

CARBON

June 2010 Issue 3

REDUCTION BULLETIN

POLICY

Ashfield plans ahead

Ashfield District Council has published a carbon management plan in which it sets out aims to hit its target of a 35% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020 six years early.

The council said: "The plan is an opportunity for the council to take practical steps in getting its own house in order and work towards being a low carbon authority.

"Developed in partnership with the Carbon Trust, it consists of understanding carbon emissions, setting an ambitious carbon reduction target and identifying projects that have the potential to save money on energy use and reduce carbon emissions."

Councillor Margaret Thorpe said: "The council is committed to reducing the district's carbon footprint ahead of target and raising environmental awareness. We recognise damage to the environment damages personal health, impoverishes economies and weakens communities."

The plan sets out individual council officers with responsibility for each action towards achieving the target. Environment and sustainability

manager Jenni French told *CRB*: "The plan is about having project owners: the first half is about the council taking responsibility, but individual officers and sections have to have ultimate responsibility to do what's in their power.

"How do you make people accountable if you keep it too high level? People have put their names forward, it's not like I've sat in my ivory tower and dictated it, we've said to people 'what is it you want to contribute towards this?' and 'are you able to deliver it?' and people have said 'yes we can'."

French said: "If they can't deliver we will make them accountable, ask what's gone wrong and why they weren't able to deliver.

"It might be as simple as they tried it and it wasn't going to bring the savings about. But if they haven't bothered then that isn't good enough."

In his introduction, chief executive Philip Marshall wrote: "Having a dedicated and committed officer team who can speak authoritatively on carbon management enhances the council's ability to both lead and influence in this area."

French said: "It's important to have one person co-ordinating action. My job is about sticking my nose into every bit of business and asking if we can do it in a better way and save carbon."

The council has deliberately set an ambitious target. French said: "It's a bit like the high jump, what the Carbon Trust say is place that bar as high as you possibly can, the higher it is the higher people will jump."

French also said taking action now would help the council be prepared if the Carbon Reduction Commitment – which it is currently two small to come under – is extended.

She told *CRB*: "I think eventually everybody will come under the CRC.

"This plan is all planning for it. We don't have to do anything now so we're not taking steps directly to address it. But by having a good carbon reduction plan and understanding the carbon emissions we so have, if we should ever come under the umbrella of having to apply for the CRC we would understand where we are and how we could go about making the big carbon savings."

INDUSTRY

Manchester low carbon support

The Greater Manchester Carbon Reduction Group has been launched by the region's Chamber of Commerce.

Richard Critchley told *CRB*: "We're developing support for members who deliver carbon reduction services. We're not going to give advice on carbon reduction because we know there are so many organisations doing that.

"By supporting our members delivering carbon reduction services we can make sure they get the most of the opportunities out there.

"In greater Manchester there is so much going on, everyone wants to reduce their carbon emissions. We're saying our members have the expertise and resources to do that and we want to make sure they access the opportunities."

Critchley said the task was complicated by difficulty in identifying which member companies provide carbon-related services, with most coming under other categories.

He said: "Part of it is identifying who provides the services, then getting them

networking with the right people – engaging with the councils, the Environment Agency – and making them aware of the skills we have."

The Chamber sees the environmental sector as "absolutely essential" to the region's future. Critchley said: "Manchester was the first low carbon economic area and we see our members as having a huge amount of skills in carbon reduction. We think it's definitely the future for Manchester and the economy and we want to be part of it."

IN BRIEF

Spending cuts

Prime Minister David Cameron has said carbon emissions from central government will be cut by 10% in the next 12 months, describing it as "the most ambitious commitment on UK government emissions ever made". However, Defra, DECC and local authorities face spending cuts.

Government department headquarters will publish energy use online in real time.

Cameron said: "I don't want to hear warm words about the environment. I want to see real action. I want this to be the greenest government ever.

"Taking our lead from 10:10, I commit us to a 10% reduction in carbon emissions across central government in the next twelve months.

"To those who say this is insignificant, remember this: the UK's public sector has a bigger carbon footprint than the entire waste industry."

A new energy bill was also announced in the Queen's Speech. Defra secretary of state Caroline Spelman said it "demonstrates the commitment to be the greenest government in the country's history".

Defra will contribute £162 million to the government's spending cuts, with DECC losing £85 million.

Councils also face budget cuts, but the LGA chair Dame Margaret Eaton said: "We all know cuts are necessary and councils are ready to talk to the government about how these cuts are implemented and limit their impact on front-line services."

WELCOME

Welcome to Carbon Reduction Bulletin – a supplement to Air Quality Bulletin, Noise Bulletin and Contaminated Land Bulletin.

If you want your own copy of future supplements sent individually, please email crb@empublishing.org.uk.

● Rob Bell, Editor

IN BRIEF

National Indicator portal

The Audit Commission's national indicator information portal is now available, providing "quick and easy access to all the information you need about the national indicators".

The commission said: "Along with Communities and Local Government and government departments, we have worked to ensure that this is the primary source of guidance for the national indicator set."

● www.audit-commission.gov.uk/localgov/audit/nis/pages/niguidancesearch.aspx

Environmental tools

A free directory of over 350 environmental accounting tools covering climate change and carbon accounting, air quality, trading, water, adaptation and full lifecycle analysis has been launched.

● www.environmenttools.co.uk

NHS Wales assessment

The NHS in Wales will "undertake a major exercise to assess its carbon footprint as part of the development of a low carbon strategy", health minister Edwina Hart has announced.

This exercise will identify NHS Wales' main sources of carbon emissions and opportunities for improving performance and reducing its carbon footprint.

Hart said: "As Wales' biggest single employer and organisation, the NHS is a consumer of a considerable amount of goods and energy and generates a lot of travel as it works to care for the health and wellbeing of the people of Wales."

"While we have already done a great deal, we know we must do more. The work that I am instigating on determining the carbon footprint of the NHS will help me identify where further efforts should be focused and help to prioritise future work in this area."

"Being more energy efficient is not only good for the environment, but also helps to reduce costs and save money."

STREETLIGHTS

Council rethinks lighting plan

Blaenau Gwent Council has successfully introduced a part-night lighting scheme after its first attempt last year was met with complaints and cancelled.

The council said: "The energy saving programme will keep lighting on in residential streets and cut £142,000 a year off energy bills."

"We have equipped streetlights with the latest remote switching technology. By saving energy and making cost savings the council is keeping all its 13,200 streetlights in operation, cutting its carbon reduction bills by £12,000 a year and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 1,000 tonnes a year."

Streetlights now stay on through the night in town centres, areas covered by

CCTV, at main road roundabouts and at pedestrian crossings. Streetlights are switched off between one and 5.30am on main roads and alternative streetlights are switched off between one and 5.30am on residential streets.

Streetlighting manager Ken Weeks told *CRB*: "We started last May, but we had a lot of complaints, because we only had the central management system installed in half the borough."

"So we've switched them back on except on main roads and industrial estates and we've had maybe two complaints but have already saved £120,000 in energy costs."

The council has spent the last four months installing remote switches controlled by the

central management system in the remaining 6,000 streetlights. Weeks said: "It has been an ongoing programme over four or five years, and we're doing a lot of other things to reduce our carbon footprint and energy use, including new lamp technology."

"They cost about £100 a light, which is about £50 more than the standard lamps, but it gives us flexibility if the politicians decide to change their decision from part night to whole night lighting."

"And if we'd bought part night photocells and that decision changed, we'd have to go in and replace all the bulbs which is more labour intensive than the remote switches."

Weeks expects the council to save around £200,000 a year in energy costs.

FUNDING

NWDA grants for low carbon SMEs

The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) is offering small firms £2 million of funding to "develop and demonstrate innovative technologies that reduce carbon emissions".

The grant funds will be available to companies working in categories including waste treatment and recycling, water pollution, air pollution, land remediation and energy

generation and efficiency.

Dan Griffiths, NWDA head of climate change, told *CRB*: "There is a tremendous opportunity for our economy going forward to provide the sort of goods and services required to deliver the climate change act and carbon reduction targets."

Grant funding between £20,000 and £250,000 for up to 40% of project costs is

available.

Griffiths said: "We've realised that some of these activities can require quite a significant amount of support particularly if it involves changing a manufacturing process. A lot of technologies are very mature, so to change them to low carbon may take quite a lot of effort."

● www.nwdabusinessfinance.co.uk

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Brighton sets out 10:10 actions

Brighton & Hove City Council has set out how it intends to meet the requirements of the 10:10 campaign.

The report said: "A range of measures to ensure that we use display energy certificates more effectively have been developed. A renewal of these certificates is underway and the schools programme has been brought in-house to allow for closer monitoring and to ensure development of savings can be highlighted as part of the renewal/audit process."

"Each medium to high

scoring site will receive at least one visit per year from a low carbon officer and an audit of their usage and energy management will be carried out."

IT energy use will also be addressed, alongside a number of actions on transport. The report said: "The corporate fleet manager has analysed fuel usage and mileage for cleaning and parks vehicles. Fuel has reduced by 4.5% in the past year. A driver ID scheme will produce monthly driver spreadsheets enabling roll out

of more efficient driving practices. This is currently being piloted but will be rolled out to all council vehicles."

Brighton also hopes action to meet 10:10 will help towards the Carbon Reduction Commitment. The report said: "The efforts of the campaign will have a significant impact on the CRC. Any savings that can be made through the 10:10 campaign will reduce the cost of the CRC by reducing the number of allowances that need to be bought and increasing our position on the league table."

REGULATION

Businesses unprepared for CRC

Sixty-five percent of UK businesses are not prepared to comply with carbon emissions reduction and energy efficiency legislation such as the Carbon Reduction Commitment, according to research by IT services and technology company Morse.

However, researchers said the survey shows legislation is beginning to have the desired effect, with 79% of organisations saying carbon legislation will change the way they think about their IT operations.

"While businesses are currently unprepared for the introduction of new legislation, it is very encouraging that they

seem to recognise this and understand the need for change," said principal consultant Brian Murray. "What is important now is that businesses develop confidence in their ability to comply with current and future regulation.

"Key to this is accurate measurement. IT departments, and businesses as a whole, need to rigorously monitor and manage their energy use.

"There are a number of things organisations can do to reduce energy use and prepare for compliance with carbon emissions regulation. Simply reviewing where energy is currently used, identifying any inefficiencies and optimising

data centre operations so that these inefficiencies are removed can provide immediate benefits. However, any strategies will only be successful if they are planned, executed and audited using rigorously gathered facts about energy usage.

"These facts will be even more important as regulations come into place and audits are required. At the moment most organisations are just using guess work.

"This can't continue. In the same way that financial auditors wouldn't accept guesses as to an organisation's cash position, environmental auditors are unlikely to accept guesses on energy use."

RESEARCH

Scottish school walking rates falling

The number of children walking and cycling to school in Scotland has fallen slightly, according to the second annual Hands-Up Scotland survey by sustainable transport charity Sustrans.

In 2009, more than 415,000 children (approximately 59% of all pupils in Scotland) took part in the survey, providing a detailed insight into how children across the country travel to school.

Results collated from the survey show a 1.3% drop in the number of children walking to school and a more modest 0.5% decrease in the number of children cycling on the same journey, while the amount of children being driven to school has increased by just over 1%.

Sustrans national director Scotland John Lauder said: "While the results from this survey are disappointing compared to last year, the findings highlight the need for government at local and national levels to maintain sustained and focused investment to encourage children to travel actively.

"It is known that the benefits to health and wellbeing resulting from children travelling actively offer a great

return on investment, particularly when public funding is tight.

"The small decrease in the number of children travelling actively to school in Scotland is a shame; however half of all journeys to school are still made on foot, by bike or by scooter. The forthcoming cycling action plan will place the school journey as one of its aims and this must be matched with focused funding."

The results were not all bad, however, with 13 of the 31 Scottish local authorities that took part in the survey seeing an increase in some modes of active travel.

West Lothian, for example, saw levels of walking rise by nearly 4% and cycling levels increase by 0.2%.

Lauder said: "There are some rays of light in this survey – a number of areas are continuing to increase active travel levels among children in Scotland, although we've still got a long way to go. We welcome the recent spending increase of £10 million for sustainable transport and the important role it will play in encouraging more children to cycle and walk to school."

Sustrans is unable to say why

walking rates are falling despite government, local authority and charity action to encourage sustainable travel. However, a spokesperson said parental fears about safety is playing a role.

Technical project officer Paul Ruffles told *CLB*: "Rates may be falling, but it's only a marginal drop – our official line would be there can never be enough investment in people walking and cycling."

The charity is planning further research to establish which factors impact on walking and cycling rates. Ruffles said: "We're proposing to use the Hands-Up survey data to do a detailed study, hopefully this autumn. We'll look at range of factors that may or may not have an impact on school travel.

"Our aspiration is to use a whole batch of data to tell us not what they do, but what we don't know, which is why they do what they do. There are a whole range of other things happening that might impact on walking and cycling rates.

"It could be the level of cycling training provided by the local authority, whether there's a dedicated travel co-ordinator, or even broader socio-economic factors."

IN BRIEF

Public sector savings

The UK public sector is on track to deliver cost savings in excess of half a billion pounds through energy saving projects and can go even further, according to the Carbon Trust.

One hundred and twenty public sector organisations have joined programmes to cut energy use and carbon emissions over the next five years, including central government departments, local authorities, schools, universities, police and fire services, and NHS trusts.

Since 2001, over 3,000 public sector organisations have worked with the Carbon Trust, which said the energy-saving projects they have implemented will deliver combined cost savings of £650 million and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by more than 6.5 million tonnes.

Head of public sector Richard Rugg said: "The public sector has shown impressive leadership in recent years in tackling carbon emissions and bringing down energy use. A few years ago, organisations graduating from our public sector carbon management programmes aimed to cut carbon emissions by 12% over five years, now they are aiming for 30%."

Renewable partnership

IKM Consulting has announced a partnership with Irish consultancy Fehily Timoney and Company, one of Ireland's leading specialists in wind farm development.

IKM director Alistair Kean said: "The initial impetus for the partnership was the growing number of opportunities presented by the renewable energy sector in Scotland.

"Fehily Timoney has a track record of nearly 60 completed wind farm developments across Ireland. We see huge potential in gaining access to that experience and expertise while Fehily Timoney in turn will benefit from IKM's knowledge of the Scottish market, planning system and regulatory authorities."

● www.ikmconsulting.co.uk

IN BRIEF

Parking problems

The *Richmond and Twickenham Times* reports Richmond Council's new Conservative administration will have to spend £90,000 to fulfil its pledge to scrap the borough's carbon-based parking scheme.

New cabinet member for transport Clare Head asked officers to change parking meters across the borough. The solar-powered meters cost the former Liberal Democrat administration £1.4 million last year.

Head told the paper: "As soon as I asked for this simple task to be carried out I was told the cost of adjusting the computer would be £90,000."

"What an outrage. First the Lib Dems wasted £1.4 million of taxpayers' money on shiny, new parking meters. Now we learn they have saddled us with a system that will cost £90,000 if we wish to modify the charges."

RESEARCH

City carbon budgets to reduce emissions

Locally managed carbon budgets for housing and transport could be highly effective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, according to US researchers.

The research proposed local government would be responsible for deciding which carbon reduction strategies to use and how to implement them.

National governments would be responsible for providing technical and financial support and devising methods to measure emissions.

And regional governments would support co-ordination between local governments and review funding applications.

The researchers identified two methods of budget allocation as most suitable. Both of these use a per capita carbon allowance based on current emissions, which Deborah Salon of the

University of California, Davis, said they considered the fairest option.

She told *CRB*: "The simple explanation is that there are a number of actions that can be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in transport and land use that in the US and many other countries are controlled by local government."

"A lot of the discussion about climate change has been about reducing emissions from power plants, industrial sources, and making nations responsible for the emissions within their boundaries."

"But the idea here is that there are a lot of things that happen not at national level but at community level. Here's a way to start to think about addressing those emissions."

"Not every community can or should address their local emissions at the same way – London is going to do

something very different to a rural town.

"So we propose a structure is provided to support local action but not dictate exactly what it should be."

"The per capita budget is pretty likely to be the way people will want to go with it, because it doesn't discourage growth in an explicit way."

Salon said current legislation in California will use the per capita carbon budget idea. She said: "We have Senate Bill 375 which is being implemented to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the regional level, which will use a per capita metric, as there didn't seem to be another fair way of doing it."

"The real concern of restricting population growth was a major issue. But I think the more people move to places where they're trying to limit per capita emissions the better."

● ddsalon@gmail.com

EVENTS 2010

June 16-17

CLIMATE CHANGE: IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES CONFERENCE 2010

A British Geological Survey event to be held at Keyworth, Nottingham. Visit www.bgs.ac.uk/climateconference/home.html

June 24

THE UK ENERGY SUMMIT

An Economist event, to be held in London. Visit www.economistconferences.co.uk/event/uk-energy-summit/1366

July 13

CARBON LABELLING: MEASURING, MANAGING & COMMUNICATING PRODUCT CARBON FOOTPRINTS

A Haymarket event, to be held in London. Visit www.endscarbonseries.com

June 17

THE CARE4AIR AWARDS 2010

Hosted by the South Yorkshire air pollution awareness campaign, covering Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley. To be held in Sheffield. Visit www.care4air.org/c4a_awards.html

July 20

CHP, THE NEXT GENERATION?

A Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers meeting. To be held in Brentwood. Visit www.cibse.org

August 17

ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS WORKSHOP

A Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers event to be held in Chelmsford. Visit www.cibse.org

September 23-24

CLIMATE CHANGE 2010; A NEW CLIMATE DEAL?

A Chatham House event, to be held in London. Visit www.chathamhouse.org.uk/climatechange10

October 19-21

EUROPEAN FUTURE ENERGY FORUM

To be held in London. Visit www.europeanfutureenergyforum.com

CARBON REDUCTION BULLETIN

Carbon Reduction Bulletin is a supplement to *Air Quality Bulletin*, *Noise Bulletin* and *Contaminated Land Bulletin*.

Readers of our newsletters have told us that they need extra information about what they are supposed to be doing now – or in the future – about carbon reduction. Sign up for future issues sent directly to you – tell your colleagues, they can have their own copy too!

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Name Job title:.....
 Organisation
 Address.....

 Postcode signed
 E-mail

CREDITS



Editor: Rob Bell

tel 020 8696 6874 (fax 01372 700400)

email rob.bell@empublishing.org.uk

Website: www.empublishing.org.uk

Address for correspondence:

PO Box 592 Redhill RH1 3WN

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OUR OTHER TITLES



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