

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

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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) **Real Nappy Week** – 21 to 27 April - Council supported Real Nappy Week as in previous years. At the Green Fair parents were given the chance to enter a free prize draw to win a Real Nappy Starter pack worth £50. Incentive scheme leaflet produced - to be circulated to creches, surgeries, nurseries etc. Links have been made with the Breastfeeding Strategy which will drive the agenda forward. In addition, links have been made with local Real Nappy agents, which will increase the choice parents have when looking to purchase nappies.
  - (b) **Green Fair** - 27 May - The Green Fair was hugely successful, with estimates of around 400 people passing through. Visitors were asked to sign the Climate Change pledge, which links into the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, in exchange for a free tree. Children were invited to plant tomato seeds and paint their pot, with links made to local produce and food waste. Both activities were good for awareness raising and will be undertaken again. Other groups represented at the fair were Friends of the Earth, GOLD, Traidcraft, various wildlife groups, the Tees Forest, the Ramblers, the Energy Savings Trust and the Council's Recycling, Countryside and Sustainability teams. This is now the 3rd year of the Green Fair and it's growing success and importance is evident in the number of people attending on Sunday despite the weather!
  - (c) **Waste Management** – Work continues on implementing the new waste contract which starts in April, 2009. A full planning application has now been submitted by Stonegrave to Durham County Council which addresses all issues highlighted in the scoping letter.
  - (d) **Recycling** - The Council has recently launched its new waste awareness initiative 'Making Waste Work – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle'. For the next 12 months, the main focus of this campaign will be around the first two R's – Reduce and Reuse, with greater emphasis on recycling when the new waste contract is in place. A new 'Making Waste Work website has been designed with a permanent link available from the main page of the Council's own website and contains a range of information. The following awareness events are also planned under the 'Making Waste Work' banner.

The Waste Minimisation and Recycling Officer is shortly to undertake a promotional exercise called 'Dr Bin' as part of a forthcoming environmental 'green' issue of The Northern Echo. This will involve analysing both the Deputy Editor's and the Portfolio Holder's waste for one week to see what could be recycled through kerbside recycling,

at the Household Waste Recycling Centre and at bring sites.

As part of the National 'Recycle Now' Week, an event will be held in the Market Square on 2 June 2008 offering information to the public on all things environmental from Street Scene and Street Champions, Tees and Durham Energy Advice and WRAP Home Composting. In addition, a Junk Music Workshop will be provided by Melting Pot Arts for children to take part in.

A short story competition is being organised by the Council which aims to get everyone in Darlington thinking about the waste they produce and to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle as much as possible. Writers are being invited to pen a short story of no more than 2,000 words on the theme of 'Making Waste Work'. There will be two categories, one for children up to 16 years of age and one for adults. The winning stories will be read at the annual Darlington Story Telling Festival at Drinkfield Nature Reserve on Saturday 2 August 2008 and published on the Council's 'Making Waste Work' website.

- (e) **The Climate Change Action Plan** was presented to the Economy, Environment and Transport Group on 24 April. A good discussion ensued with Member's of the group as to how to widen the Action Plan to include actions from organisations beyond the Council. Each of the Darlington Partnership Board Member's have been contacted to ask if they can provide some actions to be included in the Action Plan, particularly the public sector organisations. The Action Plan will now go to the Partnership Board in July.
- (f) The following items relate to transport initiatives that are contributing to the Climate Change agenda, details of which are covered in the relevant portfolio holders report:
- Eight schools submitted School Travel Plans in March 2008 for approval by the Department for Transport/Department for Children Skills and Families.
  - The Workplace Travel Plan Officer has been working closely with the management of Cummins on updating their travel plan,
  - The Highways Agency have employed transport consultancy JMP to undertake a study examining the feasibility of creating an area travel plan which covers the businesses based at Lingfield Point
  - Concessionary Fares
  - Local Motion Conference - April 2008
  - Bikeability Cycle Training
  - Pedestrian Training

2. The following meetings have been attended in respect of the Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio:
  - (a) County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service, 27 March, 2008
  - (b) Darlington Environmental Forum, 31 March, 2008
  - (c) Local Motion Conference, 2 April, 2008
  - (d) Standards Board of County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service, 21 April, 2008
  - (e) Economy, Environment & Transport Group (LSP), 24 April, 2008
  - (f) North East Regional Fire Service Management Board, 25 April 2008
  - (g) Talking Together Event at Education Village, 26 April, 2008
  - (h) Green Fair at South Park, 27 April, 2008
  - (i) Public Protection Forum, 1 May 2008
  - (j) Mayor's Thanksgiving Service, 7 May, 2008
  - (k) Talking Together Session at Coleridge Centre, 7 May, 2008
  - (l) Green Fair at Dodmire School, 17 May, 2008
  - (m) Showing of film "Inconvenient Truth" & discussion, 19 May, 2008
  
3. At the Cabinet in the Community Meeting on 29 April, many of the questions asked of Cabinet by politics students from Queen Elizabeth 6th Form College were about climate change, waste, recycling and sustainable environment issues. It was heartening to see the depth of interest and concern from these sixth formers.

### **Sustainable Environment and Climate Change Portfolio**