

future, but also a range of activities and funding streams to promote and demonstrate how to use buildings to generate the clean energy on which the low carbon economies of the future will be based. Lessons have been taken from other Solar Cities and will be built upon in the Oxford Solar Initiative (OSI).

The Oxford Solar Initiative (OSI)

Focus areas

The OSI emerges from a new generation of research and development that seeks city-wide applications of renewable energies and other means of greenhouse gas emissions reductions and absorption that will be applied in a coherent spatial and social context, as well as within community-wide framework.

The OSI proposes three areas of focus. They have to be advanced simultaneously. These are briefed below.

CO₂ reduction focused urban planning strategies

In part, due to restrictions imposed by clients, construction, design, architecture and development firms can, but rarely do, have a major influence over the embedded carbon in new developments. Local authorities, through planning strategies, should reverse this situation.

Targets, baseline studies and scenario development

Ambitious long-term targets for carbon reduction are valuable, but are often at best seen as ‘aspirational’. Milestones can be used to monitor and manage the achievement of long-term targets over shorter time scales. The reason for realistic short-term targets is that expectations about reductions in energy use have been raised before, but not met, breeding disappointment and scepticism. The development of tools to evaluate and assess individual initiatives needs to be done with scientific rigour.

Urban energy technologies, industry and business development

This group of actions includes job creation, attracting green industry, creating a new ‘green’ economic sector, promoting entrepreneurship in the green sector, efficiency improvements that reduce expenses and improve profits (Figure 18.3).

Figure 18.3
Three areas of focus of OSI.

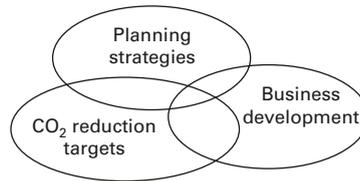
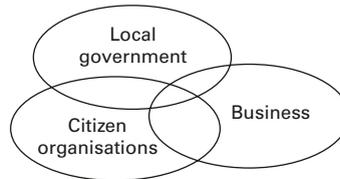


Figure 18.4
Actors involved in OSI.



Actors involved

The OSI recognises that its success will depend upon a collaborative approach among all involved parties. In Oxford, there is recognition that it is not enough to tackle such issues only at the global and national level, but that practical, workable solutions are also required based on strong local action. Oxford is fortunate in having an elected local authority that has made a *commitment* to tackling these issues strategically. The main role of the local authority in the initiative will be as a catalyst in the creation of a local 'Oxford Team'. This team will draw together the relevant stakeholders who will in turn develop a co-ordinated approach to energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions (Figure 18.4).

The overall objective of the OSI is to find the best ways to introduce Solar Energy Technologies (SET) and the RUE in Oxford. The initiative contains several clear goals including:

- **Goal One:** 10% of all houses in Oxford will have solar systems by the year 2010
- **Goal Two:** To implement a capacity building programme for local government to provide information, training and other services oriented to CO₂ mitigation strategies
- **Goal Three:** To establish strategic alliances with, and participation of local government, households, business organisations, energy supply companies and community organisations to fulfil Oxford's CO₂ reduction targets
- **Goal Four:** To initiate and implement a solar campaign to support local CO₂ reduction initiatives at every level within the Oxford community from primary school children to business leaders