



Regional Development Agencies

Delivering a Low Carbon Britain

The Contribution of England's RDAs

January 2010





England's Regional Development Agencies

Our role, as set out in the Regional Development Agencies Act (1998) is to:

- **further economic development and regeneration;**
- **promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness;**
- **promote employment;**
- **enhance the development and application of skills relevant to employment; and**
- **contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.**

Within that broad remit there have been two more recent, important, refinements:

- The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act gives RDAs responsibility for developing a Single Regional Strategy, in partnership with Local Authority Leaders' Boards; and
- Skills For Growth, the National Skills Strategy, sets out that RDAs, working in partnership with the Sector Skills Councils, local authority leaders and sub-regional bodies, will take responsibility for producing regional skills strategies that will articulate employer demand and more closely align skills priorities with economic development.





What England's Regional Development Agencies do

Regional Development Agencies promote and enable the sustainable economic growth of England's regions, providing opportunities for all and creating attractive places in which to live, work and visit.

What we do

Operating at the regional level, we work to align the critical mass of organisations needed to address social, environmental and economic challenges and opportunities – focusing all available resources and energies on tackling agreed priorities. There are essentially three main components to our work:

1 Gather evidence and create Regional Economic Strategies

- We gather intelligence and analyse the strengths and weaknesses of our economies.
- We use this evidence base to broker collective agreement about economic challenges, opportunities and priorities.
- These challenges, opportunities and priorities are set out in Regional Economic Strategies, which provide agreed frameworks for collective, multi-partner, cross-sector actions that will deliver sustainable economic growth.

2 Invest our own resources wisely

- We understand how to tackle market failure and how to exploit emerging opportunities.
- We have a decade of experience and expertise in strategic planning, economic infrastructure provision, identifying skills for business development, business support, innovation, property development, sustainable and low-carbon development, UK and European funding, project appraisal and impact evaluation.
- We take considered risks and target our own funding where it makes most impact, delivers maximum benefit to local businesses and communities and helps to deliver our share of the objectives of the Regional Economic Strategy.

3 Influence others and aligning activity

- We work in partnership and use our influence to align activity, improve efficiency and maximise effectiveness.
- We provide capacity and expertise to enable businesses, universities, local authorities and other partners to deliver the best solutions for their own local economies.
- We help to deliver integrated solutions that generate maximum benefit to local businesses, people and places.

Regional Development Agencies offer outstanding value for money

Independent evaluation by PricewaterhouseCoopers has shown that for every £1 invested by RDAs, we have to date generated £4.50 in return. This figure rises to £6.40 when future returns are included. This is recognised as being at the very top end of returns for public sector investment.

Regional Development Agencies help communities achieve their economic ambitions

A critical ongoing role for RDAs is to intervene in areas where there is market failure or opportunity, but where private sector action is not sufficient to deliver desirable outcomes. RDAs carefully target their investment to deliver the best long-term social, environmental and economic returns for these areas and their communities. RDAs and partner organisations recognise the importance of this activity. It therefore remains a vital component of the RDA's role.

As demonstrated by the following case studies RDAs are uniquely placed to bring together a wide range of partners to deliver complex, impactful capital regeneration schemes.



Delivering the Low Carbon Transition Plan in the Regions

Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are committed to addressing Climate Change and maximising the economic benefits of the transition to a low carbon economy.

Collectively, RDAs are currently or planning to invest £630m in the low carbon sector.

RDAs perform a number of important roles and functions tailored to their own regions which add real value to supporting the Government's national priorities for energy and climate change and the delivery of the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan

A major part of RDA action on the Climate Change agenda is delivered through our strategic leadership role at regional level. We develop regional intelligence, targets and strategies, including carbon reduction plans within regional strategies as a means of identifying the impact of major investment decisions.

All RDAs will have carbon management systems in place by 2010 and are driving forward development and delivery of climate change action plans through support for regional climate change partnerships.

Investments and interventions by the RDAs in support of the Low Carbon Sector are delivered with a number of objectives:

- Drive markets for the low carbon products and technologies which will deliver carbon reduction
- Support businesses to respond to emissions regulation, and emerging standards and markets
- Support research and development of new technologies and the skills essential to the transition to a low carbon economy
- Support businesses to address the risks and seize opportunities from a changing global climate and carbon reduction requirements

There is strong collaboration between RDAs and with Government Departments and other public sector bodies, particularly on low carbon sectors identified as growth areas for the future. There is also strong collaboration between individual RDAs and regional Universities, particularly in emerging and new technologies.



Strategic Partnership Agreement

In June 2009, a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) was signed between DECC and the RDA Network setting out objectives and shared priorities and how we will work together to address them.

There are many areas where DECC and RDA priorities converge. Key shared priorities and outcomes are:

- Developing low carbon, energy-efficient regional economies, with secure and sustainable energy supplies, well placed to exploit new opportunities and drive economic recovery.
- Supporting the achievement of national climate change and energy targets through regional action.
- Stimulating market, supply chain and skills development and innovation to deliver renewables, energy efficiency, nuclear power, clean fossil fuels and other low carbon technologies.
- Ensuring businesses are well informed about carbon reduction and energy efficiency opportunities/support and deliver reductions in practice.

Transforming the Power Sectors

RDAs support business growth and sustainable energy markets by funding innovative research and development, linking researchers with businesses to develop new products and through boosting market development via specification and procurement.

- RDAs manage a number of finance products aimed at helping businesses, such as Grants for Business Investment (GBI) which support capital investment projects in the regions, including supporting the introduction of new technologies or processes into businesses
- The Northern Wind Innovation and Carbon Abatement Technologies research funding programmes (in collaboration with TSB and DECC) are good examples of cross RDA working, funded through the Northern Way initiative, involving North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, and North West regions.
- In July 2009, the UK government designated the South West as the first Low Carbon Economic Area (LCEA) for Marine Energy. The LCEA designation recognises the region's great marine energy resources, long history of marine and engineering excellence and its strong research base.
- The creation of a Nuclear Low Carbon Economic Area (LCEA) in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber will give a focus to investment, developments and skills support which will benefit companies across the UK. With this kind of investment in capabilities, UK companies have the potential to provide up to 80% of the work on construction of new nuclear power plants, and the LCEA will support the development of UK capability to win this business.

The plan to 2020 will secure power supplies and cut emissions from power and heavy industry together by 22% on 2008 levels, over half of the savings needed to meet carbon budgets, so that by 2020 around 40% of our electricity will come from low carbon sources.

Source: The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan



Transforming our Homes and Communities

The RDAs contribute to the low carbon housing agenda through our policy creation and influencing role. We work closely with the Energy Savings Trust in each region in support of their vision of 'working through partnerships towards the sustainable and efficient use of energy'; we champion sustainable construction by ensuring that all capital build projects that we invest in strive towards achieving the BREEAM "Excellent" standard and we support ERDF funding for projects delivering energy efficiency improvements and the use of renewable energy in existing housing.

- RDAs in the South East, London and East of England are collaborating in a number of interesting ways around the Thames Gateway and the Low Carbon Building challenges and opportunities it presents.
- The Community Energy Solutions project supports communities by installing renewable technologies such as heat pumps and Photovoltaics. This project operates from the North East and Yorkshire and Humber, with other new pilot programmes being rolled out in the East of England and Wales.
- Launched in April 2009, Foundation is an innovative Climate Fund for the Northwest of England that gathers up donations from individuals, businesses and other organisations and uses them to support a variety of community-based carbon reduction projects.

The plan to 2020 will cut emissions from homes by 29% on 2008 levels, introduce further measures to protect the most vulnerable, and improve the security of our gas supplies, a third of which is used in our homes.

Source: The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan

Transforming our Workplaces and Jobs

Consistent with their remit, all RDAs are supporting their environmental technologies and services sectors, identifying and supporting opportunities for trade, market development and supply chain development. Companies delivering resource efficient/low-carbon solutions are a major segment of the Energy Management sector in all regions.

RDAs help local businesses become globally competitive through support provided for Enterprise Hubs and Centres of Excellence. To secure international trade opportunities, we are supporting the development of enterprises that can enhance England's position as a global leader in low-carbon technology and eco-design. These regional sector development initiatives collaborate through the UK Federation of Environmental Industries

The RDAs administer the Grant for Research and Development which provides finance to individuals and small and medium-sized businesses in England to research and develop technologically innovative products and processes.

RDAs recognise that resource efficiency, including energy efficiency, is an increasingly important component of business competitiveness. The RDAs role at the centre of the Business Support Simplification agenda encourages all business support programmes to mainstream and actively promote businesses' progression towards a low carbon economy. RDAs are supporting initiatives to deliver business resource efficiency advice, using Business Link as a gateway and in collaboration with national programmes such as Carbon Trust and WRAP.

Through our work on the skills agenda, we assist in the identification and resolution of skills gaps for renewable energy and energy efficiency installation and maintenance.

The plan to 2020 will cut emissions from our workplaces by 13% on 2008 levels, and build the UK's position as a global centre of green manufacturing in low carbon sectors such as offshore wind, marine energy, low carbon construction and ultra-low carbon vehicles

Source: The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan



Transforming Transport

RDAs invest in low carbon transport through support for the automotive and aerospace industry to enable new firms to start-up, locate and grow in high technology and high value manufacturing.

The transformation of the automotive supply chain towards a low carbon economy revolves around the platform for electric vehicles, in particular ONE North East, AWM and EEDA working with TSB. The North-East has recently been announced as a Low Carbon Economic Area for Ultra-Low Carbon Vehicles, this designation will be supported by supply chains with particular strengths in other regions, such as the Midlands and North-West with advanced manufacturing and efficiency of existing automotive technologies.

Through the National Aerospace Technology Strategy (NATS), RDAs work in parallel on large TSB-funded collaborative R&D programmes to enhance the environmental performance of future generations of aircraft, aero-engines and systems. RDAs are working in partnership on several major collaborative projects, such as the 'Environmentally Friendly Engine' involving East Midlands, South West and North West regions.

The plan to 2020 will cut emissions from transport by 14% on 2008 levels and

secure the oil supplies needed during the transition to a low carbon country.

Source: The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan

Transforming Farming and Managing Land and Waste Sustainably

RDAs are responsible for the socio-economic elements of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). Improving resource efficiency and reducing carbon emissions is integrated into every aspect of RDPE, making a significant contribution to the creation of low carbon regional economies. Waste recycling and adding value to waste products is a growth area, including diversification for the land-based sector, and RDAs continue to work closely with key waste stakeholders in developing opportunities.

In Yorkshire, livestock farmers who want to invest in new technologies to make better use of their waste, energy and water resources can access RDPE funding of up to £20,000 through Yorkshire Forward's Farm Resource Efficiency Programme. This allows them to investigate options such as renewable energy, rainwater harvesting/water recycling systems and manure management.

In the North East, ONE's Fuel for the Future initiative is helping farms and forestry businesses that are looking to produce biomass for low carbon heat and power markets to build the necessary industry supply chains. The RDPE initiative is enabling new and existing feedstock suppliers for markets such as woodchip heating and combined heat and power generation to develop facilities and systems they need, as well as providing access to specialist training.

The plan to 2020 will cut emissions from farming and waste by 6% on 2008 levels

Source: The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan



Case Study 1

The Energy Innovation Centre Northwest



The Energy Innovation Centre, located in Capenhurst, Cheshire, was launched June 2008.

It is a unique facility which connects individual inventors and small businesses with the large UK energy companies.

The centre, in conjunction with the energy companies, provides a bespoke service to individuals and SMEs so that they can accelerate their products and technologies to market. The Energy Innovation Centre is already working with companies as far afield as Nebraska and Toronto.

NWDA has provided £1.5 million to support the Energy Innovation Centre, with additional funding of £640,000 from ERDF and £660,000 from industry. The centre will become self financed by 2012.

By 2013, the Energy Innovation Centre will have assisted in the start up of 30 new businesses and created 100 new jobs.

G Park Blue Planet Logistic Park

The £50 million G Park Blue Planet, one of the world's greenest logistics projects, is a joint development between Gazeley, a global provider of sustainable logistics space, regional development agency Advantage West Midlands and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council.

Located on a former colliery site, it will house the UK's first "carbon positive" logistics development, with its own bio-fuel micro power station, fuelled by rapeseed oil and other organic materials. The power station will not only produce sufficient power and heat for the on-site buildings but will also provide enough energy to power up to 650 local homes.

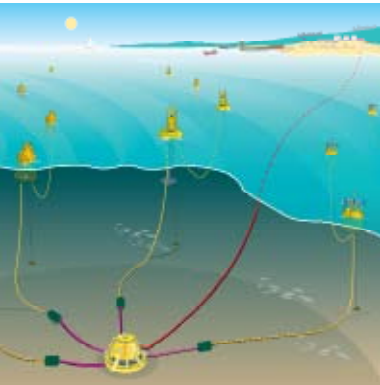
The Park has an "Outstanding" rating (design stage) by BREEAM - which is the highest sustainable accolade available in property development.





Case Study 3

Wave Hub



The Wave Hub is a groundbreaking renewable energy project to create the UK's first offshore facility to demonstrate the operation of arrays of wave energy generation devices.

Many different devices are being developed in the UK and elsewhere to generate electricity from the power of the waves. After the devices have been tested as prototypes elsewhere, the Wave Hub provides an area of sea with grid connection and planning consent where arrays of devices can be operated over several years.

The project will work with up to four different technologies at any one time. A 1km x 2km sea area will be leased to each developer for installation from 2010 onwards. Legal agreements have already been signed with leading renewable energy company Ocean Power Technologies Limited ("OPT") to take the first berth at Wave Hub using its PowerBuoy wave energy converter. JDR Cable Systems Ltd have also been appointed to manufacture the 26.5 km (16.5 mile) cable and hub assembly for Wave Hub at its new factory in Hartlepool in a contract worth £7.6 million.

The project, which has the capacity to generate 20MW of green electricity with the potential to be scaled up to 50MW in the future, is valued at £42 million, with funding secured from the UK Government (£9.5m), ERDF (£20m) and the RDA (£12.5m).

An independent economic impact assessment, commissioned by the RDA, has shown that Wave Hub could create 1,800 jobs and £560 million in the UK economy over 25 years. Almost 1,000 of these jobs and £332 million would be generated in the South West. See www.wavehub.co.uk



Case Study 4

INCROPS

InCrops (or Innovation in crops) is a "virtual enterprise hub", with a base at the University of East Anglia in Norwich and partners throughout the region, offering entrepreneurs and companies involved in crop production new opportunities for crop exploitation and commercialisation.

With the help of funding from EEDA and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the InCrops project is set to bring together some of the East of England's world class researchers in new, bio-renewable and low carbon products derived from alternative non-food crops with entrepreneurs who can turn them into commercial realities.

The project will invest £4.06 million over five years. ERDF has contributed £1.15 million and EEDA £1.05 million. The balance has been invested by the project partners.

That investment will engage and assist 200 businesses, many of which will integrate new innovative lower-carbon products, processes or services. As a result, 50 new businesses will be started (lasting for at least one year) and 70 jobs will be created or safeguarded.





Case Study 5

Low Carbon Economic Area for Ultra-Low-Carbon Vehicles

One North East is developing the UK's first Low Carbon Economic Area for Ultra-Low-Carbon Vehicles, and the region is emerging as the leading European location for electric vehicle development.

Nissan's Sunderland factory, which was recently named as the company's European 'Mother Plant' for electric battery production, and Smith Electric Vehicles, the world-leader in electric commercial vehicles are part of a partnership led by One North East that will develop new electric passenger vehicles in the region and which also includes AVID Vehicles and Newcastle University.

Alongside this new vehicle manufacturing, One North East has created a partnership of major private sector names including Tesco, British Gas, CE Electric, the AA and Capital Shopping Centres to develop a world-class electric vehicle infrastructure in the region.

The Agency is in the process of installing 750 charging points for electric vehicles over the coming two years.

The Low Carbon Economic Area will be led and delivered by One North East. It will cover areas of Sunderland, South Tyneside and the Easington District and will include:

- The first training centre to specialise in the sustainable manufacturing and education in ultra-low carbon vehicles.
- A Research & Development Centre - serving as a focus for research from all the region's universities and local business.
- An open access test track to trial the use of new technologies.
- A new business park.
- One North East is studying the feasibility of partially reopening the Leamside Rail Line to freight, linking the LCEA to the Port of Tyne.



Case Study 6

Skills4Energy

East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) has established a programme of financial support to the region's Further Education Colleges and Skills Providers for equipment to facilitate the teaching of energy technologies skills. Launched in 2008, the initial phase of the project will deliver to some 1,200 learners by December 2009. The project aims to deliver benefits to both businesses as a whole, as well as individuals employed within the business, in preparing for a low carbon future.



Seven colleges are involved offering courses covering a wide range of energy technologies, including alternative transport technologies, solar water heat, ground/air source heat pumps, wind turbines, photovoltaic systems, heat recovery systems, biomass, micro-CHP and energy monitoring systems.

Case Study 7

Northern Way Offshore Wind Innovation Programme

The North of England has launched a new collaborative programme, to bring together industrial and technological capacity for Offshore Wind energy from across the North.

NaREC and Envirolink Northwest are to deliver the Northern Wind Innovation Programme, funded through the Northern Way partnership.

The North of England has played a pivotal role in the development of offshore wind in the UK, with the first experimental offshore turbines situated in Blyth Harbour, off the coast of Northumberland. It continues to hold a strong position in the sector with world-class research facilities, industry expertise in heavy manufacturing and strong engineering capability in offshore and power engineering. Building on this cross-Northern potential, the new programme will:

- drive innovation in the offshore wind sector through the provision of a £2.6 million research fund;
- increase knowledge transfer between academia and industry,
- enable northern companies with capabilities or potential in the offshore wind sector to identify and realise these opportunities and enhance the reputation of the North of England as an international centre for wind technology research and development.

**Moving Forward:
The Northern Way**



Case Study 8

Carbon Trading Yorkshire

CO2Sense is Yorkshire Forward's business development programme dedicated to helping businesses and other major regional organisations to cut their carbon emissions. One of the programmes within CO2Sense is Carbon Action Yorkshire, which is working with the region's largest and most influential companies and organisations to secure:

1. A commitment to low carbon management.
2. Action to meet carbon reduction commitments.
3. Opportunity to exploit the growth in low carbon markets.

Carbon Action Yorkshire's carbon trading initiative is providing large businesses and public sector organisations across the region the opportunity to experience a simulation of carbon trading in a risk free environment in advance of the Government's Carbon Reduction Commitment from April 2010. .

44 companies have joined the scheme, representing emissions of just over 1.17 million tonnes. The simulation mimics phase two of the CRC, in that there is a 5% cap on the market and participants had to enter into an auction to purchase allowances. This approach encourages trading and focuses participants on how they will prepare for both phases of the CRC.



Best practice and learning is shared between the participants and national experts at a number of half day seminars. The latest event focused on monitoring and measuring in relation to the CRC. All lessons learned will be distilled into a final report, to help companies further prepare for the legislation.



Case Study 9

London Thames Gateway Heat Network



The London Thames Gateway Heat Network is a 67km hot water transmission and distribution system that will transmit heat from new and existing heat sources to commercial, industrial and residential properties. The network will help to decarbonise the London Thames Gateway by supplying affordable low carbon heat from sources including Barking Power Station and Tate & Lyle sugar refinery. It will also allow other sources of heat including new advanced conversion from waste technologies, industrial waste heat & other low cost, low carbon heat sources to be distributed using the network, thereby maximising the environmental benefits associated with these schemes. At full build out the system will abate 67,000 tonnes of CO₂ each year, with a potential for over 100,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year depending on the market penetration.



The total capital value of the project is £139 million. The project will be developed in phases as the heat load in specific areas develops. The project is currently going through the LDA internal approvals procedure and is planning to supply first heat supplies in early 2012. The CO₂ savings associated with the project will be 2.3million tonnes.



Case Study 10

Vestas Technology Global R&D Centre for 'Next Generation' Offshore Wind Turbine Blades (SEEDA)

The presence of Vestas in the South East is seen as an important catalyst for the growth of the wind turbine supply chain and development of offshore wind technology in the region, both of which will deliver economic benefit and help to achieve a low-carbon region. SEEDA is working with Government and Vestas Technology to facilitate the development of Vestas Global R&D Centre (on the Isle of Wight) for the next generation of offshore wind turbine blades (75 metres upwards); this will eventually help to accelerate deployment of offshore wind turbines around the UK, and contribute directly to the UK's renewable energy targets for 2020.

SEEDA has committed to match fund a Government grant (under DECC's ETF Offshore Wind Demonstration scheme) for R&D for producing the next generation turbine blades; this will be an integral part of Vestas Global R&D Centre which will safeguard the existing 120 employees of Vestas Technology on the Isle of Wight and add a further 200 jobs over the next few years.



The Global R&D Centre will create jobs, supply chain expansion and knowledge transfer, and will eventually lead to full-scale manufacturing of next-generation blades. It will strengthen the Isle of Wight's position as a global centre for Composites R&D and development.



Delivering National Priorities

Regional Development Agencies work seamlessly with Government departments to help shape and implement national policies so that they are relevant to local people, places and businesses. Current examples of the RDAs acting as essential delivery agents for the Government include:

Responding to recession

Over the past 12-18 months, the global recession has caused national and regional economies to deteriorate dramatically. During the downturn, RDAs have led multi-agency partners including Jobcentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council and local authorities to help companies facing redundancies. Using intelligence from their relationships with companies across localities and supply chains, RDAs have provided support for small, medium and large companies at the point they announce the intention to make redundancies, to minimise the impact on individuals for example through job matching via RDAs' company account management. Working closely with BIS, RDAs have also responded by re-prioritising their Corporate Plans to focus on activities that mitigate the impact of the recession and help prepare for the economic upturn.

Managing public sector finances

In 2009, changed short-term Government spending priorities led to a significant cut in RDA budgets. Each RDA managed these cuts in region – working proactively with partners and stakeholders to re-prioritise investment. Through this process RDAs demonstrated their ability to take tough decisions and manage relationships effectively on behalf of Government. In addition, the RDAs provide 'Regional Funding Advice' (RFA) to Government. RFA is a response to Government's request that the RDAs provide advice on investment priorities for transport, housing and regeneration, and economic development. We also provide a view on how skills priorities will support such investment. We therefore fulfil a valuable role - co-ordinating views across a large number and diverse range of partners to agree a set of common priorities

Supporting growth industries

RDAs are working in partnership with the Government, Technology Strategy Board and key national and regional stakeholders to focus support on growth industries. As a result RDAs are planning to invest £2bn to support the growth of key sectors over the next 18 months.

Responding to major economic shocks

The RDAs have a proven ability to respond swiftly, effectively and efficiently to address unforeseen economic events. For example we have mobilised resources and coordinated joint action to tackle the economic challenges arising from Foot and Mouth outbreaks, flooding and major industrial closures.

Skills development

RDAs have worked hard to ensure the business voice is heard and drives the delivery of skills provision. Our Regional Economic Strategies have provided the evidence base for the skills needed to support business growth. This role will be significantly enhanced under the RDAs' new roles set out in Skills For Growth and the National Framework for Regional and Local Development, RDAs will be able in the new Regional Skills Strategies to set out the priorities for skills for innovation and growth, and to bring together investment needs and plans across schools, colleges, universities and business infrastructure. Working with the Sector Skills Councils, employer bodies and individual businesses, RDAs will "create a new energy behind ensuring an excellent supply of courses and training. This process will start from 2010-11 with the new focus on priority sectors."



Regional Development Agencies – The Facts

RDAs are accountable

RDAs are accountable to Ministers, through the sponsoring Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). In addition each RDA Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, is directly responsible to Parliament for the use of their budget. The National Audit Office subjects the performance of RDAs to regular independent review and external audit. RDA activity is also scrutinised regularly by Parliamentary Select Committees, and reviewed by Ministers for the region and Regional Select and Grand Committees, which comprise regional MPs. Through the new Leaders' Boards, RDAs are working even more closely with Local Authorities on issues such as joint prioritisation of investment.

The decisions made by RDAs are transparent and open

RDA decision-making processes are rigorous and consistent. They comply with Government guidance, including HM Treasury appraisal and evaluation requirements. Board papers and minutes, Corporate Plans and Annual Reports are published on RDA websites.

RDAs give value for money, using resources efficiently

RDAs generate wealth. Independent evidence shows that for every £1 invested by RDAs we have, to date, generated £4.50 in return. This figure rises to £6.40 when future returns are included. This is recognised as being at the very top end of returns for public sector investment. Every RDA achieved a score of 3 or 4 out of 4 in the last National Audit Office round of Independent Performance Assessment. RDAs are lean organisations, exceeding our Government-set efficiency savings targets.

RDAs are focused and have a clear purpose – to support economic growth and job creation

RDA Boards are business-led and concentrate on the economic development of the region. However the RDA model has also proved highly flexible, with RDAs successfully taking on and delivering against a range of additional responsibilities using fewer resources. They have a track record of effective collaboration to support national priorities.

RDAs and UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) have separate, complementary roles to play

Two independent studies have recently concluded that there is no unnecessary duplication of services between UKTI and RDAs. In particular, the report by consultants Arthur D. Little points out that our services are mutually reinforcing and that there is no confusion in the marketplace about our respective roles.

There is a need for a regional tier between national and local levels

The regional tier enables multiple partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors to work together and prioritise interventions/resources between competing localities, and also decide how best to deal with interventions that have a 'knock on' effect on other places. It is also required to tackle market failures that are greater than local, but not of national scale.

RDAs are efficient, effective and offer economies of scale

RDAs are business led, business liked, resourceful and responsive. Our lack of operational complexity means that working with us is simple and our actions are swift. There are few other public sector or local authority agents able to offer this degree of simplicity and speed, which benefits both national Government and local partners.

RDAs' regional economic boundaries are practical, being based on existing regional boundaries - and we collaborate effectively across boundaries when necessary

Many other agencies and activities are now organised around the existing regional boundaries. It makes sense to ensure that all partners work effectively across existing boundaries, rather than expend effort and resources in redrawing them.



RDA DECC Lead Role

The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) has the RDA 'lead role' for the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC).

The lead role is intended to efficiently manage the relationship between the RDAs and the Department by:

- providing strategic leadership across the RDA network on Departmental policy and stakeholder management;
- providing the main point of contact between the Department and the nine RDAs, ensuring effective communications are maintained;
- providing a direct conduit for the Department to the regions and regional businesses; and
- coordination of joint RDA responses to Government consultations, information requests and policy development.

Examples of some of the key activities undertaken to date include:

- The establishment of a high-level cross-RDA Energy and Climate Change Directors Group to provide strategic leadership on the DECC agenda. This is supported by a network of energy and climate change experts
- Completion of the Low Carbon New Industry New Jobs report which exemplifies RDA activity in this area.
- Development of a methodology to utilise Common Operating Principles across the RDAs in assessing carbon savings associated with their investments
- On the ground support provided to DECC's Delivery Review team, ensuring the role of regional and local stakeholders are taken into consideration in delivery of the Low Carbon Transition Plan
- Joint DECC/RDA research and collaborative work including:
 - Collating and analysing regional Greenhouse Gas Inventories
 - Developing a compendium of regional research undertaken by the RDAs of relevance to DECCs policy areas
 - Mapping the existing BSSP Product descriptions to assess the potential content of a new Low Carbon BSSP Product
- Coordination and submission of 4 cross-RDA responses to DECC policy consultations
- Communication across DECC to raise awareness of the contribution that RDAs can make to the delivery of DECCs priorities, including RDA representation on relevant Project Board meetings and DECC discussion seminars

