plans in 2023 to realign and upscale the provision of accessible advice and skills development to farmers and crofters to a £20million /year service. From 2024, all farmers and crofters should receive the advice they need to transition to climate and nature friendly farming, respond to investment opportunities and to deliver sustainable economic and environmental outcomes.

### Why

Early action on skills and advice is essential to speed up the agricultural transition over the coming months and years, whilst helping to ensure this is a fair and managed process for farmers and crofters (a Just Transition).

### Immediate actions for the 2022 Programme for Government

- Announce the future scope and scale of advice, knowledge sharing and skills development for farmers in 2022 with detailed plans by 2023.
- Build mandatory advice into farm-level support and capital grants, starting with Track 2 of the National Test Programme in 2022.
- Starting in 2022, refresh and extend mandatory CPD on climate and biodiversity for all new and existing farm advisors.
- Commit to action in early 2023 to kickstart the strengthening of the land-based training and education system in response to the Commission on Land-based learning as soon as possible.

## Conclusion

The Climate Emergency Response Group supports this package of proposals because they will remove barriers that are blocking progress and undermining Scotland's chances of meeting its targets.

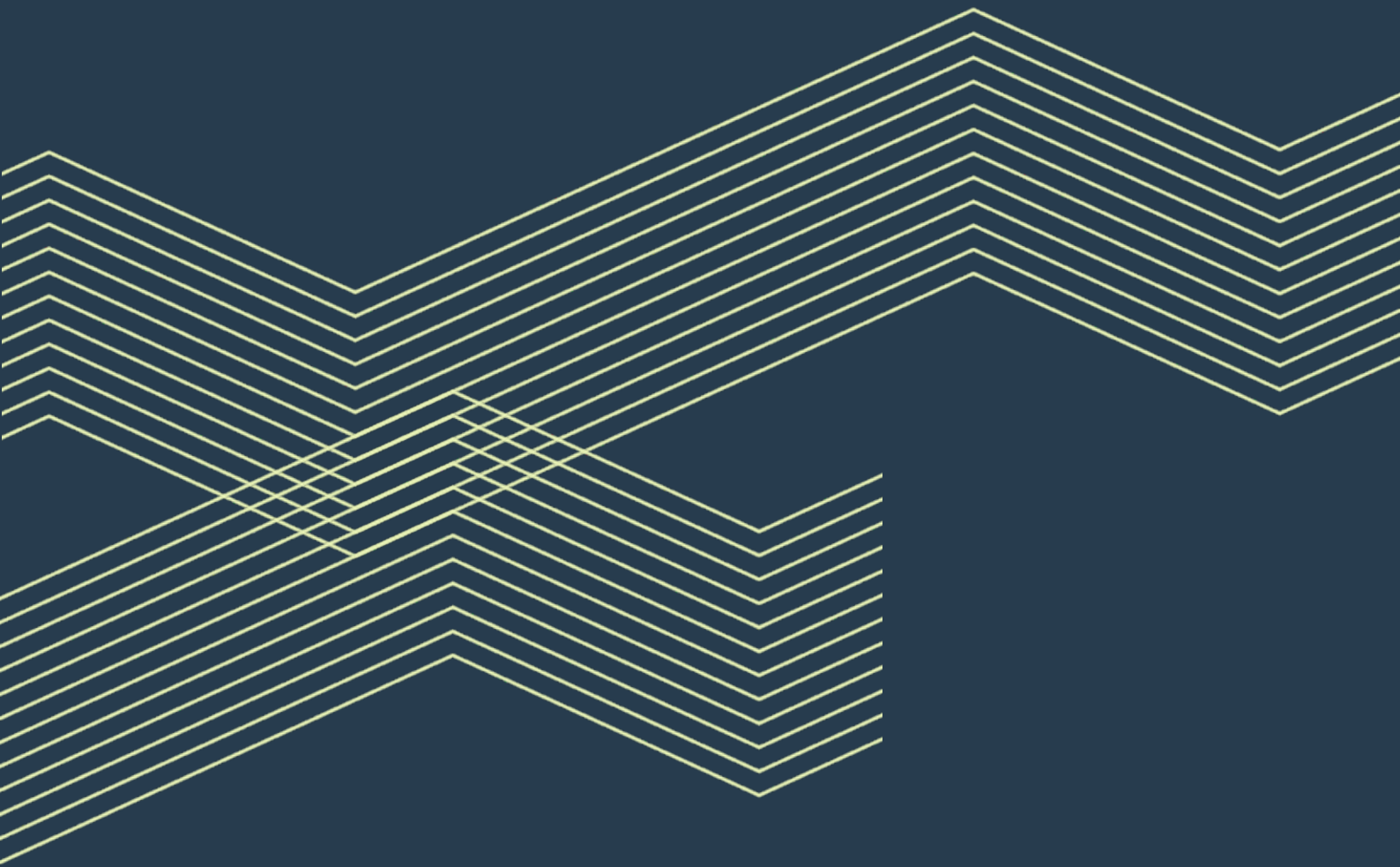
The Net Zero Test will lead to better policy and investment decisions, saving time and money along the way. Supporting local authorities to deliver on decarbonising our homes and city centre transformations will ensure solutions are tailored to local needs and circumstances. And building skills in our farmers and crofters will give the agriculture sector a head start on shifting to low carbon practice and production.

We hope the Scottish Government will take up these recommendations to lead and enable a concerted effort which engages and supports all parts of the public sector, business, and civic society in the just transition to net zero.

# Main Report

## Unlocking Scotland's response to the climate emergency:

4 immediate actions to fast-track  
delivery for the Scottish Government





# Introduction

**Record breaking heat waves, an energy crisis and sky-rocketing cost of living, it is time – indeed, it is long overdue – to double down on tackling the climate emergency and realise the many benefits of the transition. Further delay will only lead to higher costs in the future, with many of those costs falling disproportionately on the vulnerable and those with lower incomes.**

The Climate Emergency Response Group's (CERG) report sets out practical, immediate actions that can and must be taken to cut emissions, adapt to climate impacts, while improving health and the economy. There's been some progress from the Scottish Government, but Scotland must do more, and faster. In 2022 CERG has focused on just four actions because we believe they are fundamental to 'unlocking' progress across all sectors on meeting Scotland's climate targets. These are:

- Require a 'Net Zero Test' for policy and investment decisions
- Unite local and national governments in the climate emergency response
- Accelerate the shift from cars to active, public, and shared transport in Scotland's cities
- Invest in advice and skills for farmers and crofters to support a just transition

As well as tackling the climate crisis, these actions will reduce energy demand, provide long-term energy security, and help with the cost-of-living crisis by reducing energy bills and upskilling and training people for low carbon jobs, now and in the future.

It is almost a year since COP26, when 120 world leaders and tens of thousands of delegates, observers and participants came to Glasgow to negotiate the Glasgow Climate Pact. The Scottish Government showed strong leadership at this event and vowed to deliver on its own climate commitments. Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport acknowledged in his review of what COP26 achieved, "what we choose or fail to do now on climate change will shape our entire future."<sup>1</sup>

The First Minister noted at the close of COP 26 that: "ultimately Scotland can only lead and speak with credibility, if we deliver our own net zero targets...I also feel a renewed sense of responsibility to go further and faster, to face up to tough challenges as well as the relatively easy options, and to help raise the bar of world leadership more generally. And so, our focus in the months and years ahead will be firmly on delivery."<sup>2</sup>

The Programme for Government (PfG) 2021, which reflects the shared policy agenda with the Scottish Greens, includes a welcome set of climate commitments linked to delivering a just transition. For example, a new national planning framework, a green transport 'revolution', and investment in energy efficiency and decarbonising heat.

We now need to see rapid and meaningful progress on the ground – now is not the time for more strategies. Decision-makers, whether in the public or private sector, should be in no doubt that the climate emergency is an urgent priority for them and requires a departure from business as usual. This should be reflected in words and deeds by the First Minister and the entire cabinet through bold policies, investments, and unequivocal messages on how and when Scotland will transform its heating, transport, farming, and more to be a net zero nation by 2045. Action in 2022-2023 will be the real test of this administration and its ability to flex its powers and enable the public sector to work with business, citizens and the third sector to create our net-zero future.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-cop26-achieved/pages/1/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/first-ministers-statement-cop26/>



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## Unlocking Delivery

There is no doubt meeting Scotland's stretching climate change targets of 75% emissions reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2045 is challenging. Removing the logjams that are preventing progress is crucial to success. CERG has identified four areas that the Scottish Government must address to overcome these obstacles and unlock delivery. Of course, these are not the only actions needed for a comprehensive response to the climate emergency, but we believe they provide a firm foundation to accelerate progress across the board.

We recognise that the government is working within tight financial constraints, and this demands smarter ways of public sector working and investment. The Scottish Government can create the conditions for success and enable delivery by providing certainty (through regulation and targets), capacity and expertise (through funding and hubs of expertise), removing barriers (policy inconsistencies, siloed funding) and communications (national and local engagement). This approach will drive delivery across sectors, and in partnership with the public, private and third sectors. This is a 'value for money' approach which makes efficient use of resources and ensures we don't make decisions now we will regret later.

Our four proposals show how this can be done – removing barriers and driving coordinated rapid action across sectors and places:

- **Net Zero Test:** all policies, programmes and investments pulling in the right direction to deliver on the 2030 and 2045 climate targets.
- **Local government has what it takes to deliver:** the resources, skills, and levers at local authority level to implement large-scale programmes to cut emissions, adapt to climate change, and to do so in a way that reduces inequalities – affordable transport, green spaces, healthy homes.
- **City centre transformations:** As centres of economic activity and population, cities are well-positioned to rapidly reduce emissions while strengthening local economies and delivering healthy, liveable places. This requires a shift away from siloed funding pots and incremental policy steps to local integrated programmes that deliver active, public, and shared transport solutions, reduce peoples' reliance on cars, and link place-making to sustainable transport.
- **Advice for farmers and crofters** so they can shift to climate and nature friendly farming, make the most of new opportunities for low carbon food production and to support them through a just transition.



## About the Climate Emergency Response Group

The Climate Emergency Response Group (CERG) is a collection of like-minded leaders spanning Scotland's private, public and third sectors, delivery organisations and membership bodies.

The group aims to inform and influence the Scottish Government's response to the climate emergency by providing practical, workable solutions that can be implemented not in the future, but now. Using its influence and experience, the group designs and publishes proposals for climate action.

Since launching in August 2019, CERG has produced [three reports](#) with practical solutions which can be taken forward immediately – transformational policies to reduce emissions, create jobs, and deliver a just transition. CERG's reports have been well received by stakeholders and parliamentarians, who value CERG's constructive, solutions-oriented approach. As an example of CERG's influence, the group's 12-point plan for action was adopted by the Scottish Government as part of its 2019 Programme for Government. CERG is regularly invited to give evidence to Parliamentary Committees and discuss our work with Scottish Government officials, Commissions, and stakeholder groups.

CERG also produces annual [progress assessments](#), holding the Scottish Government to account on their commitments. The assessments look back on the Government's response to all our published recommendations. Our 2021 assessment concluded that while government has made good progress against our recommendations, none of our recommendations have been met in full, and that there is only limited evidence of the emergency thinking we called for – i.e., rapid targeted action, unlocking barriers to delivery and a shift from sectoral to systemic solutions.

Table 1: CERG Steering Group membership

<b>Andrew Bissell</b>	<b>Daisy Narayanan</b>
<b>Teresa Bray</b>	<b>Stefanie O’Gorman</b>
<b>Claire Daly</b>	<b>David Reay</b>
<b>Sam Gardner</b>	<b>Sara Thiam</b>
<b>Gina Hanrahan</b>	<b>Raphaëlle Vallet</b>
<b>Alex Irwin</b>	<b>Morag Watson</b>
<b>Andy Kerr</b>	<b>Paul White</b>
<b>Sarah-Jane Laing</b>	<b>Kit England</b>
<b>Adam Liddle</b>	

**Climate  
Emergency  
Response  
Group**



### CERG Secretariat

**Elizabeth Leighton**

**Kate Studd**

**Emma Davies, Cunningly Good Group**





## Developing CERG's four priority actions for 2022

CERG identified and developed the four priority actions based on the following:

- The findings of CERG's 2021 rapid assessment of the Scottish Government's response to its 2021 recommendations which identified key gaps in the Government's approach and issues that are lagging behind.
- An exploration and prioritisation of potential topics by the CERG Steering Group.
- A rapid review of publications from Government, independent organisations, and academia.
- Stakeholder interviews with experts who gave feedback in their individual capacity.

As a result of this scoping exercise, CERG decided to put their full weight behind fewer proposals in 2022, for the following reasons:

- To allow more in-depth engagement and research with stakeholders and the Scottish Government to inform our recommendations, strengthen our influence and our relationships with other organisations working on similar priorities.
- To take into account the increased capacity, activity and number of commitments made by the Scottish Government around climate change, and the work of other public / private / third sector organisations stepping up with their own climate emergency proposals (thus avoiding duplication of effort).
- To maintain space and time for CERG to continue to push for action by the Scottish Government on CERG's previous proposals, particularly those highlighted as lagging behind.



**“Our 2021 assessment concluded that while government has made good progress against our recommendations, none of our recommendations have been met in full...”**



## Four priorities to unlock barriers and drive rapid action across sectors and places

Detailed proposals for immediate action in four areas were developed, aimed at cutting emissions and creating jobs, improving health, and using public spending wisely for those most in need and to lever in private investment. The initial draft proposals were road-tested and discussed through roundtable discussions with Scottish Government officials, and at a stakeholder seminar in May 2022.

The proposals were tested against the following criteria:

1. Achieve / speed up rate of Scotland's carbon abatement – transformational change.
2. Contribute to building resilience and adaptation to climate change
3. Achievable now – can be delivered now or very soon by the Scottish Government (have the powers to act); and/or lays foundations now for next year.
4. Support a just transition and green recovery — shared prosperity, social well-being, and wider environmental benefits.
5. Best use of CERG as catalyst for action

Each proposal includes a succinct, measurable ask, along with a clear rationale for why Scotland's climate emergency response needs this action. We then go on to explain how it will deliver emissions reductions, how it supports a just transition, and what action needs to be taken to apply 'emergency thinking'.

## Watching brief on CERG asks from previous reports

CERG will continue to advocate for progress on proposals from our previous reports not covered by these four priorities, particularly those that fared poorly in our latest assessment of progress. CERG's priorities for ongoing engagement are:

- **Sustainable, climate-friendly diet guidance and implementation through public sector catering.**

This is a notable gap, which chimes with recommendations from Scotland's Climate Assembly, the UK Committee on Climate Change and societal trends. It is within Scottish Government control and represents an immediate opportunity for public sector leadership.

- **Solve real and specific financing challenges** to secure private sector investment. The Scottish Government has made leveraging private sector finance a big priority for its economic strategy. CERG proposes that the Scottish Government work directly with private investors to solve financing challenges to generate innovative solutions that work for both the private and public sectors.
- **Policy certainty to build the confidence of land managers to invest in climate and nature friendly farming.** The process of policy making needs to be speeded up. A route map is required as soon as possible setting out how the agricultural sector will be supported to transition over time to a new regime that delivers benefits for climate and nature.



## Alignment with Scottish Government priority agendas and net zero commitments

The four proposals presented in this report do not attempt to cover the full range of actions required by the Scottish Government in 2022 to respond to the climate crisis. However, they each touch on a different aspect of the transition to net zero and climate resilience and propose steps that can be taken now to overcome the systemic barriers that are holding back rapid action on the ground.

The table below sets out how the CERG proposals align with:

- The Scottish Government’s priorities: tackling child poverty; addressing the climate crisis; securing a stronger, fairer, greener economy; and delivering excellent public services (as set out in the Programme for Government 2021).
- Recommendations of key external advisory bodies: the UK Committee on Climate Change and the Just Transition Commission.

Table 2: Alignment with Scottish Government priorities and external advice

CERG proposal	Alignment with Scottish Government priorities	
	Priority policies & approaches	2021 Programme for Government commitments
Net Zero Test for policy and investment decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to shift expenditure to low carbon infrastructure</li> <li>• Joint Budget Review</li> </ul>	<i>‘Maximise the impact of public funding to boost an inclusive and green economic recovery’ (p76)</i>
Unite local and national government in climate emergency response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering excellent public services; <i>‘A new deal for local authorities’</i> (Resource Spending Review)</li> </ul>	A National Public Energy Agency; Delivery of Heat in Buildings Strategy; sustainable transport hierarchy, NPF4, National Strategy for Economic Transformation, Just Transition Sector Plans.
Accelerate the shift from cars to active, public and shared transport in Scotland’s cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering excellent public services</li> <li>• A stronger, fairer green economy</li> <li>• Sustainable travel hierarchy</li> <li>• National Transport Strategy.</li> <li>• Strategic Transport Projects Review</li> </ul>	National Planning Framework 4; <i>20-minute neighbourhoods; reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030 - ‘securing progress to net zero, improving people’s wellbeing through increased active travel, and contributing to safer, cleaner and healthier communities.’</i>
Invest in advice and skills for a just transition for farmers and crofters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just Transition <i>‘Equipping people with the knowledge and skills they need’</i> and <i>‘Planning for a managed transition’</i>;</li> <li>• Climate Ready Scotland – Second Scottish Climate Adaptation Programme</li> <li>• National Test Programme</li> <li>• Agriculture Transformation Fund</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A Just Transition to net zero - leaving no person, industry, or community behind</i></li> <li>• Agricultural Bill</li> <li>• Good Food Nation Bill</li> <li>• Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan</li> </ul>

Table 2: Table 2: Alignment with Scottish Government priorities and external advice (continued)

CERG proposal	Alignment with recommendations from external advisory bodies	
	Committee on Climate Change	Just Transition Commission (2022 & 2021)
Net Zero Test for policy and investment decisions	YES (2022 UK assessment: Box 14.4)	
Unite local and national government in climate emergency response	YES 2022: p. 583/ 434 Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget, 2020	YES 2022: p 14 enabling delivery of the Energy Strategy; 2021: 'Empower and resource local authorities'
Accelerate the shift from cars to active, public and shared transport in Scotland's cities	YES (2022: p 114) <i>Enable local places to design and implement transport systems that join together active travel, public transport, and shared mobility</i>	YES 2021 'Commit to creating communities that embed low-carbon lifestyles while improving our health and wellbeing); 2022: 'public transport system fit for the new green economy will deliver major benefits in terms of access, fairness, well-being and social inclusion to everyone'
Invest in advice and skills for a just transition for farmers and crofters	YES <i>Overcome non-financial barriers .... providing support for skills, training, and knowledge exchange in order to provide confidence to farmers to take up new measures</i>	YES <i>Ensure farmers and crofters are prepared and supported well in advance of changes to future farm support</i>



# The 4 immediate actions





# 1

# 1

## Net Zero test for policy and investment decisions

**Develop a coherent Net Zero Test to inform decision-making. The approach should focus on ensuring policy, programme and spend decisions are compatible with Scotland's net zero emissions goal and emissions pathway, as set out in the Climate Change Plan (CCP). The 'test' would not be a one-time event but an iterative process including screening and assessment.**

The process should be mandatory and designed to ensure the assessment provides a level of detail commensurate with influence/impact on emissions. It should be phased in – applying initially to the Scottish Government and then rolled out more widely across the public sector. It will include provision for capacity building and 'on tap' expertise to support consistent and coherent application.

### Why Scotland's climate emergency needs this action taken now

Decisions are being made every day by the public sector which could either support our response to the climate emergency, delay progress, or at worst lock us into a high carbon, high risk pathway. Many organisations, including the UK CCC<sup>3</sup> and the Institute for Government<sup>4</sup>, have called for a 'net zero test'<sup>5</sup> to ensure that policies, programmes, and budget plans are compatible with delivering net zero emissions.

Promising steps have already been taken in Scotland aimed at better aligning policy and spend decisions with emission reduction goals. Examples include the Scottish Government commitment to shift expenditure to low carbon infrastructure, improve alignment of the budget with climate change plans through the Joint Budget Review with the Scottish Parliament<sup>6</sup>, and for planning decisions to give 'significant weight' to the climate emergency<sup>7</sup>. In addition, some local authorities, such as Glasgow City Council, are considering how to introduce 'green budgeting' to test compatibility with net zero (also includes adaptation and equity)<sup>8</sup>.

However, without a coherent, comprehensive, and mandatory approach across the public sector it is unclear how alignment of policy and spend decisions with Scotland's net zero goals and emissions pathways will be ensured. Furthermore, the lack of a holistic approach risks significant waste of public sector resources with multiple agencies and departments developing their own approaches.

**“Promising steps have already been taken in Scotland...”**

<sup>3</sup> 2022 Progress Report to Parliament - Climate Change Committee ([theccc.org.uk](https://theccc.org.uk))

<sup>4</sup> Passing the net zero test | The Institute for Government

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.endsreport.com/article/1747970/net-zero-policy-test-look-like>

<sup>6</sup> Joint review of budget as it relates to climate change | Scottish Parliament Website

<sup>7</sup> Scotland 2045 - fourth National Planning Framework - draft: consultation - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot))

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/regional/snggreenbudgeting.htm>

<p><b>Achieve / speed up rate of Scotland's carbon abatement - deliver transformational change.</b></p>	<p>The net zero test will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate coordination and scrutiny across central, local governments and agencies.</li> <li>• Inform and influence decision outcomes early in the project cycle.</li> <li>• Comprise a screening/categorisation approach (qualitative assessment) and focus more detailed and quantitative analysis on the most significant elements.</li> <li>• Form part of an effective governance framework for the CCP, ensuring it remains a 'live' consideration in policy and spend decisions on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Provide evidence of the 'value for money' of climate policies and programmes - supporting more efficient and time-saving decisions, speeding delivery and avoiding costs of retrofit or stranded high carbon assets.</li> <li>• Bring a wider set of decision into the scope of net zero – mobilising wider parts of government which traditionally haven't strongly engaged in the transition.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build resilience and adaptation to impacts of climate change</b></p>	<p>The IPCC<sup>9</sup> highlights the need to consider the synergies, tradeoffs and co-benefits from considering mitigation and adaptation together. The test's screening process could be used to flag up significant issues that require separate and specific consideration through other processes linked to adaptation and resilience<sup>10</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Delivering a Just Transition</b></p>	<p>The test would reference the Just Transition sector and regional plans as appropriate through the screening process, flagging significant issues that may require separate and specific consideration through other processes.</p>
<p><b>Co-Benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many climate solutions result in benefits for biodiversity, health, well-being, and jobs.</li> <li>• Consistent guidance will lead to more efficient and effective decision-making which will earn the trust and support of the private sector and general public.</li> <li>• Experience of building carbon considerations into procurement of the Scottish City Deals has already identified examples of cost and carbon savings .</li> </ul>


**Immediate implementation and laying foundations for the future**

**Develop a Net Zero Test and framework with a plan for implementation**

CERG believes the Net Zero Test should comprise of two elements:

- **A comprehensive and consistent individual policy and project appraisal process to influence and inform individual and project decisions during their development** based on an understanding of the emissions significance. This needs to link to compatibility with sector emission pathways set out in the CCP. A screening approach will help signpost project and policy decisions that should be subject to detailed and quantitative analysis based on likely emissions significance.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-ii/>  
<sup>10</sup> eg supplementary guidance within the Treasury Green Book on accounting for the effects of climate change & Adaptation Scotland and Climate Ready Clyde's guidance on assessing climate risk in infrastructure and the built environment  
<sup>11</sup> <https://sustainableprocurementtools.scot/index.cfm/case-studies1/the-cross-tay-link-road-reducing-embodied-carbon-through-construction-project-design/>

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- **A collective, or aggregate, assessment of significant programmes, or plans,** (e.g., budget, infrastructure plan, local development plan, local housing strategy, local / regional transport strategy). This assessment would be facilitated by the standard approach and would relate to the overall compatibility with Scotland's net zero goals, interim targets and associated emissions pathways as set out in the Climate Change Plan.

The consistent and transparent application of this framework and associated guidance would inform policy, programme, and spend decisions, and ensure they are collectively compatible with emissions goals and envelopes set out in the CCP. The approach could help the public sector to avoid unwittingly making decisions that undermine their net zero credibility and provide clarity (supplemented by guidance) to the private sector on net-zero compatible proposals.

Processes and guidance need to be in place that are applicable and proportionate for different stages and levels of decision-making and investment, allowing informed qualitative and quantitative approaches to be appropriately applied. The application of a screening approach can help focus attention on decisions with the most significant influence/impact on emissions.

It is likely that the development of the approach could build on existing Scottish Government approaches and methodologies, rather than establishing an entirely new assessment:

- Scottish City Region and Growth Deal project carbon assessment approach.
- The 'carbon test' approach used for renewable development planning applications (the existence of the test is driving better designs, and it saves time and money for developers and the planning system).
- The UK Treasury Green Book assessment process that includes an appraisal framework for considering emissions impacts of policy and spend proposals.
- The Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) methodology, which is consistent with the Green Book, and an associated Policy Assessment Framework<sup>12</sup> for supporting the appraisal of transport options.
- The Scottish TIMES model that is used to identify least-cost options for meeting Scotland's climate targets.

It may also be useful to draw on approaches from other jurisdictions. These include:

- UK Government approach to the Comprehensive Spending Review whereby the Treasury requires departments to quantify expected emission impacts of proposed spending as part of the budget allocation process.
- HM Treasury intention to move towards strengthening assessment of climate impacts of spending policy at key fiscal events such as the UK budget and spring statement and of tax policy.
- Work undertaken by the Danish Government to integrate climate considerations into economic modelling to inform policy decisions<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> [stag-policy-assessment-framework-guidance-note.pdf \(transport.gov.scot\)](#)


<sup>13</sup> [Introductory Note - Integrating Climate into Macroeconomic Modelling \(fm.dk\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> [CO \(20\) 3: Climate Implications of Policy Assessment Requirements - July 2020 - Cabinet Office - Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet \(dpmc.govt.nz\)](#)

- 
- An approach adopted by the New Zealand Government that requires any policy proposals presented to the Cabinet that fulfill certain emissions criteria to be accompanied by an assessment of their climate impact (Climate Implications of Policy Assessment)<sup>14</sup>.
  - The Swedish Government's approach which is based on a period of clear and consistent carbon accounting across all municipalities (5 years), followed by limits on carbon aligned with their net zero target date of 2045<sup>15</sup>.

The development of the Net Zero Test would help deliver on existing Scottish Government commitments and extend their impact and influence:

- Fraser of Allander Institute recommendations to support an understanding of the emissions impact of spending decisions in Scottish Government policymaking and in the Scottish Budget.
- SNP - Greens Cooperation Agreement commitment to make public sector spending conditional on delivering wider benefits including net zero transition. This proposal would encompass local authority procurement but go wider.
- Scottish Government work on active carbon management of City and Growth Deals; links to Green Book requirements including Green Book Review 2020.
- The Infrastructure Investment Plan commitment to update its carbon assessment process in conjunction with the Joint Budget Review.
- The Transport Scotland carbon assessment methodology; NPF4 guidance; Public Bodies Duties guidance.
- The commitment in the Climate Change Plan 2020 to embed circular economy approaches into procurement.
- Implementation of the National Planning Framework 4 which states that significant weight should be given to the climate emergency in planning decisions, which should also seek to strengthen inclusions of circular economy and zero waste approaches.
- Desire to strengthen evidence base for the next Climate Change Plan (2023).



**“...this framework and associated guidance would inform policy, programme and spend decisions, and ensure they are collectively compatible with emissions goals.”**

<sup>15</sup> [Sweden's climate policy framework - Government.se](https://www.government.se/en/2019/06/sweden-s-climate-policy-framework)

<sup>16</sup> <https://fraserofallander.org/new-project-to-understand-climate-impacts-of-scottish-government-policies/>

<sup>17</sup> [Green Book Review final report 241120v2.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/429266/green-book-review-final-report-241120v2.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> [Annex C: Carbon Assessment of the Infrastructure Investment Plan - A National Mission with Local Impact: Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland 2021-22 to 2025-26 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/annex-c-carbon-assessment-of-the-infrastructure-investment-plan-a-national-mission-with-local-impact/infrastructure-investment-plan-for-scotland-2021-22-to-2025-26-gov-scot/pages/annex-c-carbon-assessment-of-the-infrastructure-investment-plan-a-national-mission-with-local-impact/infrastructure-investment-plan-for-scotland-2021-22-to-2025-26-gov-scot)



## Recommendations

- Commitment in the PFG to develop a **Net Zero Test and framework for public sector decisions on policy, planning, and investment** (procurement and infrastructure) within 12 months with interim measures to set expectations and guide decisions and a programme for phased implementation by the Scottish Government from 2023. This would build on carbon assessment work by the Scottish Government noted above and related work by UK CCC on governance and research such as the Carbon Scenario Tool Pathfinder Project (ECCI and Scottish Cities Alliance<sup>19</sup>).  
**Screening:** The test should comprise a layered approach appropriate to the various stages in the decision-making cycle and to likely emissions significance. Early stages could be considered more of a qualitative screening process (with the potential to draw from categorisation logic as per Scottish City Deal carbon assessment approach).
- **A project and aggregate assessment approach:** a consistent project/policy level assessment alongside an overarching programme level approach aimed at ensuring overall compatibility with Scotland's net-zero goals, interim targets and associated CCP emissions pathways/sector envelopes.
- **Consistency:** the test should reflect a consistent approach (e.g., scope, methodology) and be applicable across the public sector.
- Focus on **territorial/area-based** emissions to align with the statutory net zero goals and climate change plan emission pathways (with a view to a future extension that includes embodied carbon and scope 3/consumption emissions).
- **Forward-looking:** to inform policy and investment decisions and scrutinise outcomes.
- Over time the test **should also be applied to 1) existing policy, infrastructure plans and procurement frameworks so they can be amended as required to align with net zero goals and 2) tax and revenue raising** decisions.
- The layered approach to the test should link with (not duplicate) **existing statutory processes** and be applied in advance of current 'end of pipe' environmental impact assessments.
- The approach should identify opportunities to **draw on existing tools and techniques**, map out any gaps and identify how these can be filled.
- The test process would form an important component of the **governance framework** for monitoring the CCP.

## Capacity and expertise

- Develop and invest in a significant **capacity building and training programme** for the public sector, linking to performance review, job descriptions, risk registers, audit.
- Phased introduction could include a pilot in a particular policy area.
- **Provide a central source of expertise** (see CERG proposal on local authority delivery) for advice, handholding, research, curation of tools – with equal access. This would be accompanied by efforts to ensure **availability of emissions data**, and advice and guidance on the application of data to support assessment.

<sup>19</sup> <https://edinburghcentre.org/projects/carbon-scenario-tool-pathfinder-project>

## Scrutiny

- **Scrutiny measures** need to be in place, with clear consequences for lack of compliance. This would include an internal function with responsibility for ensuring rigorous and appropriate application of the process across the Scottish Government, and reporting to the Cabinet Sub-Committee on the Climate Emergency.
- In addition to internal accountability, the **Scottish Parliament, Audit Scotland, the Accounts Commission and Environmental Standards Scotland** will have roles to play in scrutiny.
- The test process will provide for **transparency** of information linked to assessment and decision making (both qualitative information linked to screening decisions and quantitative analysis used to support/inform decisions).

## Leadership

- The development and implementation of the appraisal process should ultimately rest with the Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport. Implementation will require **cross-government effort with strong leadership** from the Director General for Net Zero and the Cabinet Sub-Committee on the Climate Emergency.
- **Commitment from the Scottish Government to support public sector decisions where aligned to net-zero**, and to hold the public sector to account on following the net-zero test – this commitment is important to ‘de-risk’ decisions that may otherwise be subject to appeal. This will encourage application of the net zero test across the private sector (similar to equalities), and collaboration on finding joint solutions.
- **Partnership with key professional institutes** on guidance and implementation so developers and consultants are more likely to submit project plans that provide the information required to enable the assessment, and more likely to be aligned with the net zero pathway (e.g. ICE, RTPI, IEMA), thus saving time and money for both the public and private sectors.

## Summary - proposed phasing/priorities

Within 12 months:

- Develop methodology by reviewing and using existing tools and approaches and work in other jurisdictions.
- Apply process to inform Scottish Budget decisions and capital investment programmes of emissions significance (e.g infrastructure investment pipeline update).
- Develop phased implementation plan for application across all Scottish Government policy, programmes and budget decisions.
- Establish a roll-out plan with public sector bodies that reflects emissions significance and influence.

## Key dependencies and wider systems change

- The 'test' must be **applied early enough** in the policy making process to be considered before final commitments are made.
- Existing policies and spending decisions should be subjected to a **retrospective test** of compatibility with net zero to ensure they are not in conflict or undermining net zero objectives.
- Proper **scrutiny and accountability** at all stages of the decision-making process must be put in place to ensure the Net Zero Test informs decisions and is not treated as a box ticking exercise.
- The process should be **transparent** to allow the Scottish Parliament and bodies such as Audit Scotland to keep track of progress.

## What needs to be in the 2022-23 Scottish Budget (capital and resource)

- Resource funding to develop and implement the Net Zero test including methodology, capacity and training for implementation.





# 2

# 2

## Unite Local and Central Government to respond to the climate emergency

**Negotiate and agree a joint net-zero delivery framework between national and local government identifying roles, necessary funding, and resources within 12 months, including practical solutions to overcome barriers to delivery and make the most of existing potential. The framework would be a key component of plans to ‘reset’ the relationship between national and local government in a ‘New Deal’ for Local Government<sup>20</sup>.**

### Why Scotland’s climate emergency needs this action taken now

The UK Net Zero Strategy recognises that 30% of emissions reduction depends on local government action, and over 80% is within their scope of influence<sup>21</sup> - it’s where delivery happens, decisions are made, and where people live, work, and move. Climate impacts vary from place to place and are experienced locally. The local level is also where many of the opportunities for a just transition lie – new jobs, economic innovation, and the creation of healthy, liveable places.

**Gaps in funding, capacity and expertise pose serious risks to the delivery of Scotland’s climate targets and just transition.** Barriers exist across all sectors and are particularly acute for transport and buildings – areas where progress must be rapidly accelerated to meet our 2030 targets.

CERG is not alone in highlighting these concerns:

- The Scottish Parliament Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee is undertaking an inquiry into [the role of local government and its cross-sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland](#)
- Audit Scotland is expected to publish a briefing paper in Sept 2022: Climate change: Local government approach and ambitions<sup>22</sup> exploring these issues.
- Environmental Standards Scotland is conducting an investigation into support for local authorities in the delivery of climate change targets.<sup>23</sup>
- A recent report from UK100, a network of local authorities committed to tackling climate change, identifies the same barriers of capacity, expertise and funding and calls for a clear strategy for local net zero delivery.<sup>24</sup>
- The CCC, in its latest progress report to the UK Parliament stated, “local authorities have a vital role to play in leveraging all their powers, assets and influence to deliver Net Zero and climate adaptation” and the UK Government “now needs to work in partnership with them, through a framework to ensure local capacity is increased, that funding and policy are longer-term and more certain, and that policy contradictions are removed.”<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> [Investing in Scotland’s Future: Resource Spending Review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)


<sup>21</sup> [Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) ; [2022 Progress Report to Parliament - Climate Change Committee \(theccc.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Our work programme | Audit Scotland \(audit-scotland.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.environmentalstandards.scot/investigation-launched-into-support-for-local-authorities-in-the-delivery-of-climate-change-targets/>

<sup>24</sup> [UK100 | Local Net Zero Delivery Progress Reports | 2022 | UK100](#)

<sup>25</sup> [2022 Progress Report to Parliament - Climate Change Committee \(theccc.org.uk\)](#)



The concerns are not just about more resources – it is about unlocking existing potential and removing barriers. Local authorities are under significant pressure due to the combined impacts of COVID-19, austerity, the cost-of-living crisis, and an increased demand for services. The Accounts Commission *2022 Local Government Overview report*<sup>26</sup> notes that “pressures and stresses tighten across Scotland’s 32 councils” including “increasing demand and service backlogs...rising poverty and inequalities; acute skills shortages; lack of certainty and flexibility over long-term funding.” At the same time, challenging demands are being made of local authorities to design and deliver large scale complex net zero programmes.

Despite these challenging circumstances, significant ambition exists within local authorities to deliver transformative programmes, and there are many examples of innovation and a desire to act collectively. It is worth highlighting that many climate solutions can also help with the cost of living - e.g., energy efficiency measures, affordable transport – but local authorities need more capacity to design, lever in private investment, and deliver on the ground. Access to granular data is key to target those most in need, and to support feasibility studies and partnerships with private investors.

Some sectors, such as Heat in Buildings, have started to address capacity concerns through liaison with COSLA and considering how the new National Public Energy Agency could plug gaps. While welcome, this fails to address the cross-cutting and interdependent nature of the problem, risking solutions being delivered in silos rather than systemically, potentially slowing progress. Core, cross-cutting procedural capacity is essential and is an efficient use of resources (e.g., planning, development control, procurement), as is access to experts able to apply their skills across places and sectors (analysts, carbon accounting etc.).

The May 2022 Resource Spending Review (RSR) confirmed investment in net zero programmes (though it did not address concerns regarding funding for core resources) and committed to work with COSLA and SOLACE to agree a ‘*new deal for Local Government in Scotland in advance of the next financial year*’<sup>27</sup>. The delivery of net zero needs to be placed front and centre of this deal and **include a specific pact on delivering net zero commitments**. The pact would explore funding (public and private), the full use of national and local fiscal and policy levers, existing duties, as well as areas for new powers, delivery programmes, guidance, and training.



“The concerns are not just about more resources – it is about unlocking existing potential and removing barriers.”

<sup>26</sup> 2022 Local Government Overview report, Accounts Commission, May 2022

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/investing-scotlands-future-resource-spending-review/>

**Achieve / speed up rate of Scotland's carbon abatement - deliver transformational change.**

The lack of a framework, along with gaps in funding, capacity and expertise means:

- Scotland's ability to meet its targets and deliver on national flagship policies is at risk – decarbonising heat, renewable energy, 20-minute neighbourhoods, 20% reduction in car kms.
- Scotland is not well-placed to develop a pipeline of large-scale business cases for net zero transformational programmes, in partnership with the private sector, without strong and experienced regional and local authority teams focused on this work.
- Good intentions to align procurement with net-zero continue to face procedural barriers, and price remains the overwhelming determining factor. Risk of challenge or appeal is perceived as significant.
- Planners and elected members need to develop their knowledge base and capacity (or have easy access to the expertise they need) to make well-evidenced carbon assessments to inform planning decisions or infrastructure investments. Otherwise, we are likely to face delays and at worst, poor decisions which waste both time and money.
- Local authorities lack access to granular data, capacity to analyse it, measure and prioritise where best to focus their resources.
- While local authorities have good mechanisms for community engagement, they need more direction on priorities for quick wins and medium and long-term actions. Increasing the scope and deliberative nature of engagement will require more capacity and funding.
- Lack of clarity for public sector agencies on their scope to collaborate.

**Build resilience and adaptation to impacts of climate change**

Local authorities need more capacity to plan for, and adapt to, the increasing number of climate change related events such as flooding and extreme weather events. They can use their powers and local knowledge to ensure all infrastructure developments are 'climate-proofed', building in adaptation to the design and address many existing and potential impacts with nature-based solutions (e.g., catchment approach to flooding). The Climate Ready Clyde Strategy and Action Plan is a good example of what can be done<sup>28</sup>, though again there are concerns regarding capacity for implementation.

**Delivering a Just Transition**

Local authorities can help ensure climate policies actively reduce inequalities. However, the current gaps in funding and capacity creates an uneven picture across Scotland, with larger local authorities able to build more 'investible' programmes and compete for national funding pots with smaller local authorities getting left behind and losing out on investment, jobs, health, and well-being benefits.

**Co-Benefits**

- Job creation, business development, improved health, and well-being.
- Engaged population supporting the net zero transition in their communities and workplaces.
- Particularly during the cost-of-living crisis it is critical every penny is spent wisely to give immediate relief while addressing the climate crisis. For example, through improving energy efficiency and expanding affordable transport.

<sup>28</sup> Glasgow City Region Climate Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, June 2021

## Immediate implementation and laying foundations for the future

**Negotiate and agree joint net-zero delivery framework between national and local government identifying roles, necessary funding, and resources to deliver specific outcomes within 12 months.**

To support the framework, the following steps should be undertaken to overcome barriers and ensure Scotland can seize the economic, health and well-being opportunities of a net-zero nation:

### Leadership

- Strong commitment to making this framework happen from the Scottish Government and COSLA, with ongoing support for rapid implementation. Clear, shared, and ongoing 'ownership' of this cross-cutting task by the appropriate officials, minister, and local authority leaders.

### Capacity

- **Rapid gap and opportunity analysis.** Task force to scope capacity gaps and opportunities in key service areas/sectors (on the basis of 'no blame') considering what works/ what doesn't – especially for developing business cases to attract private investment for large scale net-zero infrastructure (city, regional) in partnership. The review would link to progress against the Climate Change Plan and achieving co-benefits of a just transition.<sup>29</sup>
- Identify how to **fill gaps** through local authority teams, shared hubs of expertise, redeployments, reprioritisation, closer collaboration with agencies, different ways of doing the same job, as well as additional funding. Explore scope to collaborate with FHE sector on cutting edge applied research and graduate placements. Align limited public sector resources to get the job done.

### Expertise

- Create a **hub(s) to coordinate and build expertise** on net-zero and adaptation policy which is accessible to all local authorities, supporting and coordinating procurement pipelines, informing planning decisions, developing business cases. It would also make data and data analysis accessible. This would reduce duplication and make the most of the limited pool of expertise in Scotland. It would supplement but not replace the need for each local authority to have the capacity and expertise (in-house for day-to-day decisions).

### Funding

- **Multi-year funding** should be made available to local authorities to achieve certain outcomes (linked to national policies, targets), not on a competitive basis (see also City Transformation proposal).
- Identify **revenue raising mechanisms** (new and existing) to be supported/developed.

<sup>29</sup> The UK CCC Progress Report to Parliament offers some useful commentary regarding the important role of local authorities and barriers to progress which could help inform the gap / opportunity analysis (pp 434-436).



## Legislation

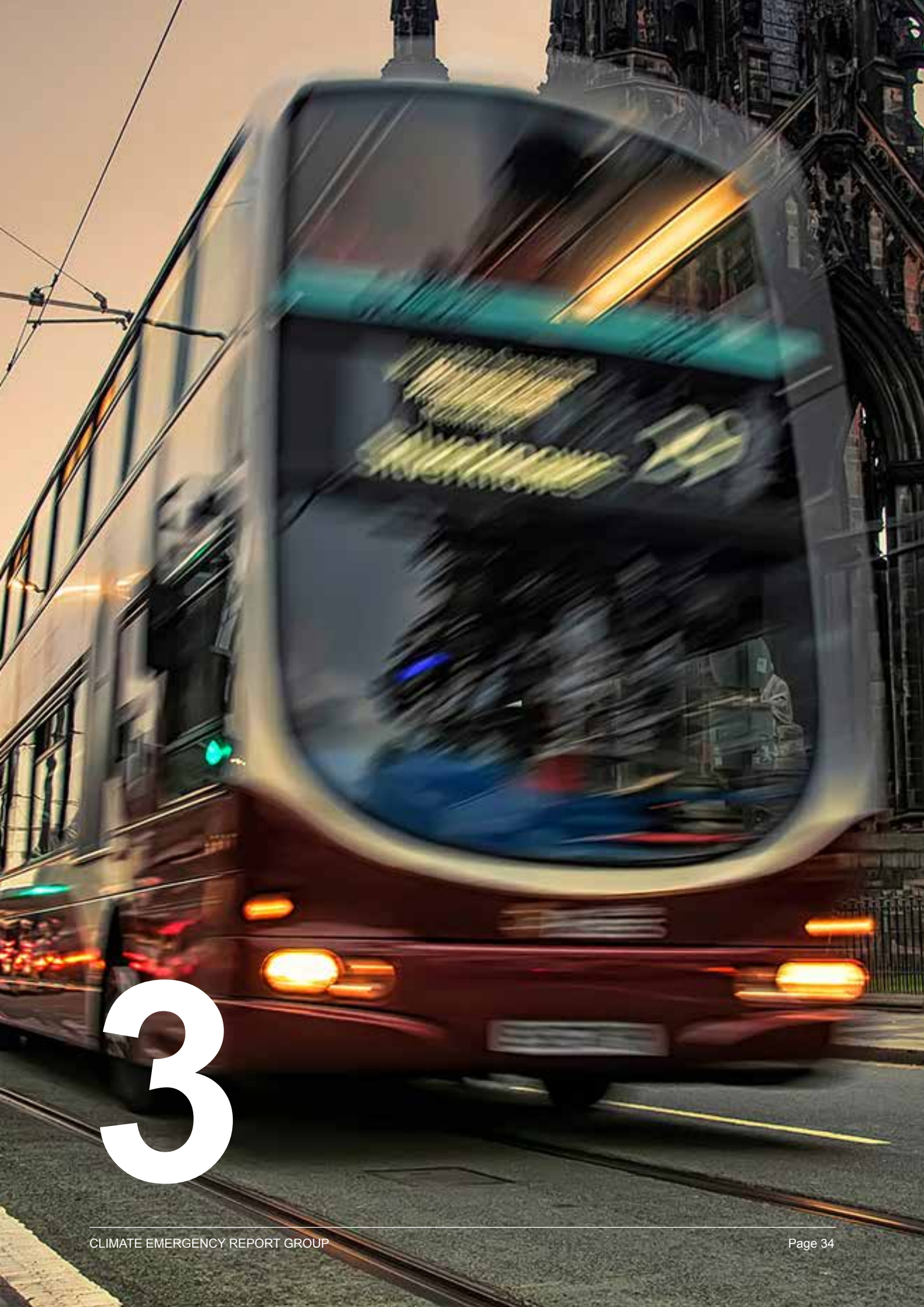
- Use the **public bodies climate change duties reporting** to ensure all public bodies set targets for reducing emissions and have credible plans in place to meet them through support and scrutiny. Revised guidance is urgently needed. This is particularly relevant for corporate emissions including procurement. In addition, there should be a coordinated programme to support area-wide emissions targets and plans to ensure effective local delivery of key aspects of the Climate Change Plan (see CERG's proposal for Net Zero Test and ECCI Carbon Scenario Tool Pathfinder).
- **Gap and opportunities analysis of regulations, duties, powers** to equip local authorities to fulfil their role (funding, capacity, expertise, de-risking): e.g., LHEES duty with National Public Energy Agency support).
- Consider **new legislation** – through Bills introduced in this parliamentary session which could incorporate relevant powers and regulation as required (LHEES, food, waste) and/or through amendments to existing legislation or emergency legislation in recognition of the urgency to unlock delivery. Need for legislative back up to policies and decisions which align with net-zero (now at risk of challenge by developers).

## Key dependencies and wider systems change

- Scottish Government provides the policy certainty to drive private investment through appropriate regulation, fiscal levers and powers to raise revenue.
- Multi-year funding agreements to deliver agreed net zero outcomes through local, place-based solutions
- Greater collaboration across all public sector bodies to tackle area-wide emissions
- Strong national leadership and support for local authorities to deliver national policy
- Regular meaningful input from locally elected leaders and MSPs
- Skills and training – mandatory climate literacy across local authority leaders and senior decision-makers, CPD for existing staff, and an education / skills system that feeds people with the appropriate mix of skills to respond to the climate emergency into the public sector.

## What needs to be in the Scottish Budget (capital and resource)

- Resource funding for hub to support and coordinate action and access to expertise.
- Resource funding for gap and opportunity analysis.



# 3

# 3

## Accelerate the shift from cars to active, public, and shared transport in Scotland's cities

**Achieving Scotland's ambitions for emissions reduction and modal shift requires a transformative step change in local authority action, with cities well-placed to lead the way. The Scottish Government must work closely with local authorities and their regional partners to overcome funding, procedural and governance barriers to enable them to accelerate delivery on the ground. Government investment, incentives and regulation need to align to enable the rapid delivery of locally agreed plans where place-making, active travel, public transport, shared mobility, and actions to discourage private car use come together to deliver emissions reduction with multiple benefits for the local economy, health, and society.**

### Why Scotland's climate emergency needs this action taken now

Cities, with their density and size of population, offer excellent opportunities to rapidly cut emissions, improve peoples' health and wellbeing and strengthen urban climate resilience. Changes in how city places are designed to make them more people-friendly and to reduce dependence on private vehicles can deliver widespread benefits for the local economy, public health, social inclusion, and the environment<sup>30</sup>. Cities are also places with concentrations of climate risk, and so such work can free up space for climate resilient urban green infrastructure<sup>31</sup>.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on urban travel patterns, with long lasting changes to peoples' work and shopping habits, and a significant decline in public transport patronage. A return to pre-pandemic travel behaviours is both unlikely and undesirable if we are going to achieve net zero. If acted on quickly, the disruptive force of COVID-19 can be a catalyst to drive a permanent shift to healthy, sustainable, low carbon places and transport.

Over the past year, a number of welcome policies, plans and funding schemes have emerged including the NPF4, STRP2, 20% car km route map: record investment in active travel, and the ongoing Active Travel Transformation Project. In addition, cities such as Glasgow and Edinburgh have agreed ambitious transformation plans, transport strategies and targets that exceed the national ambition. The focus must now be on unlocking delivery by moving away from siloed funding pots and incremental policy steps to integrated programmes that lever in private finance at scale to deliver active, public, and shared transport solutions, reduce peoples' reliance on cars, and link place-making to sustainable transport.

<sup>30</sup> [Eg Why green and healthy transport modes deliver vast rewards for cities \(c40knowledgehub.org\)](#); Element Energy (2021). Decarbonising the Scottish Transport Sector. Final report for Transport Scotland; Road space reallocation in Scotland - Publications - Public Health Scotland

<sup>31</sup> [Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability | Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability \(ipcc.ch\)](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Eg City Ranking - Clean Cities \(cleancitiescampaign.org\)](#); see egs in [How to achieve a walking and cycling transformation in your city \(c40knowledgehub.org\)](#) of Paris; Oslo; London; Birmingham; Manchester.

At the current pace of delivery, Scotland is not on track to meet its 2030 targets for transport emissions reduction and car km reduction. Scotland's cities are falling behind other cities in Europe and other parts of the UK<sup>32</sup> but with the right leadership and action there is a huge opportunity for rapid change.

The Scottish Government needs to work closely with local authorities and their regional partners to i) help them overcome known barriers to delivering changes on the ground, and ii) achieve modal shift through bold, integrated and place-based approaches. This will not only help deliver national and local priorities but do so in a just way - providing accessible and affordable spaces and transport for all.

<p><b>Achieve / speed up rate of Scotland's carbon abatement - deliver transformational change.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe, efficient, affordable, and accessible alternatives to private cars in cities, enabling cities and Scotland to reach challenging targets on transport emissions reduction, reduced car kms. Less space for the private car creates more space for ultra-low / zero emission mass public transit and shared transport</li> <li>• Create new markets / economies of scale and social norms which will drive behaviour change beyond city boundaries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build resilience and adaptation to impacts of climate change</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrates and frees up space for adaptation measures such as sustainable urban drainage, blue and green infrastructure.</li> <li>• Enhancing travel options and integration of transport networks can support resilience during and following severe weather.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivering a Just Transition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Half of households on a low income or in social rented accommodation have no access to a car, so investing in multimodal, sustainable, and active transport systems can facilitate more affordable transport alternatives across society.</li> <li>• Tackling congestion leads to faster, more reliable, convenient, and cost-efficient bus options, which in turn increases the social and economic benefits for the disadvantaged and lower socio-economic groups who rely on them.</li> <li>• Walking and cycling options for people on low incomes deliver better places and reduce health inequalities<sup>33</sup>.</li> <li>• Measures to ensure equitable location and accessibility of infrastructure and exemption measures for people for whom cars are essential can be introduced to ensure an equitable approach to demand management measures.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Co-Benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebalancing modal shares and reallocating public space creates a breadth of health, environmental, economic, and societal benefits as a result of reduced air and noise pollution, improved traffic safety, and physical activity<sup>34</sup>.</li> <li>• Easier access and mobility for disadvantaged groups.</li> <li>• Actions to provide affordable, appealing alternatives to car travel offer an opportunity to lower costs and reduce the UK's reliance on oil imports<sup>35</sup>.</li> <li>• Access to and increase in social and green spaces for all.</li> <li>• More attractive / pleasant cities.</li> <li>• Economic benefits for local businesses<sup>36</sup>.</li> </ul>

<sup>33</sup> [1] WHO 2022. Walking and cycling: latest evidence to support policy-making and practice (who.int)

<sup>34</sup> [Living Well Locally – Road Space Reallocation Contributes to Improved Health - News - Public Health Scotland: Cycling and walking can help reduce physical inactivity and air pollution, save lives and mitigate climate change \(who.int\)](#)

<sup>35</sup> Sustrans estimated £1.15 benefit from each mile cycled instead of driven. The figures are based upon monetising the costs and benefits of driving and cycling. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, medical costs, work absenteeism, congestion, infrastructure, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases and taxation.

<sup>36</sup> eg [Economic benefits of walking and cycling - Transport for London \(tfl.gov.uk\)](#)

## Immediate implementation and laying foundations for the future

### 1. Funding reform: multi-year, non-competitive funding agreements with local authorities to provide long term certainty and integrated place-based delivery.

**As an immediate first step in the wider transition from ‘funding to financing’<sup>37</sup>, the PfG should commit to introducing a new way of assigning capital funds to local authorities and their regional partners against the delivery of agreed net zero / modal shift outcomes.**

Capital funding needs to evolve from siloed, short term, competitive, single-issue grants focusing on specific transport modes to multi-year, flexible, negotiated funding tied to net zero outcomes. This has been identified by local authorities across the UK as a significant barrier for effective delivery<sup>38</sup>. Funding reform will incentivise and support local authorities and their regional partners to design and deliver active, public, and shared transport outcomes in an integrated way through place-based transformation programmes and should:

- i. allow cities and regional partners to invest in the capacity and R&D they need to build large scale transformation programmes.
- ii. coordinate investment into, and delivery of low carbon active, public and shared transport outcomes in a timely, coordinated way.
- iii. improve the integration of sustainable transport outcomes with regional plans, neighbourhood regeneration and new developments.
- iv. increase the flexibility of local authorities and regional partners to rapidly respond to new opportunities to deliver agreed outcomes.
- v. align with delivery of long-term city transformation plans / transport strategies / mobility plans.
- vi. speed up delivery through efficient and smart deployment of government funds.

### 2. Speed up consenting for new infrastructure and strengthen enforcement of priority measures by the end of 2022.

**The PfG should make a specific commitment to make further amendments to the regulations around Traffic Regulation Orders and Redetermination Orders by the end of 2022 to enable faster delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure by local authorities, with new regulations rolled out in 2023.** Consultation and appeal processes must be clearly time-bound and proportionate with greater clarity and guidance on what is - and isn't - being consulted on and what qualifies for appeal.

Local authorities need to be granted stronger powers to enforce existing measures for bus priority and parking restrictions, such as Automatic Numberplate Recognition (ANPR).

<sup>37</sup> [Investing in Scotland's Future: Resource Spending Review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) page 20

<sup>38</sup> [UK100 | Local Net Zero Delivery Progress Reports | 2022 | UK100](#)

### 3. Bus decarbonisation.

With 73% public transport journeys made by bus (particularly by low-income and vulnerable groups), safe, accessible, and reliable bus services are central to achieving an equitable modal shift and a just transition. CERG welcomes ongoing investment by the Scottish Government for bus decarbonisation (ScotZEB) and prioritisation (Bus Partnership Fund) and the recent extension to the COVID-19 recovery grant (Network Support Grant plus). However, the Scottish Government's ambitious bus decarbonisation targets, modal shift and CERG's vision of 'zero emission cities'<sup>39</sup> are unlikely to be achieved in the current operating environment faced by bus companies. Measures are required to **support more rapid decarbonisation of the bus sector through ScotZEB and delivery of the Bus Decarbonisation Pathway**<sup>40</sup>.

### 4. Identify practical solutions through national and local engagement.

**Building on lessons from Scotland's Climate Assembly, the PfG should commit to running a national campaign to challenge misconceptions about car use alongside an informed public engagement process on car km reduction in 2023. The process should be carefully designed to incorporate two-way exchange of evidence, experience and ideas between citizens and experts and lead to the identification of practical, workable solutions.**

The national campaign should be delivered in tandem with targeted regional and local engagements and campaigns to identify locally relevant, practical options to reduce car dependence as part of place plans / neighbourhood renewal. The Net Zero marketing campaign #LetsDoNetZero will play an important role in raising public awareness of the issues but should be in addition to, not a substitute for, true dialogue.

It should be part of a longer-term plan of accessible advice and support to individuals and communities to implement their ideas and plans.

The process should clearly set out the economic, public health and environmental costs of the current levels of private car use and car culture; consider accessibility issues and inclusion; provide space and time for the public to consider and discuss the evidence and options; and provide human-centred stories and case studies with evidence of the outcomes from changing travel behaviours on health and wellbeing, community wealth, economy, and climate change. A specific stream of the process should look at exploring local solutions for low carbon last mile deliveries.

Data and evidence are critical to design successful modal shift solutions, to enable informed local debate and to challenge entrenched assumptions about the costs and benefits of car versus alternative travel options. As first movers in this space cities should be resourced to gather, access, and make use of locally-specific evidence and data.

<sup>39</sup> [CERG\\_Report\\_Final\\_Sept\\_2021.pdf](#)

<sup>40</sup> [Bus Decarbonisation Taskforce | CPT \(cpt-uk.org\)](#)

## 5. Stronger leadership and regional action to reduce car use within cities.

The 2025 date for the national strategy on demand management is far too late to provide the policy certainty, mandate and levers needed to reduce the number of vehicles on city streets. This makes it substantially harder for cities to address congestion, air pollution and to free up the space needed for walking, wheeling and greenspace. Cities and regional transport partners should be incentivised to act now. **All regional transport partnerships should be required to produce a route map for car km reduction by 2024 that meets or exceeds the national 20% reduction target by 2030.**

Well in advance of the 2025 date, the Scottish Government should introduce early incentives and additional powers to reduce car use in cities, for example:

- *Following the lead taken by Wales<sup>41</sup>, incentivise major towns and cities to introduce 20mph as the default limit on restricted roads from 2023,*
- *Reduced access to parking in city centres, except for blue badge holders,*
- *Scottish Government support and funding for community car-free days and 'leave the car for shorter journeys' campaigns.<sup>42</sup>*

### Key dependencies and wider changes

As a derived demand, changes in how people move around cannot be resolved through transport policy alone - it is crucial that every decision on land use planning, housing and transport explicitly reduces the need for cars. This substantive change requires a whole-system approach and for the vision to be backed up by regulation. The following have been identified as critical key dependencies to achieve targets on modal shift and action is required this year. CERG will monitor the Government's progress across all aspects of this transition.

#### **Better integration between spatial planning and transport at all scales**

Close integration of transport and spatial planning at all spatial scales is essential to enable long term shifts in travel behaviour. The opportunity and need to integrate active, shared transport measures with place-based planning lie particularly around local development plans, local place plans and development management. Delivery of the aspirations set out in the NPF4 needs to be backed up by the necessary legislative changes and action is needed to update key guidance such as Transport Appraisals and Designing Streets.

#### **Core capacity within local authorities**

Place-based programming requires multi-disciplinary teams and strategic coordination. As set out in the CERG proposal on local authority resourcing, there is an urgent need to fill gaps in local authority capacity including around planning, building investible pipelines, and designing and delivering complex place-based projects.

<sup>41</sup> [Speed limit to be lowered to 20mph in Wales - BBC News](#)

<sup>42</sup> eg car ads in France since March 2022 obliged to carry a message encouraging car owners to car share, walk, cycle or use public transport. [https://www.francetvinfo.fr/economie/automobile/pensez-a-covoiturer-les-publicites-pour-des-voitures-devront-bientot-afficher-des-messages-encourageant-d-autres-modes-de-deplacement\\_4897481.html](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/economie/automobile/pensez-a-covoiturer-les-publicites-pour-des-voitures-devront-bientot-afficher-des-messages-encourageant-d-autres-modes-de-deplacement_4897481.html)

### **Ensure all Scottish Government transport policy and investments are compatible with net zero and the recommendations of STPR2**

The Scottish Government must ensure that all road investment and infrastructure is compatible with net zero and the sustainable travel hierarchy and the key themes and recommendations of STPR2. This should include revisiting the justification for major road-schemes against the STPR and exploring options for lower-cost, safety-related schemes. See CERG proposal on the Net Zero Test.

### **Data sharing standards and accessible data platforms**

Data sharing agreements and standards are needed to give decision-makers access to information that provides the necessary evidence to design and monitor effective transport projects by understanding and tracking changes in peoples' behaviour and travel experiences. This information is also required for the delivery of Mobility as a Service (MaaS). Data needs go beyond just a transport focus to include, for example, grid capacity and energy generation potential.

### **Scotland to act as champion for UK road user charging**

Scotland needs to shift the balance of costs away from default private car use in favour of active, public, and shared transport. Tailored road-user charging can play an important part in this, but it is difficult to introduce it without revision to vehicle excise duty and fuel duty which are reserved. The Scottish Government should champion the rapid and coordinated introduction of road-user charging in the UK, and other demand management measures which are within UK reserved powers.

## **What needs to be in the Scottish Budget (capital and resource)**

- Multi-year, flexible, outcome-oriented city transformation funding agreements (not necessarily brand-new investment, but existing capital commitments invested differently).
- Resource to ensure rapid delivery of the Bus Decarbonisation Route map.
- Resource for national and local engagement on modal shift and place-based transformations, and associated data and evidence.
- Incentives and resources for cities to take early action on demand management.



<sup>49</sup>Eg [RTPI | Net Zero Transport: the role of spatial planning and place-based solutions](#) (2021); [RTPI | RTPI Scotland's response to Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee inquiry](#) eg designing and locating development to maximise accessibility by public, active, shared modes of transport, and as a result support the recovery of public and shared transport, rather than drive the expansion of road use.





# 4

# 4

## Invest in advice and skills for a just transition for farmers and crofters

**The Scottish Government must publish comprehensive plans in 2023 to realign and upscale the provision of accessible advice and skills development to farmers and crofters to a £20m/yr service. As a result, from 2024, all farmers and crofters should receive the advice they need to transition to climate and nature friendly farming, respond to investment opportunities and to deliver sustainable economic and environmental outcomes.**

This will equip farmers and crofters with the knowledge and skills they need to help their business respond to the climate emergency and invest with confidence in low carbon, climate resilient, nature-friendly approaches.

### Why Scotland's climate emergency needs this action taken now

Accessible and tailored advice, knowledge sharing, and skills development must be at the heart of the agricultural transformation process. The Scottish Government needs to act now to realign and upscale its Farm Advisory Service and wider land-based learning system in order to deliver a just transition for the farming sector and to accelerate changes in land use and management as quickly as possible to meet its climate targets.

The Scottish Government has the powers to deliver these changes now – advice, training and knowledge sharing is fully within the government's control and requires no legislative changes. If acted on, this proposal will speed up the transition to achieve the government's vision of 'sustainable and regenerative farming'<sup>44</sup> by helping farmers, land managers and crofters understand and have the confidence to take up new measures at the earliest possible moment.

The Scottish Government's intention to realign and upscale its Farm Advisory Service (FAS) needs to be announced in 2022 with detailed plans published in 2023. This early signal will give the FAS providers the necessary time to plan for a managed transition of their services and ensure there are sufficient numbers of trained, experienced professionals with expertise on climate and nature-friendly practices ready to **scale up and renew the FAS contracts in 2024.**

Action can be taken now to lay the foundations of this new service through focused investment in **Continuous Professional Development (CPD) (particularly around climate mitigation, adaptation and nature) for all existing farm advisors and by incorporating mandatory advice into Track 2 of the National Test Programme.** This would maximise the impact of the test programme by enabling advisors to follow up on the results of carbon audits and soil testing with immediate actions and opportunities that farmers could take. This practice would also set a precedent for the future linking of advice to public investment.

<sup>44</sup> (Scottish Government, March 2022) [Sustainable and regenerative farming - next steps: statement - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/sustainable-and-regenerative-farming-next-steps-statement/pages/10-to-12.aspx)

The FAS is only one of the many channels through which current and future land managers, farmers and crofters build the skills and knowledge they need to respond and adapt to the climate and nature emergency. The whole land-based learning system, including Scotland’s secondary and tertiary education, careers advice, apprenticeships, volunteering, work-based learning, needs to build the skills required to deliver against low carbon, climate-resilient regional land use priorities, and designed to deliver more entrants, fairer work practices, and a more diverse sector. **A rapid, well-resourced response to the recommendations of the Commission on land-based learning, with tangible results in 2023 is essential.**

<p><b>Achieve / speed up rate of Scotland’s carbon abatement and deliver transformational change.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge and confidence to take up new measures to reduce emissions, sequester carbon, increase efficiency and add value. (Overcome non-financial barriers that prevent take up of low carbon farming measures and land use change)</li> <li>• Much wider take up of measures to deliver targets on agriculture emissions reduction, land-use change, woodland creation, peatland restoration / management, biodiversity restoration.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build resilience and adaptation to climate change</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural flood management.</li> <li>• ‘Future-proofed’ land management practices and food production.</li> <li>• Resilient / restored ecosystems, biodiversity &amp; soil health.</li> <li>• Increased awareness among farmers, landowners, and crofters of the potential climate risks to their businesses and land.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivering a Just Transition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New economic opportunities for farmers, crofters, land managers through a shift to multi-functional land use and greater efficiency.</li> <li>• Farmers able to make an informed response to new initiatives e.g., understanding the risks and opportunities of carbon markets, maximising profitability and efficiencies from capital grants and identify new market opportunities from climate friendly diets and the Sustainably Scottish brand.</li> <li>• A managed transition for land managers, farmers, and crofters to start their transition to net zero and make their businesses more resilient.</li> <li>• Green jobs - new advisor roles; access to income; new farm enterprises; improved opportunities for young people living in rural communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Co-Benefits (aligned policy priorities)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural employment and enterprises.</li> <li>• Sustainable low carbon, local food and drink production.</li> <li>• Biodiversity outcomes.</li> <li>• Increase in tailored advice to farmers and crofters on all aspects of farm/croft management, including measures to respond to the rising costs of materials, energy and living costs.</li> </ul>

**“...all farmers and crofters should receive the advice they need to transition to climate and nature friendly farming,”**

## Immediate implementation and laying foundations for the future

### 1. Announce the future scope and scale of advice, knowledge sharing and skills development for farmers in 2022 with detailed plans by 2023.

Advice, knowledge sharing and skills development for land managers need to be designed, equipped, and resourced to provide the necessary advice and outreach so that all farmers and crofters understand how the transition to net zero and the impact of climate change will affect their business, where potential opportunities lie, and that they are supported to act. The combined budget for training, knowledge sharing, and advice needs to rapidly increase year-on-year from 2024, scaling up to reach £20 million per annum by 2027.

An upscaled and realigned Farm Advisory Service is central to this and requires experienced professionals with a range of expertise, designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- Ensure advice and support reaches all land managers and farmers – through a place-based approach and a greater focus on community knowledge sharing and peer to peer learning (drawing on existing recommendations by groups such as Farming for 1.5 inquiry and the EU<sup>45</sup>).
- Diversify current advice so that it covers resource use, and measures for nature and climate at a whole-farm scale – either by providing advice directly or partnering with other experts. Advice should include topics such as soil health, water, agroforestry and agroecology, integrated land use, emissions reduction, carbon sequestration and climate adaptation, biodiversity, circular economy and renewable energy.
- Advisors act as a conduit and trusted broker for knowledge sharing between farmers, researchers, and innovation programmes.
- Empower farmers and land managers to understand the transition process and invest in their own CPD and knowledge sharing through stronger signposting / alignment with local training providers.

### 2. Mandatory advice needs to be built into farm-level support and capital grants, starting with Track 2 of the National Test Programme in 2022.

Greater efficiencies and improved outcomes can be achieved by building advice and knowledge sharing into the Agricultural Transformation Programme, capital grants and innovation programmes. For example, mandatory tailored advice on next steps should be provided following the completion of surveys and audits to help farmers and crofters analyse their results and inform management decisions. This will increase the likelihood of improved and additional outcomes and strengthen the links between FAS and farmers / land managers. Peer to peer learning and sharing will encourage community knowledge exchange and uptake of new practices.

<sup>45</sup>PREPARING FOR FUTURE AKIS IN EUROPE Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) 4th Report of the Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS). 2019

### 3. From 2022 the Scottish Government should refresh and extend mandatory CPD on climate and biodiversity for all new and existing farm advisors.

- Rapid review of existing CPD and (where relevant) update of education, training and CPD courses for all new and existing farm advisors to identify gaps and opportunities to update materials (review in 2022, new materials for 2023).
- Additional mandatory one-day CPD across the FAS to bring all advisors up to same level on the climate and biodiversity emergency as well as policy changes and new opportunities. Materials to be designed in 2022 and delivered in 2023 reaching all advisors and cascaded to other trusted people. To include:
  - o Climate literacy (emissions reduction pathways, nature-based solutions and adaptation including impacts already being felt)
  - o Policy context, direction of travel and implications for farming (climate change targets, agriculture transformation, integrated land use, biodiversity)
  - o Existing and new opportunities for farmers (National Test Programme, forestry grants, private finance, agroforestry etc.)
  - o Knowledge and lessons from innovation programmes (e.g., Farming for Better Climate, KTIF, National Test Programme etc.)
  - o Sources of knowledge / advice / training – relevant to RLUPs / catchments.
  - o Two-way knowledge exchange to capture advisors' perspectives to feed into future agriculture policy and design of future FAS.
- Resources should be ringfenced for this training and used to backfill the time spent by advisors on additional CPD.
- Include training of trainers approach to roll out to other local trusted professionals (vets, agronomists) to cascade knowledge, reinforce messaging, and provide follow-up.



## Key dependencies and wider changes

Farmers, crofters, and landowners are still facing a great deal of uncertainty around the future of agricultural support in Scotland, and this makes decision-making, investment, and long-term planning incredibly difficult. Even with access to the best possible advice and training, land managers will understandably remain reticent to make any improvements until there is clarity over what is required of them in the future. The process of policy making needs to be urgently speeded up with clarity on the transition period and the post-2025 regime. CERG continues to stand by its 2021 call for ‘a roadmap for rural support that clearly sets out how the agricultural sector will be supported to transition over time to deliver benefits for climate and nature’.

In addition, changes are needed beyond the Farm Advisory Service - a systemic and integrated response is required across all land-based training, advice, and education. CERG welcomes the work of the Commission for Land-based Learning, and CERG’s proposal deliberately does not pre-empt the outcome of the Commission’s investigations. It is critical the Commission’s recommendations are acted on with urgency. CERG would like to see the early identification of ‘no-regrets’ actions that align with the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan. These actions should be built into the 2022 PfG and 2023 budget process to kickstart the strengthening of the land-based training and education system as soon as possible. Emergency priority should be given to building a skilled workforce to tackle priority land management changes including woodland management/creation and peatland restoration.

### The 2023 Scottish Budget (capital and resource)

- Allocate budget to the whole FAS (or reallocate within the FAS) to backfill time for all advisors to attend additional one day Climate CPD.
- Secure match funding or assign budget for training providers to design and deliver climate and nature CPD courses in 2023.
- Up to 10% resource budget added onto National Test Programme to cover advice and knowledge sharing.

**“A rapid, well-resourced response to the recommendations of the Commission on land-based learning, with tangible results in 2023 is essential.”**

<sup>46</sup> For CERG’s previous work on this see: [CERG\\_Report\\_Final\\_Sept\\_2021.pdf](#); [CERG\\_budget\\_briefing.pdf](#); [Climate-Emergency-Statement-1.pdf \(cerg.scot\)](#)

<sup>47</sup> [Commission for the Land-Based Learning Review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

A low-angle, close-up photograph of a person's legs and feet as they walk across a crosswalk. The person is wearing blue jeans and maroon sneakers. A bicycle wheel is visible in the foreground, partially obscuring the person's legs. The background is blurred, showing other people and a city street. The text "Conclusion and Next Steps" is overlaid in large white font on the left side of the image.

# Conclusion and Next Steps

## Conclusion and Next Steps

The Climate Emergency Response Group decided to throw its collective weight behind this package of four proposals because they are essential to addressing the climate emergency. Without action in these areas, CERG believes Scotland's chances of meeting its targets is seriously at risk. And this is not just about meeting targets – this is about doing what's required to tackle the biggest crisis of our lifetime and securing a future for our children and grandchildren.

Every day policymakers are taking decisions that determine if we will continue to be reliant on volatile and climate-wrecking fossil fuels, or if we will secure a net-zero, climate-resilient future, with the benefits and costs shared fairly. CERG's proposals help guide these decisions and enable decisionmakers to do the right thing.

The Net Zero Test will lead to better policy and investment decisions, saving time and money along the way. Supporting local authorities to deliver on decarbonising our homes and city centre transformations will ensure solutions are tailored to local needs and circumstances. And building skills in our farmers and crofters will give the agriculture sector a head-start on shifting to low carbon practice and production.

The First Minister has said 'this is the decade for action.' We would go further and say this is the year for a tangible shift from strategy to action, with all parts including the public sector, business and civic society engaged and supported in the just transition to net zero.

**“...building skills in our farmers and crofters will give the agriculture sector a head-start on shifting to low carbon practice and production.”**







## Annex 1 – expert interviewees

**Karen Barrass**, Policy & Research Manager, UK 100

**Liz Barron-Majerik**, Director, Lantra Scotland

**Andrew Bauer**, Head of Food and Footprint, SAC Consulting

**James Black**, Knowledge Exchange Fellow, Fraser of Allander Institute

**Fiona Brannigan**, Senior Auditor, Audit Scotland

**Jamie Brogan**, Head of Climate Partnerships, University of Edinburgh

**Caroline Brown**, Lecturer in Environmental Planning & Healthy Environments, The Urban Institute, Herriot-Watt University

**Jim Densham**, Campaigns and Policy Manager, Scotland, Cycling UK in Scotland

**Craig Hatton**, Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council and Climate Change Lead, SOLACE

**Stuart Hay**, Director, Living Streets Scotland

**Anna Herriman**, Senior Partnership Manager, SEStran

**Judi Kilgallon**, Climate Change Transformation Manager, Improvement Service

**Keith Masson**, Head of Net Zero Transition, Highlands and Islands Enterprise

**Paula McLeay**, Head of Policy & Insight, City of Edinburgh Council

**Robert Nicol**, Chief Officer - Environment and Economy, COSLA

**Mairi Spowage**, Director, Fraser of Allander Institute

**Chris Stark**, Chief Executive, Climate Change Committee

**George Tarvit**, Director, Sustainable Scotland Network

**Ruth Taylor**, Agriculture and Land Use Policy Manager, WWF Scotland

**Sally Thompson**, Audit Manager, Audit Scotland

**Mary Thomson**, Vice Principal Skills and Lifelong Learning, SRUC

**Clare Wharmby**, Carbon Innovation Manager, Edinburgh Climate Change Institute

The **Scottish Cities Alliance** supported **CERG** to seek the input from staff representatives of the 7 Scottish cities.

“...this is the year for a tangible shift from strategy to action...”



The organisations supporting the work and progress of the Climate Emergency Response Group are:

