

Background

- Back in 2008 the Climate Change Act was introduced, with the goal to reduce carbon emissions by at least 80% lower than the previous decades baseline. The introduction of the act solidified the UK government stance on climate change. Recent figures from the UK Green Building council and the Technology Strategy Board estimate that the built environment contributes to 40% of the total UK carbon emissions. These figures therefore suggest that the built environment is a crucial factor in achieving the 2050 target that is set by The Climate Change Act sets.

Aim and objectives

The aim of the research was to determine the commitment of the UK Government & local Governments in reducing carbon emissions in the built environment and how it is perceived within the industry. The main objectives were as followed:

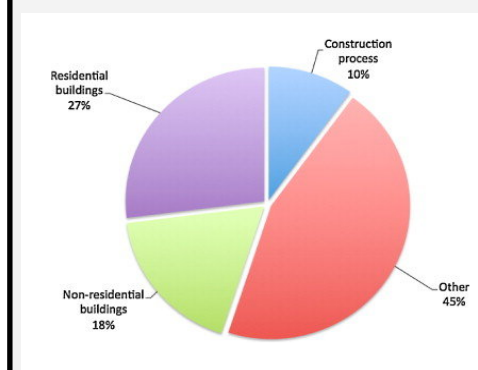
- To Find out if and how the policies in place are being implemented by industry
- Determine the amount of support provided by the government to the industry
- Determine the opinions of the individual in the industry regarding carbon emissions
- Identify what the government is doing to address carbon emission output by the built environment

Literature Review

The literature review aimed to review and identify existing legislation, policy and research on the topic area. By identifying current legislation and policy, it gave the researcher an overview of the topic area and allowed for general opinion to be drawn. The literature review identified gaps in the topic area, and determined what primary data would need to be collected in order to answer the research question.

Method

To effectively examine the commitment of the UK government to reducing carbon emissions, a mixed method approach was adopted to collect the necessary data. First a quantitative approach was used to explore the issue and to obtain the views of professional in the industry by surveys and gain a general understanding of how the commitment of the government is viewed by industry. The second method of data collection was qualitative data which was collected in the form of unstructured interviews. The interviews aimed to gain understanding if



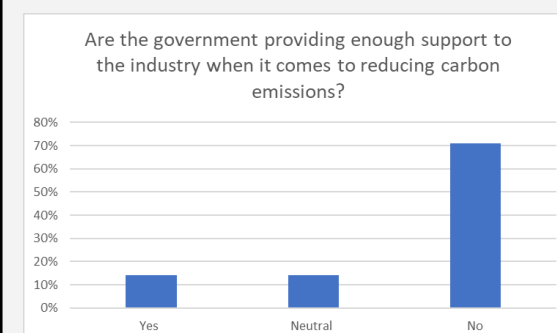
the implementation of policy was successful and if enough support was being provided to adopt policies.

Results

The results of the study revealed:

- That there was a lack of government support to the industry.
- That policy was not being implemented effectively within the industry.
- That sustainability adds complexity to a project making profit margins uncertain.

The findings highlighted a connection between government support and industry implementation of policy. It was found that lack of government support resulted in an unwillingness to adopt a sustainability approach into their business plan.



Limitations

The topic area chosen presented a number of limitations to the study, due to the current situation with COVID-19 the original data collection approach was to conduct focus groups. This would have allowed for an in-depth discussion with industry professionals and the ability to explore and expand on opinions. The survey was also limited in the ability to gather data. As participants were limited to only three replies, the data collected was unable to expand on why they presented that opinion, which also made for analysis of the results to present difficulties.

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from the results is that there is a lack of government commitment to reduce carbon emissions in the built environment. The literature review identified that there was an overall lack of policy and legislation, certainly when compared to other sectors. However, the lack of commitment was determined by a lack of support to the industry to implement sustainability into their projects. The main finding of the research was that government support directly affects the implementation of policy in the industry. As it was identified that the current policy lacked any incentives to promote sustainability. The interviews indicate that sustainability can add complexity to making profit, as methods of construction and technologies are expensive. Therefore, instead of sustainability being seen as a positive idea, it is seen as a disadvantage from an economical point of view.

Future Research

Suggestions for future research would be to explore how other industries are responding to carbon emission policies and if the situation is similar to the built environment.