

## Climate Change Plan call for views: summary of responses for non-sector specific questions

The Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee ran a proactive [Call for Views on the forthcoming Draft Climate Change Plan \(CCP\)](#) from 27 June to 19 September 2025. This SPICe briefing highlights key non-sector specific issues raised by respondents. It is not intended to be a comprehensive summary, but a brief overview of key issues raised. Full responses are published on the Scottish Parliament website: [Published responses for Draft Climate Change Plan Scrutiny 2025 - Scottish Parliament - Citizen Space](#).

A table of acronyms used to refer to the organisations that submitted responses is included at the end of the document.<sup>1</sup>

### Funding the changes required to meet emission reduction targets

Overall, responses call for a coherent and inclusive approach to financing climate action that delivers social, environmental and economic benefits. Respondents argued that Scotland's transition to net zero will require a robust, fair and transparent funding strategy that mobilises both public and private finance. Many responses emphasised the importance of embedding justice in funding decisions, applying the Polluter Pays Principle and ensuring fiscal clarity. Public investment was seen as essential, particularly for local authorities and SMEs, with many respondents arguing that private finance must be well-regulated and aligned with public goals. Sector-specific approaches and long-term planning were widely supported and respondents warned that the cost of inaction would outweigh the investment needed now.

### Just transition

Many respondents emphasised that climate action must be fair, inclusive, and rights-based, ensuring that vulnerable communities are protected and no one is left behind. Dr Lea Raible, Dr Kat Fradera and Dr Rebecca Williams (University of Glasgow) stressed that "any funding model needs to avoid putting the costs onto individuals who have limited opportunity to choose emissions reduction practices." ClimateXChange echoed this, citing deliberative research showing that people "wanted to see an equitable approach, meaning that everyone contributes but not all in the same way or by the same amount."

Organisations proposed various mechanisms to embed justice in funding. PHS, FDFS, the Highland Council and the RESPECT project advocated for community wealth building, with PHS highlighting its potential health equity benefits. South Lanarkshire Council called for regional Climate Action Hubs, while SCCS argued for Scottish Ministers to have a statutory duty to have regard to the Just Transition

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The table includes all organisations that submitted a response to the Call for Views. However, not all organisations responded to every section, and not all acronyms appear in each briefing.

Commission's advice. The ALLIANCE proposed human rights budgeting to guide fiscal policy.

Balancing fairness with feasibility was a recurring theme. The AGS noted that some changes, like installing new heating systems or discouraging car use, would incur costs for individuals, and the government would need to consider how to balance these with its Just Transition ambitions. This tension between equity and practicality was a common thread across responses.

## **Polluter Pays Principle**

The Polluter Pays Principle was widely supported, with respondents agreeing that those responsible for the most emissions should bear the greatest financial burden. Individuals, including Doreen Osborne and Alex Cochrane, called for taxing high-carbon lifestyles, arguing that behaviours such as excessive aviation and meat consumption should reflect their true environmental costs.

Organisations proposed structured mechanisms to implement this principle. Culture for Climate Scotland suggested levies on for-profit, carbon-intensive companies, while FOES advocated for progressive revenue generation that incentivises emission reductions among wealthy individuals and businesses. SPT recommended demand management policies like road user charging to fund sustainable transport.

Several responses stressed the need for careful design to avoid regressive impacts. RCPE proposed shifting the burden from households to high-emissions sectors by introducing or expanding carbon pricing, levies or taxes on high-emissions industries, reinvesting revenue into low-carbon alternatives.

## **Transparency and clarity**

Transparency in funding climate action was a key concern. The AGS called for clear identification of resource and capital costs for each CCP policy, and alignment with the five-year carbon budget framework. The AGS also stressed the importance of long-term financial planning and investor confidence, noting that "clarity and transparency around respective private sector and public sector funding" is essential.

Orkney Islands Council and the Highland Council echoed these calls, emphasising that policy cycles and funding allocations must align with carbon budget timelines. Consumer Scotland and WWFS supported fiscal transparency, while Perth and Kinross Council argued that transparency should be embedded across all budget items, including education, infrastructure and health.

AGS also recommended a "clear line of sight between the costs set out in the CCP and spending allocations in the Scottish Budget," a view supported by multiple organisations. This clarity was seen as crucial for effective planning, public trust and private sector engagement.

## **Public investment**

Public investment was near-universally recognised as essential. Responses highlighted the need for strategic, targeted and long-term public investment aligned

with climate goals. For example, FDFS called for targeted grants for SMEs, and PHS called for targeted investment where societal benefits (including health and health equity gains) are greatest. ClimateXChange argued that "funding must be aligned with long-term, high-impact outcomes - not short-term optics or narrowly defined technical fixes." CERG called for the Scottish Government to "consider and quantify the whole life climate impact of all government policies, budgets and projects through roll out of the Net Zero Assessment", to support investments and decisions that align with achieving carbon budgets. RCPE argued that strategic investment could generate long-term savings by reducing health system burdens from air pollution, poor housing and climate-related emergencies.

Local authorities, including East Dunbartonshire, Highland, Orkney Islands, Perth and Kinross and South Lanarkshire Councils, stressed the need for clarity in funding responsibilities, multi-year funding and support to overcome capacity barriers and deliver place-based climate action. SRAEHL argued that a major barrier for councils is the lack of upfront funding to develop capacity and a pipeline of viable projects. They recommended the creation of a Scottish project development unit and the use of the National Wealth Fund to attract capital into heat and buildings. This, they argued, would support a just and effective transition to net zero. Organisations, such as SSN and Homes for Scotland, emphasised the importance of investing in rural areas, underserved communities and circular economy infrastructure. SSN noted that capacity to identify local area interventions and connect them with finance and investment mechanisms is crucial. SEDA warned that "if investment continues to favour large-scale, centralised infrastructure or new build development over retrofit, maintenance, and local supply chains, Scotland risks locking in high emissions and widening inequality."

Many respondents supported using fiscal tools to raise climate funds. Some individuals proposed wealth taxes, frequent flyer levies and taxing polluting behaviours. Several organisations referred to new revenue generation, and some stressed the need for progressive taxation to avoid regressive impacts. For example, SCCS refer to their [2022 report on fiscal measures to tackle the climate crisis](#) and [2025 briefing on policy priorities](#) setting out potential measures to generate new revenue, including in relation to private jet use. IPPR Scotland state that, for most households, additional taxes would be lower than the costs they would face if left to finance their decarbonisation costs themselves.

Several organisations (including FDFS, Get Glasgow Moving and Glasgow City Council) noted a potential role for green bonds, with others suggesting evergreen investment funds (East Dunbartonshire Council), devolved revenue raising powers (Get Glasgow Moving). HES called for multi-year funding to enable significant works, with Logistics UK noting that extending grants beyond one-year would build confidence that schemes would continue to be available and to allow for the timing of procurement cycles.

Conditionality was another theme. RSPB Scotland criticised timid approaches to conditionality in Direct Payments [to farmers], while RMT called for public subsidies to include conditions of supporting local employment, fair work and robust health and safety standards. Others, like Quakers in Scotland and Doreen Osborne, urged carbon impact assessments for all publicly funded projects. RCPE also called for all spending decisions to be subject to a climate and health test, and for public

procurement to be required to prioritise local, low-emissions, health-promoting goods and services.

## **Private finance**

Private finance was seen as vital, especially for infrastructure, retrofit and innovation. The AGS recommended that ideally, the CCP should outline how costs will be split between public and private finance, which would help inform the Scottish Government's consideration of how it can leverage such finance and whether there is a need for new mechanisms or specific instruments to shape the market.

Organisations proposed a range of mechanisms and approaches, including blended finance models, Regulated Asset Base (RAB) models, contracts for difference (CfDs) and green bonds. UKERC, CEP and the Highland Council supported RAB models and trade policies to attract investment. Glasgow City Council emphasised the role of the Scottish National Investment Bank in de-risking projects. Individuals tended to focus more on household level support. For example Angeli Mehta suggested "public private finance initiatives that would allow households to pay back the cost of installation by sharing the benefits of lower energy bills."

Concerns about regulation and alignment with public goals were common. PHS warned that "market driven solutions could fail to deliver a wider range of benefits." RCPE stressed the need for governance frameworks to protect community interests and ensure responsible investment. RSPB Scotland highlighted the fragility of funding to administer the Peatland Code, arguing that "the government could help underpin the private finance markets by ensuring that robustness of the structures by which the markets operate." The RESPECT project questioned whether "using public funds to create, regulate and provide guarantees for a high-integrity private market is the most effective use of those funds, compared to direct public investment" and cautioned against reliance on unregulated carbon markets.

## **Sector-specific funding**

Tailored funding approaches were widely supported, with agriculture, transport and buildings frequently mentioned. In buildings, AGS referenced their 2024 report on [Decarbonising heat in homes](#), urging clarity on public investment and value for money, including considering how to create the right conditions for private investment. CIAT proposed treating retrofit as infrastructure investment, "funded through borrowing, which can be repaid as a result of increased productivity growing the tax base, as well as lower costs for, e.g., heat or cold related health problems." SEDA called for VAT reductions on retrofit to match new-build rates.

Some responses expressed concern about underfunding and slow progress in specific sectors. For example, RMT criticised underfunding of measures to deliver modal shift to public transport and called for ring-fenced funding. Doreen Osborne advocated that policy in sustainable transport could be seen as an opportunity to reallocate costs within existing budgets to shift burdens from low- to high-income groups. Colleges Scotland and Scottish Care raised concerns about unmet funding needs in the colleges and care sectors respectively.

## Cost of inaction

The cost of inaction was raised by many respondents, who argued that failing to act would result in greater economic, social and environmental harm, and that decisive action now is both the cheapest and most responsible path forward.

SCCS cited evidence from the [Office for Budget Responsibility](#) and the [Institute and Faculty of Actuaries](#) to argue that "the costs of inaction are significant" and should be the benchmark for evaluating climate spending. WWFS warned that "the economic damage from unchecked climate change mounts sharply and soon," citing evidence from the [Royal Scottish Geography Society](#).

PHS noted that while the costs of delivering the CCP are significant, "the costs of inaction [are] greater," and that a fair and healthy transition could deliver health and equity benefits. Transform Scotland framed the issue in moral terms, asserting that "Scotland must be a strong voice on the global stage, making the environmental, social, economic and moral case for strong action."

## Governance arrangements needed in the Scottish Government to ensure effective delivery of the CCP

Across responses there was strong consensus on the need for clearer accountability, cross-sector coordination and independent oversight. Organisations and individuals alike stressed that governance must be robust, transparent and capable of driving delivery at the pace required to meet Scotland's climate targets. While individuals tended to focus on principles such as leadership, simplicity and independence from vested interests, organisations provided more detailed proposals including statutory duties, programme boards and regional empowerment. There was widespread concern about fragmentation, lack of clarity and political inertia, with many calling for structural reform and mission-based approaches to overcome these barriers.

## Cross-Government coordination

Respondents consistently emphasised the need for strong coordination across government departments, sectors, and levels of governance.

NFUS highlighted the importance of integrating climate policy with existing rural and agricultural strategies, such as the [Scottish Biodiversity Strategy](#) and the [Land Use Strategy](#). BHHPA called for alignment with other strategies, highlighting the [Draft Environment Strategy](#) as usefully bringing climate, biodiversity and pollution together, but noting overlap with the CCP and that "It is essential that Government integrates these two frameworks clearly, so operators such as parks can contribute effectively without navigating duplicate or inconsistent obligations."

SEPA referenced the [Climate Change Committee's \(CCC's\) 2023 progress report](#) and calling for a broadened approach to coordination that includes regulators and other public bodies. They warned that "without a joined-up approach there is a danger that opportunities are missed to deliver actions which... provide significant social, environmental and economic co-benefits." SEStran stated that "cross-

government collaboration is vital, ensuring alignment across departments and with regional authorities to avoid duplication and maintain policy coherence.”

RCPE advocated for embedding health institutions into climate governance, proposing that PHS, Health Boards and NHS Scotland be integrated into decision-making structures. They argued that governance must be "transparent, health-integrated, cross-cutting and accountable," and recommended Health Impact Assessments for all major emissions policies. RSPB Scotland pointed out a disconnect between high-level political will and implementation, particularly in agriculture and land use, suggesting that climate action is being siloed.

CEP called for governance arrangements that recognise interdependencies across sectors, proposing dedicated units within government to focus on net zero skills, supply chains, and economic planning. UKERC, represented by Prof Jan Webb and Dr Jess Britton, stressed that carbon budgets must be institutionalised across all government decision-making and public spending. SCCS supported the establishment of a First Minister-led Cabinet sub-committee with external members, backed by a cross-divisional programme management board and delivery boards for individual policies. Aberdeen City Council reinforced this by stating that "governance must ensure continuity, accountability, coordination and policy coherence across departments and political cycles." Culture for Climate Scotland stressed that the climate change team needs more dedicated budget to help other departments meet their obligations.

## **Transparency, accountability and independent oversight**

Transparency and accountability were central concerns for many respondents, who called for clear ownership of actions, regular reporting, and independent scrutiny mechanisms.

Organisations such as ClimateXChange, CEP, UKERC, FOES and IPPR Scotland, called for robust frameworks to monitor emissions reductions, wider benefits and enabling actions. East Dunbartonshire Council emphasised the need for mechanisms to independently scrutinise government spending against statutory targets, while SEDA called for a coherent governance framework that ensures alignment, transparency and accountability. SEStran emphasised that risk management systems “should be evidence-based, enabling early identification and escalation of climate-related risks.”

The AGS outlined a comprehensive framework for governance, including clear roles and remits for governance groups, alignment across departments, structured reporting, and effective risk management. They stressed the importance of costed delivery plans linked to the Scottish Budget, stating that "to allow consistent monitoring and effective scrutiny... there must be a clear line of sight between the costs set out in the CCP and spending allocations." SEPA similarly emphasised that "roles and responsibilities should be stated clearly within the plan". ClimateXChange referenced their previous work on [improving the emissions assessment of Scottish Government spending decisions and the Scottish Budget](#).

PropertyMark advocated for "transparent and regular reporting on key milestones and targets." RCPE stated that "transparent monitoring builds trust, accountability,

and public engagement," which are essential for delivering the CCP, and recommended the role and resourcing of Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS) and Audit Scotland (AS) be strengthened to track carbon-related public expenditure, noting that this would enhance trust and accountability.

SCCS proposed evolving the CCP Advisory Group into a partnership to monitor and accelerate progress. SCCS supported statutory changes including the introduction of a human right to a healthy environment, full compliance with the Aarhus Convention, and the establishment of a specialist environmental court to strengthen citizens' ability to hold government accountable. SCCS also propose establishing the Just Transition Commission on a long-term, statutory footing. The ALLIANCE also proposed legal reform, "Incorporating the right to a healthy environment into Scots law... would assist the meeting of climate targets."

## **Mission-based delivery and structural reform**

A number of organisations advocated for a mission-based approach to governance, arguing that current structures are insufficient to drive delivery at the required pace.

CERG referenced their latest briefing on [Embedding delivery in Scotland's Climate Change Plan](#) and warned against a "plan first, think about delivery later" mentality and recommended embedding delivery into the CCP through programme boards with named accountability and transparent allocation of responsibilities. They proposed a full review of the Scottish Government's climate governance structures, systems, and processes, to be conducted by an independent expert. WWFS urged Ministers to complete and publish the promised review of climate governance, set out in the [Scottish Government response to the Public Audit Committee in September 2023](#), questioning whether current structures have "the authority, skills, data access and resources to unblock delivery at pace."

Professor Jan Webb and Dr Jess Britton (University of Edinburgh), in the UKERC response, suggested establishing an independent delivery authority accountable to Parliament, with a statutory requirement to focus on outcomes against carbon budgets. They argued that "effective action on five-year carbon budgets would require rapid resolution of governance structures." RCPE proposed the creation of a cross-ministerial Climate Delivery Unit reporting directly to the First Minister or Deputy First Minister, including senior officials from health, housing, energy, transport, finance, and land use. This unit would be empowered to coordinate across departments, resolve conflicts and enforce progress.

SCCS supported the establishment of delivery boards for major transformations in heat, transport, and land use, with public reporting on progress. They argued that missions are particularly suitable for overseeing delivery of issues requiring significant system coordination across multiple actors. HES called for the Global Climate Emergency Programme Board to oversee the publication of implementation plans for each sector shortly after the CCP is laid in Parliament, to enable stakeholders to access information and plan ahead accordingly. SEDA recommended bringing retrofit and low-carbon construction into the regulatory sphere, with clearly defined roles for the Building Standards Division and an independent performance verification body.

SCIS emphasised that to support more effective delivery, the CCP should provide “clarity on how policies will be implemented, with details of which organisations are responsible for these interventions, what they are designed to achieve, and crucially how progress will be measured.” SCIS also called for a more agile, responsive, targeted, and effective approach to delivery of the aims, benefits and outcomes of the CCP, by ensuring policies and interventions were updatable:

“Establishing a live and updated list of policies and interventions to apply, supported by a dynamic monitoring process, would support more agile and effective planning and delivery, allowing revision of the plan in response to progress, insights, and emerging opportunities.”

## **Local empowerment and regional delivery**

There was widespread support for empowering local authorities and regional bodies to play a central role in climate action. Orkney Islands Council stated that “top-down policies go some way to delivering change, but will achieve far greater impact if they are focused through local knowledge and networks.” Highland Council emphasised that governance must reflect “the disproportionate contribution of the Highlands in renewable generation and land-based removals.”

South Lanarkshire Council noted that governance arrangements must “fit the reality of how local authorities operate,” including political engagement and adequate resourcing. South Lanarkshire Council, Aberdeen City Council and the SSN supported the continuation and strengthening of the [Climate Delivery Framework](#) to improve governance, coordination and action across national and local government. PHS also highlighted the Framework’s role in integrating monitoring with adaptive learning and wider stakeholder engagement.

UKERC proposed a direct policy mandate for localities to meet carbon budgets, institutionalised local carbon planning through statutory powers and devolved resources, and investment in local authority carbon reduction teams. They argued that multi-year funding is essential to end stop-start initiatives and build a robust pipeline of viable projects. SEDA called for community representation in governance structures to ensure decisions reflect lived experience and local priorities.

East Dunbartonshire Council, ClimateXChange and SCIS emphasised the need for joint governance arrangements, regional delivery plans, and capacity to identify local interventions. Climate Café Shetland called for “regional delivery plans as a partnership of industry, local authority, third sector etc.” The RESPECT project urged support for Regional Land Use Partnerships and better integration of laws and policies relating to agricultural peatlands.

## **Broader environmental and social considerations**

Respondents stressed that governance must incorporate broader environmental and social considerations beyond carbon metrics. SEDA warned that “over-prioritising carbon as the only metric can obscure other pressing crises,” and called for integrated approaches that address soil health, water systems, biodiversity, and ecological resilience. Culture for Climate Scotland advocated for a shift towards a wellbeing-focused economy, aligned with the Wellbeing and Sustainable

Development (Scotland) Bill. SCCS supported the proposed Bill as a means to enhance clarity and accountability in achieving net zero and a just transition.

ClimateXChange called for governance arrangements that link climate policy with nature restoration, land reform and circular economy principles. They highlighted the importance of avoiding narrowly defined technical fixes and instead pursuing systemic change. The Highland Council and SSN also supported holistic approaches that integrate climate action with broader sustainability goals.

CERG noted that the governance system must also track wider economic, social, and environmental outcomes, not just emissions reductions. PHS also called for “comprehensive frameworks that monitor emissions reductions, wider benefits, delivery of enabling actions to support system change, finance, and governance.”

## **Climate literacy and capacity building**

Building institutional capacity and climate literacy was seen as essential for effective governance. CIAT recommended that the Scottish Government ensure robust processes are in place to regularly review regulatory requirements, allowing for a "ratcheting up of standards over time." SEDA argued that governance must include a strategy for building climate literacy within the public sector itself.

Several respondents argued that legislation alone is insufficient without a shared understanding and commitment. They called for investment in education, training, and institutional reform to build the capacity needed to deliver the CCP effectively. For example, Dr Dominic Hinde (University of Glasgow) recommended a dedicated programme of internal training and communications, as well as external engagement, to establish a shared national "transition narrative." They argued this would help centre the work of decarbonisation within organisations and foster a cohesive understanding across multiple levels of government and society. Examples from Denmark and the Netherlands were cited as best-case scenarios where cohesive messaging has supported effective climate action. PHS emphasised the need for climate literacy and institutional capacity within the public sector, noting that anchor institutions like the NHS and local government can play a key role in implementing community wealth building, which could support a fair and healthy transition to a low-carbon economy. They noted that this must be inclusive, well-resourced and part of a wider strategy.

## **Stakeholder engagement and co-production**

Stakeholder engagement was widely recognised as vital for socially just and effective climate governance. Scottish Care called for co-production with care providers, people who access social care services, and social care staff. The ALLIANCE recommended that the development and delivery of the CCP be coproduced with those impacted, including people with lived and living experience and frontline staff.

FDFS stated that “Ongoing partnership with industry, workers, communities, and local government is essential.” SEDA recommended formal stakeholder forums to ensure the CCP remains responsive to emerging evidence, innovation, and barriers in practice. They also called for participatory governance that includes industry

representatives, trade unions, education providers, and civil society groups. IPPR Scotland and the BHHPA supported deliberative participatory approaches and cross-sector taskforces. RCPE proposed establishing a permanent Citizens' Climate Assembly and funding community climate partnerships, such as community-led retrofit and food growing initiatives.

Homes for Scotland advocated for industry collaboration through mechanisms like a Scottish Future Homes Hub, which could guide future changes to building standards for new build homes. SEStran emphasised structured partnerships with industry to co-develop low-carbon solutions, support innovation and align regulatory frameworks with business capabilities. They also called for incentives for green investment and support for SMEs.

## **How the Scottish Government can ensure transparent monitoring and reporting on progress**

Across responses, there was strong consensus on the importance of clarity, accessibility and accountability. Individuals emphasised public trust, plain language, and the right to know, while organisations proposed detailed frameworks, independent oversight and integration with existing systems. There was broad agreement that monitoring must be inclusive, data-driven and adaptive, with clear milestones and co-benefit indicators. Respondents also stressed the need for alignment with local data and public body reporting duties.

### **Annual reporting and public dashboards**

Respondents widely supported annual reporting and the use of public dashboards to track progress against climate targets. SCCS stated: "The Scottish Government should maintain annual reporting on greenhouse gas emissions data... and annual progress reports on the delivery of policies and proposals set out in the CCP." Aberdeen City Council called for "open-access dashboards of progress using simple, timely metrics alongside technical emissions data." RCPE proposed a dashboard "showing progress in real time, broken down by Sector (e.g. transport, buildings, agriculture), Region, and by key health and equity metrics."

PHS noted that "inclusively designed and accessible visual tools such as dashboards can help to communicate the vision, and progress toward it." Anderson Bell + Christie Architects recommended "annual publications with clear data, accessible summaries, and visual dashboards to engage stakeholders effectively." East Dunbartonshire Council suggested an annual monitoring report against milestones such as modal shift, EV uptake, and nature-based solutions. Seafood Scotland and the BHHPA also supported public dashboards.

Scottish Care cautioned that "this must be done in a way that is proportionate and supported by capacity-building," noting that many care providers lack the resources to collect and report detailed emissions data. NFU Scotland stressed that "on-farm monitoring and reporting abilities in Scotland need to be improved," and called for immediate delivery of the LiDAR programme. Homes for Scotland argued that transparency must be embedded in both the design and monitoring of the CCP.

Cycling UK, FOES and Consumer Scotland reinforced the importance of dashboards as tools for public engagement and accountability. They argued that dashboards should not only track emissions but also show progress on enabling actions and co-benefits. Orkney Islands Council added that regional disaggregation would allow for tailored interventions and fair comparisons across areas.

## **Public accessibility and engagement**

Many respondents stressed that monitoring must be understandable and accessible to the public. Dr Lea Raible and colleagues emphasised the need for "timely, useful and adequate access to environmental information for individuals and relevant stakeholders" and RCPE proposed embedding a "right to know" for the public; both referenced the requirements of the Aarhus Convention to ensure timely access to useful environmental information.

The ALLIANCE recommended that outputs be "available to the public in a non-complex and accessible format," including explanations for decisions. Glasgow City Council noted that while emissions data is published annually, it is "not accessible or tailored to public audiences," and suggested using tools like ClimateView [used by the SCIS] to improve communication. PHS added that dashboards can be a "powerful tool to engage partners, stakeholders and the public." Dr Dominic Hinde also emphasised the role of communication in building trust and inspiring behaviour change: "Transparency is a key part of establishing broad social consensus for decarbonisation and a just transition."

SEDA called for citizen participation and data accessibility, recommending tools for communities to view local progress and opportunities for community-led audits and storytelling. RCPE stated: "Require the Scottish Government to publish an annual CCP delivery report... Use Plain English, infographics, and translated materials to reach a wide public audience."

UKERC and WWFS highlighted the importance of transparency for societal legitimacy and policy delivery. FDFS added that "data and progress reports should be made accessible to the public and stakeholders, with clear explanations of progress, challenges, and next steps." Glasgow City Council also noted that "this could inspire behaviour change" if communicated effectively.

## **Independent oversight and auditing**

There was strong support for independent oversight to ensure credibility and accountability. WWFS recommended that "Scottish Parliament committees should scrutinise the CCP's delivery plan using a published checklist that covers alignment of all Scottish Government policies and budgets with carbon budgets." RCPE called for funding and empowering independent bodies such as ESS, CCC and AS to "audit delivery plans, flag failures or delays, and recommend and enforce urgent corrective actions." RCPE and UKERC both stressed the need for independent bodies (such as AS, CCC, ESS) to support independent audit, analysis, advice and policy response, and UKERC also called for independent research groups to have a role.

Dr Lea Raible and colleagues stated: "There should be adequate and accessible avenues for redress for individuals and the public in case of non-compliance or rights

violation in relation to climate change." PropertyMark supported the role of an independent body like the CCC or a Scottish equivalent to oversee monitoring. Climate Café Shetland also called for an independent agency to review progress. SCCS proposed retaining the CCP Advisory Group and developing it into a monitoring partnership.

The Highland Council suggested empowering SCIS or a similar agency to issue early warnings when progress deviates from the trajectory. NECCUS stated that "it is important that the progress and targets have been reviewed by experts and can be backed up with the relevant data."

## **SMART indicators and adaptive policy**

Respondents emphasised the need for SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) indicators to track progress and support adaptive policymaking. WWFS argued that the CCP should publish "specific outcome and quantitative indicators; delivery milestones and decision gates; powers and levers to be deployed; investment needs and funding model; named owners; and dependencies with UK Government reserved policies." The AGS noted that "due to the two-year time lag in annual reporting... a framework will therefore need to be in place for assessing progress against the individual policies and actions in the CCP."

Organisations such as WWFS, ClimateXChange and the CEP called for standardised metrics, sectoral milestones and delivery timelines. ClimateXChange referenced [deliberative research it had conducted on effective indicators](#). WWFS proposed publishing policy pipelines with readiness criteria and external assurance to detect slippage early. Consumer Scotland supported ESS's call for SMART measures and targets, stating that these should be "underpinned by appropriate indicators, including an assessment of consumer support for and participation in measures under the plan." SEPA recommended that for each indicator, there should be "an assessment made about the efficacy, assumptions and limitations of the indicator," with review periods built in to allow for the value and efficacy of indicators to be assessed.

In UKERC's response, Dr Mark Winskel (University of Edinburgh) called for "a transparent, detailed evidence base for the government's preferred plan, perhaps in a technical annex", noting that the "the 2017 Plan lacked much of the detailed sectoral analysis published in its 2013 equivalent."

SCIS highlighted the need for an "agile, consistent, and evidence-based approach" to track the impact of interventions. SEDA proposed that monitoring should serve as a feedback mechanism to adjust strategies as conditions evolve. CERG stated: "A robust and transparent monitoring and reporting system must do more than simply track emissions and outcomes." Both SCIS and CERG highlighted the importance of dynamic, evidence-based monitoring systems that support learning and course correction. SSN encouraged the Scottish Government to use their reporting and analysis programme to "help inform how barriers and challenges to delivery are addressed in a coordinated and transparent way."

PHS and the ALLIANCE stressed the inclusion of qualitative data and lived experience to ensure community voices are heard.

## **Inclusion of co-benefits**

Many respondents urged that monitoring frameworks include co-benefits, such as health, equity, jobs and biodiversity.

PHS, SEPA and RCPE called for indicators that capture distributional impacts and demonstrate the wider value of climate action. PHS stated: "Monitoring should include health as well as equity indicators to capture distributional impacts of policy across communities of identity and place." SEPA noted that co-benefits are "an important component of a just transition to net zero and therefore should be included within the monitoring and reporting framework." RCPE recommended including indicators on "health impacts (e.g. air pollution-related illness, cold homes, active travel uptake), distributional impacts (who is benefitting or being left behind), workforce and Just Transition data." The Highland Council and Aberdeen City Council supported integrating social value indicators to reflect a just transition.

UKERC and SEDA recommended a whole-systems approach, with metrics that assess sustainability, wellbeing and alignment with local development plans. In the UKERC response, Dr Richard Carmichael (Imperial College), highlighted the Win-Window project, on metrics for tracking and communicating co-benefits using ex-post assessment. The RESPECT project cautioned against over-reliance on quantitative metrics like hectares of restored peatland, advocating for better indicators that reflect quality, social impact and local fairness. RCPE and PHS argued that showing how climate action improves lives can strengthen public and political support.

## **Integration with local data and other reporting requirements**

Many respondents argued that leveraging existing systems and local insights is key to effective and inclusive monitoring and called for alignment with local data systems and existing reporting duties.

Organisations such as SCIS, PHS and SSN highlighted the role of the SCIS in standardising and visualising data across local authorities, which was praised for enabling real-time, place-based monitoring and reducing reliance on external consultants. PHS stated that the SCIS "provides a centralised mechanism for collating, analysing and standardising climate data across Scotland." East Dunbartonshire Council noted that public bodies are using [SCIS's Climate View Platform](#) for "area-wide emissions progress communication, as a dynamic modelling tool... and as a way of identifying potential corrective actions." CERG and ClimateXChange supported using platforms like ClimateView to create agile, bottom-up dashboards. SCIS note that:

"adopting and adapting this approach can support the development, monitoring and delivery of Scotland's Climate Change Plan at both local and national levels, by collating local insights on progress against different sources of emissions and using these to inform, adapt, and direct policies and interventions."

South Lanarkshire Council and Orkney Islands Council emphasised the need to align reporting expectations and reduce administrative burdens on local authorities. PHS, CERG, Creative Scotland and East Dunbartonshire Council recommended alignment

with and use of data from the [Public Bodies Climate Change Duties reporting \(PBCCDR\)](#) to reduce duplication, increase consistency and improve efficiency. Cheyne Hamm proposed that "SG should produce one integrated report" to streamline public sector reporting. Creative Scotland, Orkney Islands Council, SEPA and SSN also called for alignment with the [Scottish National Adaptation Programme \(SNAP3\)](#).

## **What the Scottish Government should do to help the public contribute to climate action**

Across responses, there was strong agreement on the need for the Scottish Government to empower the public in contributing to climate action through a multifaceted approach. Respondents emphasised that climate action must be accessible, inclusive and linked to everyday benefits like health, wellbeing, and affordability. Individuals focused on education, fairness and communication; they wanted honest messaging, trusted sources and support for collective action. Organisations provided more detailed proposals, calling for structural support, longer-term funding mechanisms and inclusive engagement strategies. Key themes included the need for better public education, financial support to make low-carbon choices affordable and stronger community involvement. Organisations especially stressed the importance of systemic change and place-based approaches. They also raised investment in green skills and jobs (set out under '[Other factors](#)').

### **Education and awareness**

Education was seen as a foundational tool for enabling public contribution to climate action. Responses called for education to be embedded across all age groups and sectors, from schools and colleges to adult learning and public services. The 2050 Climate Group stressed that "young people emphasised the importance of education in supporting the public to contribute to climate action," calling for climate literacy to be integrated into schools and delivered in person and place-specific. Angeli Mehta added, "There needs to be better education about climate change and mitigation and adaptation starting in primary and secondary schools." Scotland Excel and FDFS also supported embedding climate education in formal curricula and investing in green skills.

Several respondents acknowledged and praised the Scottish Government's existing [Net Zero Nation Public Engagement Strategy \(PES\)](#). However, of these, most stressed that more needs to be done to actively build climate literacy, trust and motivation. Professor Jason Chilvers and Dr Phedeas Stephanides from UKERC's Public Engagement Observatory noted that "the Scottish Government has, to date, taken commendable steps to engage civil society and enhance public contributions to climate action," but also warned that current approaches are "not typically systemic" and require further development. They emphasise the need for better data on how publics are already contributing to climate action in Scotland, to develop a more systemic approach to engagement. SSN recommended continued support for the strategy, including a dedicated team to provide tools, advice, training and funding to public bodies.

Many respondents emphasised the importance of honest communication about the scale of the climate challenge, while also highlighting the co-benefits of action. For example, SCIS stated that “Co-benefits should be quantified and communicated” and FOES urged the government to “commit to public information campaigns to explain the risks of inaction, and the various co-benefits of tackling the climate crisis.” RICS called for “simple, relatable messaging that highlights the direct benefits of net zero policies—such as warmer homes, lower energy bills, improved air quality, and job creation in green industries.” RCPE proposed framing climate action as a public health opportunity, with messaging that connects climate action to improved air quality, reduced NHS pressures and stronger communities.

Respondents also stressed the importance of storytelling and highlighting co-benefits to make climate action relatable and inspiring. SRAEHL called for a move away from framing climate change as technical or emergency issues, and reframing it as “community conversations, rooted in everyday concerns and local relevance.” SEPA stated, “There is real value in storytelling: giving people, communities and businesses the opportunity to celebrate not just what they have done to reduce emissions but also the multiple and co-benefits that happened as a result.” Dr Dominic Hinde stated that “it is important that rather than trying to hide in technocratic discussions that we establish a national destination for decarbonisation and a just transition, and that we consistently and actively engage in acts of public storytelling”, with key messages integrated into work across the Scottish Government.

Tailored communication was seen as essential to reach diverse audiences. ClimateXChange advised that messaging should “reflect the context of those it is aimed towards and be focused on practical actions for individuals,” and recommended using visual communication and humour, referencing [research on effective engagement](#). WWFS supported “deliberative, benefits-led communication that explains the ‘why’, the ‘how’, and the fairness of the transition.” The ALLIANCE and SCIS stressed the importance of making climate messaging relevant to people’s lives and communities, and of co-creating campaigns with civil society. Glasgow City Council noted that “A national approach that can be used easily shared would support communications on a local level in the face of capacity challenges” and noted this could be based on the PES.

CERG recommended that the Scottish Government publishes a clear, accessible summary of the CCP, using it as an opportunity to make the case for climate action. This was supported by WWFS.

RICS suggested that the Scottish Government should consider a one-stop digital hub or local hubs “where people can get tailored advice and support, making the transition more accessible and less daunting.”

## **Inclusive engagement and building trust**

Respondents highlighted the importance of collaboration with trusted organisations and individuals to deliver effective engagement and communication to counter misinformation and build public confidence. RCPE stated, “Clear, trustworthy communication led by health professionals, teachers, and community leaders is essential. Winning hearts and minds is as important as winning policy battles.” PHS

added, "People and communities need accessible inclusive information from trusted messengers that positively frame the wide range of health and health equity benefits from climate action."

Respondents supported inclusive, deliberative processes to shape climate policy as a key component of trust-building. Doreen Osborne advocated for "nationwide, meaningful, face-to-face public meetings" to build genuine support. Mary Scott proposed "community consultations and dialogues... We need a national dialogue where all views are welcome." Climate Café Shetland proposed establishing both national and local citizens assemblies. RCPE recommended a "permanent Citizens' Climate Assembly with representation, including from marginalised groups." UKERC warned that citizen assemblies must have a clear route to influence policy, noting that "some fail to have a clear route or pathway to influence policy."

The ALLIANCE emphasised the need for "positive dialogue and appropriate support for individuals to participate in any activities, groups and initiatives aimed at climate action." Aberdeen City Council emphasised the need to involve and include young people.

SEDA, Culture for Climate Scotland and others stressed the need for stakeholder forums and co-production of delivery plans. CERG advocated for "delivery and investment plans for policies and proposals [to be] co-designed with stakeholders."

## **Financial support and incentives for households**

Respondents stressed that financial barriers must be addressed to enable public action. Culture for Climate Scotland stated, "It won't be possible for many householders... to pay for the changes to heating their homes without significant support." RCPE recommended "means-tested grants or 0% loans for heat pump installation, home insulation, EV car clubs or bikes."

Scottish Care highlighted the need for schemes to be accessible to care settings and low-income households. Aberdeen City Council called for "clear timelines for programmes/ grant funding, support and information available to the public." SEDA argued that "a significant portion of funding should be diverted into direct, needs-based grants to enable homeowners, landlords, and tenants to implement whole-building retrofit strategies."

Dr Lea Raible and colleagues pointed to income and perceived costs as barriers, referencing [Consumer Scotland's evidence base](#). Consumer Scotland noted that its consumer framework for addressing climate change identifies cost, convenience, clarity, and confidence (the 4 Cs) as key issues for considering the role of consumers and can be used as a policymaker's toolkit. CEP emphasised that engagement must "focus on enabling action that is affordable and accessible, calling for "targeted financial support for energy efficiency and heating upgrades, especially for those in fuel poverty, alongside clear information and trusted local advice services." Perth and Kinross Council called for "simple and long-term funding to support the public to take action."

## **Community empowerment, wealth building and local action**

Respondents strongly supported place-based approaches and community ownership of climate action. Many responses called for the Scottish Government to support community climate hubs, energy cooperatives and participatory planning processes that reflect local priorities and lived experience. RCPE proposed a "national fund for community climate hubs," enabling local groups to run initiatives like tool libraries, repair cafés, growing projects, and food waste reduction schemes. SEDA stressed the need for "a people-centred, place-based, and inclusive approach that supports long-term engagement, informed decision-making, and visible community benefits." CERG noted that "Securing local benefits should be a priority for climate policy" and cited [Britain talks Climate and Nature](#) as showing that support for climate action is significantly increased if policies deliver local, tangible benefits.

Many organisations stressed that funding must be sustained to allow communities to plan and implement meaningful climate action. SCCS highlighted that "this funding needs to be on a sufficiently long-term basis to allow communities and hubs to offer good, secure jobs and to plan and implement programmes relating to both mitigation and adaptation." PHS added that "inclusive place-based engagement would be expected to deliver benefits if coupled with sustainable funding to support long-term community capacity building."

Orkney Islands Council referenced the Carbon Neutral Islands programme as a model for community-level action, but highlighted that islands with small populations require support and resourcing to evaluate initiatives and support others to use the learning. SRAEHL also emphasised "Local officers need to have a platform to come together and share experiences also with regional and national governments."

Several respondents emphasised that communities should also benefit directly from investments. Some (including PHS, 2050 Climate Group, Highland Council, RESPECT project, FDFS) specifically highlighted the importance of community wealth building as a strategy to support climate action. PHS stated that "supporting consistent implementation of the community wealth building model of economic development across Scotland... could support community-led climate action while delivering wide ranging health and health equity benefits." Highland Council added that engagement should "guarantee that communities benefit directly from projects, not just host them." FDFS called for support for "local climate action projects, community wealth building, and place-based approaches." The 2050 Climate Group advocated for energy cooperatives that allow communities to own and benefit from clean energy, reinforcing the link between climate action and local economic empowerment.

## **Structural reform and systemic change**

Respondents argued that individual behaviour change alone is insufficient and must be supported by systemic reforms. They called for changes in planning, procurement and infrastructure to make low-carbon choices the default. Culture for Climate Scotland stated, "Individual behaviour change contributes to but does not deliver the entirety of the societal change required." RCPE recommended making "the healthy, low-carbon choice the easiest and most affordable," through infrastructure and public services. Respondents referred to universal energy advice, insulation grants, free or

low-cost public transport and climate-friendly public catering. In the UKERC response, Professor Nick Pidgeon and Professor Karen Henwood (University of Cardiff) emphasised that to be successful, “a combination of upstream- (regulatory), mid-stream (incentives, support structures), and down-stream (communications) interventions” would be required.

Consumer Scotland emphasised the need to create “an enabling environment where it is easier for consumers to make the changes.” SPT and Get Glasgow Moving called for investment in public transport and active travel infrastructure, with Get Glasgow Moving noting that “joined up regional autonomy of the public transport networks” would enable simplified ticketing and lower fares. East Dunbartonshire Council proposed expanding segregated, lit and maintained active travel networks.

Dr Lea Raible and colleagues stressed that individuals should not bear the burden alone, referencing the Aarhus Convention and calling for “adequate and accessible avenues for redress.” They also highlighted the need to consider vulnerabilities and socio-economic wellbeing when distributing responsibilities for climate action. PHS stated that “Structural reforms should remove barriers and put in place enabling systems to ensure everyone in Scotland has an equal opportunity to contribute to and benefit from climate action.” IPPR Scotland and the Energy Saving Trust also supported structural reforms to ensure equitable access and participation.

Respondents also called for reforms in planning and procurement systems to support low-carbon choices. SEDA and CIAT recommended changes to building standards and procurement criteria to prioritise sustainability. FDFS urged the government to “provide advice, incentives, and infrastructure to support sustainable choices,” including food waste reduction and energy efficiency.

## **Other factors that could affect whether Scotland meets its climate change targets**

Respondents highlighted systemic challenges such as climate variability, policy dependencies, workforce gaps, geopolitical dynamics, public support and public sector leadership.

### **Climate variability, adaptation and nature-based solutions**

Many respondents emphasised that climate change itself - through increasing variability, extreme weather events, and long-term shifts - poses direct risks to infrastructure, public services and economic stability. Dr Lea Raible and colleagues warned, “Extreme weather or heatwaves putting strains on public infrastructure... all models point to an increase in frequency and severity.” PHS echoed this, noting that climate hazards could affect energy systems, supply chains, and health outcomes. NatureScot pointed to the Climate Change Risk Assessment 3 as highlighting the risk of cascading failures to infrastructure. Several respondents stressed that adaptation planning was essential and must be integrated with mitigation efforts. SEPA stated that, “The vulnerability of infrastructure and assets designed to mitigate climate change... should be considered in the light of projected changes to our climate.”

Respondents cautioned against framing biodiversity and climate goals as competing. RCPE stressed, "Climate and nature are interdependent... solutions must be planned and implemented with both in mind." SEDA called for planning systems that reflect ecological integrity and long-term wellbeing, stating, "Mass extinction and loss of biodiversity are just as urgent as decarbonisation." Nature-based solutions were widely supported as a way to address both climate and biodiversity goals. NatureScot stated, "Nature-based Solutions are the common thread that joins net emissions reduction, societal adaptation to locked-in climate change, health and well-being, and the resilience of nature." Angeli Mehta proposed planting carbon-sequestering seaweeds and seagrass along Scotland's coastline and highlighted tree planting and peatland restoration as opportunities to create rural jobs.

Several respondents called for alignment with other strategies and delivery plans. These included the [Scottish Biodiversity Strategy](#), [Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan 2024-2030](#), [Scottish National Adaptation Plan 3](#), [Environment Strategy](#), [Circular Economy \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#), the [Good Food Nation Plan](#) and the [Wellbeing and Sustainable Development \(Scotland\) Bill](#). SEPA and Consumer Scotland also emphasised the key role of water, and that the possibility of reduced availability of resources such as water should be considered in setting the policies in the CCP.

## **Reserved powers, UK policy dependencies and grid constraints**

Many respondents highlighted that key levers - including energy pricing, carbon taxation and grid charging - are reserved to the UK Government. They argued that this limits Scotland's autonomy and creates dependencies that may hinder progress. The Highland Council stated, "Grid charging, energy pricing, and carbon taxation remain reserved to Westminster. Without reform, net-exporting regions will continue to be disadvantaged." RCPE emphasised that Scotland's progress is heavily influenced by UK Government policies on grid decarbonisation, fossil fuel licensing and trade policy.

WWFS stressed the need for coordination across devolved and reserved powers, noting, "The dependency on UK Government reserved policies should lead to increased cross-governmental collaboration." UKERC argued that "Effective governance is therefore sustained, systematic coordination and collaboration with UK Prime Minister and Cabinet." SWA called for "policy direction on hydrogen's role, coordinated with UK Government." Some respondents called for transparency and contingency planning. AGS recommended that the CCP highlight potential barriers or uncertainties and note interdependencies with other policies.

Grid limitations were also widely cited as a barrier to decarbonisation. Respondents noted that constrained capacity, slow planning processes and misaligned infrastructure sequencing could delay the rollout of low-carbon systems. The Highland Council stated, "Current processes are too slow and fragmented for infrastructure delivery. Streamlined but fair consenting is essential," and warned that "Infrastructure sequencing: Grid, heat networks, and carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) must align in timing to avoid stranded assets." South Lanarkshire Council highlighted the challenge of high electricity prices, stating, "There are significant challenges around grid capacity at a national level - the CCP should look to address these."

The absence of fair grid charging was described as a systemic risk, particularly for renewable-rich regions. Highland Council stated, "The absence of fair grid charging is the greatest systemic risk for the Highlands." Angeli Mehta commented, "Electricity has to be priced in a way that makes it more affordable... this has to be a UK-wide solution." Some organisations called for national-level coordination to improve grid infrastructure and reduce curtailment of renewable energy. SRAEHL proposed decentralised solutions: "Allowing and supporting localised generation and distribution of renewable energy would alleviate some of the grid constraints." The CEP and SPT respectively stressed the need for long-duration energy storage and enhanced grid resilience.

## **Skills, capacity and workforce gaps**

A recurring theme was the shortage of skilled labour in sectors critical to the transition, including renewables, retrofit, nature restoration and engineering. Alex Cochrane urged, "More workforce planning for a fair transition for workers and communities who will be affected by the switch to a green economy." The Highland Council noted, "Training capacity is lagging demand in retrofit, renewables, hydrogen, and grid engineering." WWFS emphasised the scale of the challenge, stating, "Transitioning to Net Zero requires tens of thousands of skilled workers in renewable energy, heat, retrofit and nature restoration."

Respondents stressed the need to build capacity across sectors through investment in education, vocational training and lifelong learning. SEDA called for "significant funding... to reskill and upskill the existing workforce," enabling tradespeople to deliver high-quality retrofit using both traditional and modern techniques. CIAT and IPPR Scotland echoed the importance of vocational pathways to support climate policy delivery and ensure a just transition. FDFS advocated for investment in "climate education, green skills, and retraining." while Angeli Mehta highlighted the wider social benefits, noting that equipping people with skills could "cut its benefits bill and improve people's mental health."

Several contributors emphasised the importance of engaging young people and supporting sector-specific training. Aberdeen City Council urged efforts to "encourage young people to enter jobs in the green economy," and called for investment in education and skills at all levels. The 2050 Climate Group recommended subsidised workplace education delivered by experts, stating, "This educational work should be subsidised so organisations do not have to bear the brunt of the cost and the training should be mandatory for all staff." Scottish Care stressed that care staff "can play a vital role... if they are properly trained and resourced," and recommended tailored programmes for the sector.

Organisations such as Colleges Scotland and CEP called for strategic coordination and long-term funding. Colleges Scotland highlighted the need for expanded vocational education and apprenticeship pathways, noting that "a significant increase in the number of Modern Apprenticeships will be required." Colleges Scotland also lamented the loss of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund and called for targeted investment to build capacity in the college sector.

## **Geopolitics, economic volatility and global supply chains**

Global economic shocks, inflation, and supply chain disruptions were identified as major risks. FDFS noted, "Economic shocks (e.g., COVID-19, Ukraine War) can affect investment capacity, supply chains, and consumer behaviour." Several respondents (Seafood Scotland, FDFS, SCCS, SEDA, Cycling UK, SEStran) raised the impact of geopolitics on global supply chains. PHS referenced "Geopolitical developments, international trade agreements, global energy markets and fossil fuel prices..." while CEP stressed, "External shocks... will affect progress. Achieving targets will require proactive planning to anticipate these constraints." Dr Mark Winskel (University of Edinburgh) said in the UKERC response that low carbon technology costs and availability are affected by "international market demand, supply chain bottlenecks, commodity price changes, exchange rate fluctuations, and skills and labour availability." NECCUS noted that, "Market conditions will affect the ability of companies to invest in emissions reduction."

## **Public and political support**

Public trust and cultural acceptance were seen as essential for climate action. Margery Bell stated, "We must have leadership from our elected representatives... take a stand against concerted lobby groups." Tactran emphasised, "Winning hearts and minds is as important as winning policy battles."

Respondents stressed that public support is shaped by fairness, visible benefits and inclusive communication. PHS noted, "Public perception and acceptability of emission reduction policies, and their distributional impacts." Dr Dominic Hinde added, "Buy-in to low-carbon technologies and social changes is higher when there is a clear social and economic public benefit."

RCPE warned, "Cost-of-living pressures may reduce public support for policies perceived as expensive or unfair... climate policy that improves health and saves households money will boost resilience and public backing." Glasgow City Council highlighted the need to connect climate action with social priorities: "The primary issues facing many of our communities are child poverty and social deprivation... we should look to engage with communities about the issues that are facing them, and support the connection back to climate action." The 2050 Climate Group noted, "The public may not understand that there are many co-benefits arising from climate action... the Scottish Government should pursue a holistic approach."

Transform Scotland and UKERC warned of political stagnation and opposition, with Dr Mark Winskel observing, "There is now a vocal political opposition to net zero among some politicians... understanding this changing context is important." Transform Scotland urged Scotland to be a strong voice internationally, "making the environmental, social, economic and moral case for strong and sustained action."

## **Procurement and public finances**

Respondents discussed the role of procurement and public finances. SEPA stated, "The Scottish public sector procures around £16bn in goods and services each year... considerable scope to explore how this purchasing power can exploit further emissions reduction." East Dunbartonshire Council highlighted pension fund

investments: "Strathclyde Pension Fund alone has hundreds of millions of pounds invested in fossil fuels... clearly not compatible with the Scottish Government's emphasis on 1.5°C aligned decarbonisation pathways." Angela Oakley added, "Government guidance or legislation could require financial companies to let their customers know if they fund the fossil fuel industry."

Angela Oakley called for financial transparency: "Banks, Pension Companies and Financial Organisations... are funding climate chaos. The public should know if the money in their bank account or pension fund is green or funding climate chaos." They added that "The Government and Parliament should not use financial organisations which fund climate chaos."

## Other factors

Some respondents raised additional issues that could affect Scotland's ability to meet its climate targets. For example:

- **AI and energy use:** UKERC and the 2050 Climate Group pointed to the transformative role of artificial intelligence, and its uncertain implications for energy supply and demand and systems.
- **UK and EU Emissions Trading Schemes (ETS):** NECCUS highlighted the importance of linking the UK and EU ETS, noting that "this will potentially allow for more integrated carbon trading and provide the financial mechanisms for CCUS to be operational and expand quicker."
- **Availability of vessels:** RMT flagged: "The international shortage of vessel types needed to install and transport offshore wind farm components... could impede progress in delivering the increased production of clean electricity from offshore wind in Scottish waters."
- **VAT on historic buildings:** BEFS advocated for VAT reform: "New-build development is incentivised with a 0% VAT rate, whereas the redevelopment and refurbishment of historic buildings is charged the full standard rate."
- **Care sector infrastructure:** Scottish Care raised concerns about the care sector's infrastructure: "Many care facilities are run in older buildings that are difficult and expensive to retrofit... climate strategies must be integrated with other reforms."
- **HGV zero-emission infrastructure:** SWA argued for, "Scale up zero-emission HGV infrastructure, with a focus on rural and remote routes."

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**4 November 2025**

## Table of acronyms used to refer to organisations

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Full form of respondent</b>
C2050	2050 Climate Group
ABCA	Anderson Bell & Christie Architects
ACC	Aberdeen City Council
AGS	Auditor General for Scotland
ALLIANCE	Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland
BE-ST	Built Environment Smarter Transformation
BEFS	Built Environment Forum Scotland
BHHPA	British Holiday & Home Parks Association
CCAN	Cardross Climate Action Network
No acronym used	Climate Cafe Shetland
CEP	Centre for Energy Policy, University of Strathclyde
CERG	Climate Emergency Response Group
CIAT	Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists
CITB	Construction Industry Training Board
No acronym used	Colleges Scotland
CreScot	Creative Scotland
CS	Consumer Scotland
No acronym used	Culture for Climate Scotland
CXC	ClimateXChange
No acronym used	Cycling UK
No acronym used	Edinburgh Communities Climate Action Network
EDC	East Dunbartonshire Council
EHA	Existing Homes Alliance
EMEC	European Marine Energy Centre
EST	Energy Saving Trust
FDFS	Food and Drink Federation Scotland
FES	Future Economy Scotland
FOES	Friends of the Earth Scotland
GCC	Glasgow City Council
GGM	Get Glasgow Moving
HC	Highland Council
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HfS	Homes for Scotland
IKEA	IKEA Ltd
IPPR Scotland	Institute for Public Policy Research Scotland
No acronym used	Liquid Gas UK

No acronym used	Logistics UK
RESPECT Project	LUNZ Hub RESPECT Project
MCS	The MCS Foundation
NECCUS	North East Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage
NESTRANS	Nestrans (Regional Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire)
NHS Lothian	National Health Scotland Lothian
NFUS	National Farmers Union Scotland
NS	NatureScot
No acronym used	Nourish Scotland
No acronym used	Orkney Islands Council
No acronym used	Paths for All
No acronym used	Peat-free Partnership Scotland Advocacy Group
PHS	Public Health Scotland
No acronym used	Perth and Kinross Council
No acronym used	Propertymark
PS	Police Scotland
QS	Quakers in Scotland
QMS	Quality Meat Scotland
RCPE	Royal College of Physicians Edinburgh: Air Pollution Working Group and Climate Café
RICS	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
RMT	National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers
RSPB Scotland	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland
SAP	Scottish Agroecology Partnership
SC	Scottish Care
SCCS	Stop Climate Chaos Scotland
SE	Scotland Excel
SCIS	Scottish Climate Intelligence Service
SEDA	Scottish Ecological Design Association
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SEStran	South East Scotland Transport Partnership
SF	Stockfree Farming
SLC	South Lanarkshire Council
SPT	Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
SRAEHL	Scottish Research Alliance for Energy, Homes and Livelihoods
No acronym used	Seafood Scotland
SSN	Sustainable Scotland Network

StC	Stirling Council
SuSc	Sustrans Scotland
SWA	Scottish Wholesale Association
TACTRAN	Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership
No acronym used	Transform Scotland
UKERC	UK Energy Research Centre
UoGSoL	University of Glasgow, School of Law
UWE Bristol	University of the West of England Bristol
WWF Scotland	World Wide Fund for Nature Scotland