
**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 Minimisation Review Group** – We gave consideration to the findings and recommendations of the Waste Minimisation Review Group which was established by the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee to investigate ways of reducing and reusing waste across the Borough. The Review Group made a number of recommendations following a number of meetings held by the Review Group members with officers and other interested parties and outside bodies i.e. Friends of the Earth, ENCAMS and the Darlington Partnership. I am pleased to report that we have endorsed the recommendations of the Group which will enable further work to be undertaken to ensure the message Re-Use Reduce and Recycle is wide publicised across the Borough.
 - (b) **New Waste Contract**
 - (i) The new waste contract has now commenced and we have seen significant improvements at the Household Waste Recycling Centre. The Council has received a number of positive comments from residents using the facility.
 - (ii) The Household Waste Recycling Centre is only licensed for domestic waste and not trade waste. Attempts in the past have been made to restrict access with limited success. Wades have recently gained planning permission for the adjacent site to build a waste transfer station. This facility will provide the opportunity for local businesses to deliver their waste for recycling and disposal at a reasonable fee. Once the site has been developed, height restriction bars and improved policies will be put in place to restrict access for trade customers.
 - (iii) Building work on the new treatment plant is well under way and it is anticipated that the plant will be operational for summer 2009. Publicity with regard to changes in the materials collected for recycling at kerbside will commence shortly to tie in with the opening of the plant. Materials collected will be paper, card and glass. This change does not mean that other materials will not be recycled. During the treatment process, plastics (all types), tetrapaks and metals (ferrous and non ferrous) will be extracted from general household waste and recycled. Once the plant is operational, along with the changes at the Household Waste Recycling Centre, will enable the Council to significantly improve recycling performance within the first year towards 50% with further increases anticipated over the duration of the contract up to 60%.

- (c) The third Darlington Green Fair took place on Sunday 19th April. 28 organisations attended the fair, including Friends of the Earth, Energy Savings Trust, Groundwork, Traidcraft, WWF, renewable energy installers and the Council's Countryside and Recycling teams. Melting Pot Arts provided entertainment for children with their Junk Music Show, Recycled Fashion Show and Birds of Prey displays took place throughout the afternoon. The Green Fair Was very well attended again.
- (d) The Council is taking part in the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme. The LACM programme was identified in the Darlington Climate Change Action Plan as a key action in delivering carbon reductions from DBC. Participation in LACM will allow a systematic analysis of the carbon footprint, a calculation of the value at stake and the case for taking action, an assessment of the opportunities for managing carbon emissions and ensure that carbon management is embedded in the day to day operations.
- (e) The following items relate to initiatives that are contributing to the Climate Change Agenda, details of which are covered in other Portfolio reports:

Transport

- (i) Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives – Cyclist Training Activities; Pedestrian Training Activities; School Activities
- (ii) School Travel Planning
- (iii) Workplace Travel Plans
- (iv) Cycle demonstration Town
- (v) Supported bus services

Health and Leisure

- (vi) Darlington Playing Pitch and Facilities Strategy
- (vii) Transport Programme – Teen Card
- (viii) Darlington Doorstep Walks
- (ix) West Park Bike Track

Councillor Nick Wallis
Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio