

**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) **Waste Management** – Progress continues on implementing the new waste management contract, the Planning Application for the new treatment plant will be heard by Durham County Council in mid November 2008 and subject to approval, building work will commence on the facility within Wades Quarry in early December 2008. Officers continue to work closely with the new contractor to ensure a smooth implementation in April 2009.

A new DVD is being produced, which will promote the new recycling service and the treatment facility. This will be available on line and used at promotional events.

The Council needs to review how it deals with its own waste and officers are currently reviewing our existing practices, drawing up an action plan to ensure that the Council becomes an exemplar in how it deals with its own waste. The action plan will be implemented from April 2009.

- (b) **Fuel Poverty** has been identified as a key priority for action in the Darlington Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, both of which have been endorsed by the Council and the Darlington Partnership. The Darlington Fuel Poverty Action Group was set up in August 2008 and has now met on 3 occasions. Members of the group include the Citizens Advice Bureau, Darlington Association on Disability, Age Concern, PCT and the Council's Housing Renewal Manager and Sustainable Development Officer. The main objective of the group is to consider how to work in partnership to tackle fuel poverty in Darlington. The group is hoping to fund a new post to help raise awareness among the key vulnerable groups and investigate opportunities for grants to help with tackling fuel poverty.
- (c) **The LSP Greener Theme Group** met on 24 November to consider and discuss the consultation draft LDF Core Strategy Preferred Options. The meeting also considered the draft Theme Group Delivery Plan which identifies key actions towards implementing and achieving the Greener Darlington priorities included in One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.
- (d) Officers attended a seminar/workshop organised by GONE focused on National Indicators 185 and 186 (reduction of CO2 emissions) which highlighted the role of Local Councils in taking the lead on these matters particularly through their own operations, and as an example to the local community.

2. The following items relate to initiatives that are contributing to the Climate Change Agenda, details of which are covered in other Portfolio reports:
 - (a) School Travel Planning
 - (b) Work Place Travel Plans
 - (c) Station Travel Plan
 - (d) Travel Information - Self Guided Cycle Rides
 - (e) Cycling England Visit
 - (f) Cycling Town Funding

3. The following meetings have been attended in respect of the Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio:
 - (a) A seminar/workshop organised by GONE as part of the current consultation on National Indicator 188 – ‘Adapting to Climate Change’.
 - (b) A event at Dodmire School as part of the Eco Schools Network focussing on global climate change issues.
 - (c) An awareness-raising event organised by Friends of the Earth focussed on waste minimisation and recycling.
 - (d) A Darlington Rotary Club meeting to report on the Climate Change Action Plan and issues facing the Borough.

Councillor Nick Wallis
Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio