



Local Authorities Briefing: Taking Carbon Management to the Next Level

November 2012

The majority of local authorities in the UK have set carbon reduction targets, put in place energy efficiency projects and even started to see some positive results in terms of carbon reduction. However, going forward it is likely to become more difficult to achieve the level of carbon reductions required to meet the UK and Scottish targets.

Who are we?

Carbon Masters is a carbon management company based in Edinburgh. Our mission is to assist organisations to measure, manage, reduce and report their carbon emissions. Carbon Masters have worked with several local authorities and have developed skills and expertise unique to the challenges faced by this sector. Our current list of public sector clients includes:



What challenges do local authorities face and how can Carbon Masters help?

Challenge: Reducing carbon is becoming an operational necessity not just a civic responsibility

Local authorities are already facing significant increases in energy costs against a background of reduced budgets. On average, gas bills for medium non-domestic customers have gone up 41% in last 2 years, with electricity bills up 15%. This upward trend is likely to continue due to a combination of wholesale price increases, ageing UK energy infrastructure and the impacts of environmental policies. Given that an average UK council is already paying around £4.5 million a year in energy costs, with some paying as much as £20 million, reducing energy bills is not simply a question of civic responsibility but is an operational imperative. Failure to reduce energy bills could mean further cuts to jobs and services.

Solution: We assist clients on their complete carbon journey, rather than one-off projects.



Reducing energy and carbon requires long-term vigilance. There are no silver bullets or one-off solutions; what's needed instead is an ongoing process of measuring emissions, developing an appropriate strategy, designing and implementing solutions, and re-assessing. Carbon Masters understand that most local authorities are not starting from scratch with this issue but having been working for several years to reduce their carbon emissions and related energy bills. Our approach is not a one-size-fits-all solution, instead we work with each of our clients to assess where the organisation currently stands, where its aiming to get to and how we can help. This might involve assessing the energy rating of your buildings, developing a business case for low

carbon technologies, or linking you with technical experts. No matter where your organisation is on its low carbon journey, we can work with you to identify the right approach going forward.

Challenge: Cutting carbon can be difficult across a large and diverse property portfolio

Local authorities own and manage large and complex property portfolios and with pressure on budgets there is a need to prioritise which carbon reduction initiatives to pursue. Many councils lack a proper overview of the total carbon assets they are sitting on, making it difficult to work out where they can get the best return on limited investments. In addition, sorting and analysing carbon data across so many sites can be time-consuming, and if done using spreadsheets there is potential for error.

Solution: Using innovative software to improve data management and get a clearer picture of the carbon assets across your organisation

We have a suite of software called **Carbon Guru** designed to help manage and analyse carbon data:

1. Carbon Guru For Organisations is designed to help you calculate your organisation's carbon footprint as well as organise and store your energy, waste, water, transport and fugitive emission data in an effective way. The software can be configured to your exact requirements – councils can measure emissions across all operations which can be broken down into divisions or individual sites to enable benchmarking and comparison. This can help to identify which activities emit the most carbon and therefore appropriately prioritise efforts.

2. Carbon Guru for Low Carbon Buildings is a suite of building information management tools that can measure the energy and carbon asset rating of an individual or portfolio of buildings. Carbon Masters then compare this with each building's actual operational rating to develop recommendations on which improvement measures are the most carbon and cost effective and what the likely payback times are.

Challenge: Conflicting carbon reporting requirements

Local authorities face increasing scrutiny on their carbon performance. They are encouraged to report their carbon emissions through voluntary reporting initiatives such as DECC's 'Sharing Information on Greenhouse Gas Emissions...' (previously NI 185) and the Scottish Climate Change Declarations. They are also required to measure emissions under legislation such as CRC and EU ETS. Reporting in line with a plethora of different regimes is time-consuming and requires expertise.

Solution: Advice from independent experts (+ software to assist)

Carbon Masters are carbon footprinting experts with in-depth knowledge of global carbon reporting initiatives such as GHG Protocol and ISO 14064, as well as sector-specific guidance provided by DECC and other bodies. Carbon Masters can assist by providing a road map which navigates the complexities of climate change legislation and lays out best practice in measuring an organisational carbon footprint. Our Carbon Guru for Organisations software can be used to prepare bespoke carbon reports to meet internal and external reporting requirements. The software has an in-built quality assurance step which means before you can report your figures, one of our analysts will look at every data entry to identify errors and ensure the final figures are accurate.

Challenge: Lack of recognition or reward for your carbon reduction achievements

Local authorities have already made significant strides towards managing and reducing their carbon emissions. Data from DECC's recent 'Sharing Information on Greenhouse Gas Emissions...' initiative (previously NI 185) suggests that as many as 80% of the local authorities who have reported their emissions to DECC over the last three years have achieved a reduction in their carbon emissions. Gaining recognition from stakeholders and the general public for good carbon management practices can be challenging, however, as it not an area of expertise widely understood.

Solution: Certification under an Environment Agency Approved Scheme



From left: Kevin Houston, Carbon Masters Director, MSP Stewart Stevenson awarding Carbon Masters Standard to David Lister, Edinburgh Airport Sustainability Director.

Our carbon emission reduction and certification scheme, the Carbon Masters Standard, is designed to help organisations gain recognition and reward for reducing their emissions. The scheme is approved by the UK Environment Agency as a Carbon Trust Equivalent, which means organisations who achieve the Standard can impact their ranking in the CRC Performance League Table, published annually. As part of the process of achieving the Standard, Carbon Masters will coordinate with your press team to assist in sharing your good news with the local and national media. We work with an award-winning PR consultancy Carlos Alba Media to help publicise your success.

Why Carbon Masters?

Carbon Masters overarching aim is to give your organisation the tools and ongoing support to help you develop the skills you need to reduce carbon emissions year on year. Working with us you will benefit from face-to-face support from our highly qualified team, all of whom have postgraduate qualifications in Carbon Management or Sustainable Energy Systems. We're based at the University of Edinburgh and maintain close links with some of the world's leading climate change scientists and carbon economists – meaning we are always on top of the latest developments. Here are a few examples of our work with local authorities:

East Dunbartonshire Council



East Dunbartonshire Council was the first council in the UK to sign up for the Carbon Masters Package which includes Carbon Masters Standard, use of Carbon Guru For Organisations and independent verification in line with ISO 14064(3) by our low carbon auditors

Grontmij (see details on next page). Carbon Masters worked closely with the Council to assist them in gathering three years of emissions data for their application to the Carbon Masters Standard. The data was entered onto Carbon Guru software platform by Carbon Masters analysts with documents such as energy bills uploaded to ensure there was a clear and transparent record of how emissions had been calculated. The council then went through a rigorous assessment process carried out by independent assessors at Grontmij. Joe Wilson, Climate Change Team Leader from East Dunbartonshire Council said ***'The Carbon Masters Standard really helped test and further improve our internal data management processes for collecting carbon management data. Especially around the area of transport'***

West Dunbartonshire Council

West Dunbartonshire Council also signed up for the Carbon Masters package. The council had already taken significant steps to reduce their emissions, and were delighted to discover that they had achieved an 11% reduction over the three year period measured for Carbon Masters Standard. This was largely due to using more fuel efficient vehicles and changing behavior and habits in the workplace to bring energy usage down. Carbon Masters held an awards ceremony with West Dunbartonshire Council, to present their Carbon Masters Standard certificate and celebrate their new fleet of electric vehicles. Councillor David McBride, Convener of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development, said: ***"We are delighted to have attained this significant award which recognises that this council is taking its climate change responsibilities very seriously. To be one of the first Councils in the UK to achieve this recognition is great and it is certainly something we are committed to further improving in the years to come."***



From left: Jim McAloon, Head of Regeneration & Economic Development, Kevin Houston, Carbon Masters CEO, Cllr David McBride & Joyce White, Chief Executive

North Lincolnshire Council



North Lincolnshire Council have also successfully achieved the Carbon Masters Standard this year, having demonstrated a 12% reduction in their carbon emissions over a 3-year period. North Lincolnshire Council will be formally awarded their Carbon Masters Standard certificate November later this year during Switch Off Fortnight.

Carbon Masters Package for Local Authorities

Carbon Masters offer a carbon management package designed for local authorities who are already starting to see some results in terms of reducing their carbon emissions, but need some help on how to take their carbon management practices to the next level. It consists of three main elements:



1. Use of our industry-leading carbon accounting software solution Carbon Guru for Organisations.

- Intuitive interface suitable for use by all.
- In-depth support & training provided.
- Wide range of emissions sources covered – including Scope 3 such as waste, water & business travel.
- Improved data management - all quantitative & qualitative data, bills & invoices stored in one place.
- Automatically applies relevant, up-to-date emissions factors.
- In accordance with GHG Protocol & ISO 14064 (1)



2. Assisted Certification under the Carbon Masters Standard, our carbon emission reduction and certification scheme.

- Environment Agency approved (under CRC scheme)
- Provides road map for best in class carbon management
- Improves CRC Performance League Table position
- Demonstrates leadership to stakeholders & within sector
- Developed with assistance from leading climate change scientists & business leaders.
- Final recommendation report after the certification process is completed pointing out areas for further improvement

Independent verification



3. Independent 3rd party verification by Grontmij, one of Europe's leading environmental and engineering consultancies

- Grontmij will verify 3 years of historical GHG emissions data in line with ISO 14064 (part 3) as well as independently assess your application to the Carbon Masters Standard.
- On-site visit to assess your carbon and energy data management
- Observations and recommendations report provided

Carbon Masters can provide a proposal tailored to your organisation's precise requirements. Indicative costs (excluding VAT) for the Carbon Masters package are detailed below:

Energy Bill	Indicative costs
£500k-£5m	£12,000
Over £10m	£14,000

This typically includes:

- an annual GHG assessment on Carbon Guru (including software license costs, configuration, quality assurance, training & ongoing support, unlimited users and upload of historical data)
- Assisted certification under Carbon Masters Standard (lasts for 2 years from date of award)
- Independent 3rd party verification of GHG emissions data.

Contact Aphra Morrison (Aphra@carbonmasters.co.uk) & Tom Gibbs (Tom@carbonmasters.co.uk) for further information.