

**OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE
PORTFOLIO**

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio:
 - (a) **Community Heroes** – as part of a project between the Education Village and the BBC, students nominated their ‘heroes’ under a range of categories (sporting, political, environmental etc) and carried out research on the person/organisation, culminating in an awards ceremony. Darlington Borough Council was nominated for its environmental work in terms of maintaining and enhancing the local environment, improving access to recreational open space and tackling climate change. Officers gave their time to help students with their research and to man an exhibition stand at the Awards ceremony event. Although ultimately unsuccessful, the nomination was a welcome recognition from the local community of the work the Council does for the environment.
 - (b) **Covenant of Mayors** - The Council signed up to the EU Covenant of Mayors in February 2009, making a commitment to reduce carbon emissions across the Borough by 20% against a 2005 baseline by 2020. A Sustainable Energy Action Plan has been developed to outline the measures required to achieve this reduction, using a scenario modelling tool. The use of the software has enabled various scenarios to be analysed, including extensive cost-benefit analysis. The SEAP is due to be submitted to the EU at the end of October.
 - (c) **Local Authority Carbon Management Programme** - The Council's Carbon Management Plan (CMP) was adopted by Cabinet in June 2010. Work is being undertaken across every Department of the Council to deliver against the 25% reduction target outlined in the CMP. Officers are currently investigating the feasibility of solar panel installation and Feed in Tariffs as part of the Carbon Management Programme.
 - (d) **Carbon Reduction Energy Efficiency Scheme (formerly the CRC)** - The Council is now registered with the Carbon Reduction Energy Efficiency Scheme, UK's mandatory climate change and energy saving scheme. The scheme started in April 2010 and is administered by the Environment Agency. The scheme is central to the UK's strategy for improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, as set out in the Climate Change Act 2008.
 - (e) **Local Food** - The Local Food project is gathering momentum with interest from several organisations across the Borough. A launch event is planned for Friday 23rd October, with a Green Market planned for Saturday 23rd October.

Scoping meetings have begun the task of identifying key tasks and milestones for the project. Lets Grow Darlington includes the concept of a Darlington Orchard, whereby residents will be encouraged to help with the planting of 5,000 trees on public and private land around the Borough.

This is not a Darlington Borough Council scheme, but draws on the experience, vision and goodwill from officers across the authority, as well as partner organisations in the town. It has my full support.

- (f) **Tackling Fire Deaths** - Together with other members of the Fire Authority from Darlington, I have been actively supporting the work being undertaken to help reduce fire deaths by identifying vulnerable members of our communities most at risk. A strong working partnership has been established between Fire Officers and Darlington BC's housing team. A seminar is now being planned for December, which will provide a valuable opportunity to unearth key cross-cutting issues between the fire, police and housing professionals and determine ways they can work more smartly to protect vulnerable tenants particularly in respect of acquisitive crime and fire.

It is hoped that this will lead to the development of a common vulnerability assessment framework, and a joint delivery Protocol or Memorandum of Understanding, which will be included in Service plans and Social Housing provider Action plans.

2. The following items relate to initiatives that are contributing to the Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Agenda, details of which are covered in other Portfolio reports.

Transport

- a) Great Burdon to Sadberge Cycle Route – This scheme is now complete
- b) Safer Routes to School
- c) School Travel Plans
- d) Cycling – Annual Cycling Festival; Workplace Cycle Challenge; bikeability training
- e) Local Motion newsletter

Neighbourhood Services

- a) Street Scene
- b) Housing – Garden Maintenance Service; HEAT annual report

3. Meetings

Since the last meeting of Council, meetings I have attended include those of the Durham and Darlington Fire Authority, the Greener Theme Group, and 2 Local Food Group meetings.

Councillor Nick Wallis
Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio