

CLIMATE CHANGE – THE ROLE OF LSPs AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is threefold:

- To understand some of the issues around Climate Change
- To raise awareness of the Green Audit currently being undertaken by New Forest District Council (NFDC) and share any other similar initiatives that might be going on within Hampshire; and
- To consider the potential role for LSPs and the Sustainable Community Strategies in helping to mitigate the effects, and plan for the impact, of Climate Change.

2. CLIMATE CHANGE, HAMPSHIRE AND BEYOND

2.1 The impact of mankind on Climate Change now has broad recognition. It is generally accepted that the way we live is speeding up Climate Change. Although we cannot affect what happens in the next 20 years it is not too late to influence the way the climate is changing after that period. Everyone, both organisations and individuals, are responsible but they also have opportunities to make a difference for the benefit of both present and future generations.

2.2 Latest projections for Hampshire show that by the 2050's:

- Annual temperatures will rise by between 1 and 3 degrees C on average
- Rain in the summer months will decrease by between 10 – 30%
- Rain in the winter months will increase between 10 – 22%
- Average sea levels will rise 30 – 50 cm but high tides and storms surges will affect actual levels
- Soil moisture content, wind speeds, frequency of storms are all part of the future picture.
- View scenarios on www.ukcip.org.uk (to be updated in 2008)

2.3 It's impossible to talk about Climate Change without mentioning some global and longer term issues.

- Fresh water shortages will continue to grow with a predicted 40% of the world's population suffering drought by 2050's.
- World temperatures are rising – levels of 125 degrees now being reached in Pakistan and much nearer to home, temperatures are claiming lives – in Europe in 2003 – 35,000 people died of the heat.
- The financial cost of storm damage and flooding is escalating beyond belief as natural disasters grow in their intensity.
- The Arctic ice cap has diminished by 40% in the past 50 years. In the next 50 years it is likely to disappear altogether in the summer months.

- Greenland and Antarctica are vulnerable – the impact of these melting is incredibly significant – either one disappearing would result in a significant rise in sea levels.
- The permafrost of Siberia and Alaska contains enough methane and CO2 that if released through melting would double the current levels of pollution that we have in our atmosphere.

2.4 The causes of all this can be summarised as:

- Population – it took 10,000 generations of modern man to reach a 2 billion figure in 1950 – it has taken less than one generation to move to 6.5 billion today. By 2050 the population of the world will be 9 billion.
- Pollution – that population is putting 70 million tonnes of global warming pollution into the atmosphere every day. Some are putting in very little, others are putting in a lot. About one third of that pollution is being absorbed into the world’s oceans causing the oceans to be more acidic – major impacts on coral reefs and the ecosystem.
- Science and Technology – the industrialisation of the modern world has brought about many of the problems we now face. It has of course also brought great advances to people’s quality of life. It is hoped it can provide some of the solutions to the issues we now face.
- Lack of reaction – much of the science has been known for many years and it could be argued that not all reasonable actions have been taken to lessen the impact.

3. NFDC’S GREEN AUDIT

3.1 As an example of one of the initiatives taking place in Hampshire, NFDC is undertaking a Green Audit to cover its roles as a service provider/enabler and its role as a community leader. It will focus on the use of non renewable resources and pollution of the environment – both issues featuring prominently in the responses to the recent Future Matters Issues and Options consultation. The audit will consider the following themes:

Theme -The way:	Focus on	Start	Finish by
we operate our vehicles	Reducing consumption of non renewable fuel and pollution arising from our vehicles – transport fleet, employee and member travel	Pre 5/07	31/3/08
communities are developed	The role of planning & building regulations in developing communities in a way that minimises impact on the environment through the use of planning decisions & policies including those relating to the use of renewable resources, rainwater capture, solar panels & heating, wind turbines, timber frames, carcinogenic – free coatings & locally sourced materials.	Pre 5/07	31/3/08
we operate our offices & other buildings	Reducing consumption of non renewable electricity, gas and water.	Post 5/07	31/3/08

Theme -The way:	Focus on	Start	Finish by
we operate our services	Reducing the use of paper and other related non renewable resources & increasing the level of re use of such material and then recycling.	Post 5/07	31/3/08
we procure our goods and services	The role of procurement in helping to reduce the Council's environmental impact.	Post 5/07	31/3/08
households are run	The role of waste management, recycling & composting and HECA and other work in reducing energy wastage & CO2 emissions in housing.	Post 5/07	31/12/08
communities are run	The role of traffic management, clean streets & public space and the use of non renewable energy & resources in the street scene.	Post 5/07	31/12/08
we work with businesses	The role of commercial waste management & recycling, reducing inappropriate packaging, including the use of plastic.	Post 5/07	31/12/08
we understand and plan for the impact of Climate Change	Our plans for the future bearing in mind the knowledge we have today.	Post 5/07	31/12/08

3.2 The Council is responsible for:

- Its own carbon footprint of 7655 tonnes
- Annual mileage of over 2.5 million miles – over 5 return trips to the moon each year!
- The use of over 146,000 gallons of fuel pa.
- Spending over £850,000 on electricity, gas and water pa.
- Planning for over 4000 additional new dwellings over the next 20 years
- Collecting over 65,000 tonnes of household waste pa of which over 18,000 tonnes of materials is recycled
- The use of 10 million sheets of paper pa

3.3 Others facts and figures that may be of interest are:

- Over 2 million tonnes of carbon emissions in the District (New Forest District residents only, based on national average of 11.81 tonnes per person)
- 27% of all UK carbon emissions come from heating, lighting and running homes
- Growing traffic levels year on year
- Government target is to have all new homes carbon neutral by 2016
- The country will run out of landfill sites in 9 years time
- Flood damage in the UK is expected to rise from £1.4 billion to £27 billion by 2080
- UK Small to Medium sized enterprises are estimated to waste £812m on energy each year
- 28% of average business utility costs are due to unnecessary energy consumption

- People in the UK are the biggest wasters of energy in Europe
 - “If we don’t act now to stem greenhouse emissions the world’s GDP could shrink by 20% by 2050. If we spend 1% of GDP on turning green now, we should be able to avert this economic apocalypse” – the Sterne Report.
- 3.4 The Audit comprises evidence gathering, policy & performance review, an environmental challenge and improvement planning stages. It has cross party, high level support and is one of the Council’s key targets over the next two years.
- 3.5 The audit process enables all members and employees to take part and provides for external peer challenge.
- 3.6 A key part is to raise awareness of, and test attitudes to, the issues. Improved communication and consultation on the subject are part of the process.
- 3.7 Members of the Changing Lives Partnership (New Forest’s LSP) have been given a presentation of the audit and invited to become involved in particular themes.
- 3.6 Members of the Partnership also shared information about similar initiatives taking place within their own organisations.
- 3.7 The presentation led to a potential flagship initiative for the new SCS being developed to help tackle climate change. This is currently being put together for consideration in July.

4. THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF LSPs AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

- 4.1 The importance of the issue of Climate Change is growing locally, nationally and globally eg the draft Climate Change Bill has been published and the G8 nations agreeing ways forward. The challenge to tackle Climate Change has been laid down.
- 4.2 LSPs are well placed to make a difference not only as a collection of individual agencies but also through the Sustainable Community Strategy to work with communities to reduce pollutants and the use of non renewable resources.
- 4.3 The SCS includes relevant key features including the integration of the 3 areas of well being, meeting the needs of future generations and respecting the needs of others in the wider area. Indeed climate change is quoted as the sort of cross cutting issues SCS’s should be tackling.
- 4.4 A strategy for change across Hampshire could be used to move from where we are now to where we want to be. This could involve:
- Understanding the issues – sharing research and information and identify where we can make a difference
 - Understanding and influencing attitudes – much of this is about attitude change. This requires a better understanding of people’s attitudes through engagement as well as making information available so that people can make informed choices.

- Building capacity – bringing organisations and the community together to work towards this common outcome
- Measuring performance – need to understand what impact has been made. To do that, better use of data and information is required
- Publicising success – share what works well to influence others to do the right thing
- Reviewing and learning – understand from our performance about how we can improve

4.5 The Network is asked to:

- a) share any information about other strategic approaches being taken in each LSP area including the position of climate change as part of existing or developing SCS's;
- b) discuss the role of LSPs and SCSs in this issue; and
- c) consider whether it sees any potential to work across Hampshire LSPs to treat it as a priority issue for development (perhaps as part of a common county wide flagship project to focus on organisation and community mitigation initiatives?)

4.6 As part of the above, the Network needs to consider:

- 1) HCC's Commission on Climate Change (Adaptation);
- 2) The review of the Hampshire SCS;
- 3) The role of the Sustainability Officers Network in this issue; and
- 4) The potential for involvement of the LSP Chairs Network.

For further information:

Keith Smith, Head of Performance & Strategic Development
 New Forest District Council, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire SO43 7PA
 Tel: 02380 285551, Email: keith.smith@nfdc.gov.uk