

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING – 29 JANUARY 2009

CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE

Report by: Stephen Trotter, Director of Conservation, Recreation and Sustainable Development

Summary:

This report:

- i) provides members with an update on progress to address climate change issues
- ii) proposes that the Authority considers signing the Nottingham Declaration on climate change.

Recommendations: To

- 1. **note the report**
- 2. **agree that the Authority should sign the Nottingham Declaration.**

Resources and Corporate Plan:

Mostly staff time required in the short term.

Objective C7 of the Corporate Plan: support high quality building and open space design in village and town centres, reflecting the distinctive character of the build environment.

Papers:

NFNPA 285/09:	Cover paper
NFNPA 285/09 Annex 1:	Progress against earlier actions
NFNPA 285/09 Annex 2:	Additional tasks, initiatives and projects undertaken
NFNPA 285/09 Annex 3:	Summary of forthcoming activities in 2009
NFNPA 285/09 Annex 4:	The Nottingham Declaration
NFNPA 152/07:	Climate change update – January 2007

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UPDATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIVITIES

Report by: Stephen Trotter, Director of Conservation, Recreation and Sustainable Development

1 Introduction

1.1 This report updates members on the Authority's activities and progress on various climate change issues since January 2007 (see **NFNPA 152/07**).

2 Progress during 2008

2.1 A series of actions were agreed at the Authority meeting in January 2007. An update of progress against these actions is provided in **Annex 1**.

2.2 Whilst many of the identified actions have seen good progress or been completed, there are a number of additional activities and achievements that were not anticipated in the January 2007 paper. These are summarised in **Annex 2**.

3 Forthcoming activities in 2009

3.1 A number of activities are planned for 2009 to maintain the momentum of the Authority's work to address climate change. These are outlined in **Annex 3**.

4 Recent developments that may have an impact in the New Forest and on the Authority's work

The Climate Change Act

- 4.1 This new legislation became law on 26 November 2008. The Act introduces the world's first long term legally binding framework to tackle the dangers of climate change. For the first time this commits the UK to controlling its emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.
- 4.2 There are two key aims underpinning the Act:
- to improve carbon management and help the transition towards a low carbon economy in the UK, and
 - to demonstrate strong UK leadership internationally.
- 4.3 Some of its provisions include:
- i) **legally binding targets:** Green house gas emission reductions through action in the UK and abroad of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions in CO₂ emissions of at least 26% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline and a new carbon budgeting system which caps emissions;
 - ii) the creation of the **Committee on Climate Change**, a new independent, expert body to advise government on the level of carbon budgets and where cost effective savings could be made;
 - iii) use of **international credits:** Government is required to "have regard to the need for UK domestic action on climate change" when considering how to meet the UK's targets and carbon budgets. The independent Committee on Climate Change has a duty to advise on the appropriate balance between action at domestic, European and international level, for each carbon budget;
 - iv) further **measures to reduce emissions** include powers to introduce domestic emissions trading schemes more quickly and easily through secondary legislation; measures on biofuels; powers to introduce pilot financial incentive schemes in England for household waste; powers to require a minimum charge for single-use carrier bags;
 - v) on **adaptation** the Government must report at least every five years on the risks to the UK of climate change, and publish a programme setting out how these impacts will be addressed. The Act also introduces powers for government to require public bodies and statutory undertakers to carry out their own risk assessment and make plans to address those risks;

- vi) a requirement for the Government to issue **guidance** next year on **the way companies should report their greenhouse gas emissions**;
 - vii) new powers to support the creation of a **Community Energy Savings Programme** (by extending the existing Carbon Emissions Reduction Target scheme to electricity generators);
 - viii) a new requirement for **annual publication** of a report on the **efficiency and sustainability of the Government estate**.
- 4.4 The Government also recently created a new Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). This department will lead the national action to meet the UK's commitments on reducing its dependency on fossil fuels and developing the use of renewable energy. The Department brings together much of the Climate Change Group, previously part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), with the Energy Group from the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR).

5 Local Area Agreements 2008 - 2011

- 5.1 Local area agreements are a contract between central and local government which defines how local government will deliver national priorities to local communities. The priorities have been agreed with partners in Hampshire and support the longer term ambitions in the Hampshire Sustainable Community Strategy. Agreements are based on a list of national targets – or national indicators (NI) which local government agrees to work in partnership to achieve.
- 5.2 Hampshire County Council is the lead authority for the partnership in this area (excluding Wiltshire which has a separate Local Area Agreement). As part of the Hampshire Local Area Agreement, under the Environment 'priority theme', two of the targets are relevant to climate change:
- NI 186 Mitigate the progress of climate change:
Measured by the percentage reduction in CO₂ emissions in Hampshire from business and public sector, domestic housing and road transport
 - NI 188 Adapt to the consequences of climate change:
Measured through a process of self assessment against the state of preparedness reached against five progressive levels of performance
 - NI185 Which measures CO₂ reduction from local authority operations is also relevant but not part of the Hampshire Local Area Agreement.

- 5.3 The National Park Authority has a responsibility to have regard to these Local Area Agreement targets and assist in their delivery as a partner.
- 5.4 The Authority is already involved with the Public Sector Sustainable Development Group that supports progress on NI185. Discussions have already taken place about the Authority joining the working groups for the other targets. The Authority has already assisted the work towards NI 188 by undertaking research into weather events that have had a socio-economic impact since 2000.

The Nottingham Declaration

- 5.5 The Nottingham Declaration is a national initiative whereby local authorities can voluntarily express their commitment to taking positive action on climate change. The Declaration is supported by Defra, IDeA, the Local Government Association, the Environment Agency, the Carbon Trust, and UK Climate Impacts Programme and ICLEI, the worldwide association of local governments concerned with sustainability. It is one of the Government's expectations of local government that local authorities should sign the Nottingham Declaration and the Local Government Association is keen to ensure that all local authorities are signatories. The text of the Declaration is provided in **Annex 4** and further information is available at www.carbonsavingstrust/nottinghamdeclaration.org.uk.
- 5.6 By signing the Declaration, an authority makes a fairly broad and high level commitment to acknowledging and taking an active role in addressing climate change at the local level.
- 5.7 Some 330 local authorities have now signed the Declaration and the Local Government Association is urging all local authorities to sign up as soon as possible. New Forest District Council signed the Declaration in December 2008. So far some three other National Park Authorities have signed the statement (the Peak District, Lake District and Yorkshire Dales).
- 5.8 The key purpose of the Declaration is publically to acknowledge climate change as an issue, and to express support for the action already taken by government, whilst recognising an Authority's leadership role within its sphere of influence. By signing the Declaration, the Authority would acknowledge:
- climate change is occurring and that it will have far reaching effects on the UK's people and places, economy, society and environment
 - that action to combat climate change brings social, environmental and economic benefits
 - support for the emissions targets agreed by central government in the UK Climate Change Programme

- the opportunity for local government to lead the response at local level
 - its commitment to work with central government to deliver the UK Climate Change Programme, the Kyoto Protocol and the target for reducing carbon dioxide by 2010
 - its role in developing plans with partners to address the causes of climate change according to local priorities
 - its commitment to achieving reduced emissions through the Authority's own activities
 - the need to assess the risks of climate change for services and communities and adapt accordingly
 - the need to encourage all sectors in the community to adapt to the impacts and reduce carbon emissions; and monitor and make public the results.
- 5.9 Signing the Declaration will be a positive step for the Authority in terms of encouraging and promoting further activity and raising awareness and send a strong message to external partners and the public. It may also bring opportunities for securing further resources and partnerships.
- 5.10 There would appear to be few, if any, drawbacks to signing the Declaration. The commitments involved are in line with the Authority's existing objectives and proposed activity and are unlikely to incur additional costs or resource requirements above and beyond existing plans.

Recommendations: To

- 1. note the report**
- 2. agree that the Authority should sign the Nottingham Declaration.**

Progress against earlier actions

Actions identified in 2007		Original date for completion	Progress	Comments
Involve stakeholders	Establish joint working with agencies and local authorities	Spring 2007	Yes, completed / ongoing	Various discussions held – it was subsequently decided that the best solution, rather than a conference and joint working, was to use the existing Local Strategic Partnership structure to achieve this. It has now been agreed to establish a new group under the Local Strategic Partnership (with New Forest District Council)
	Arrange a conference with the key agencies and NGOs to look at local adaptation		No longer a priority	
	Produce an adaptation document for all agencies		To be presented at March Authority meeting	
	Join the South East Climate Change Partnership		Yes, completed	
Communication	Spread the word: members, local authority officers, Consultative Panel, developers and the public need to be aware of the impacts of climate change and how to adapt to it in the New Forest National Park	By end of 2007	Started but more to achieve	Eight talks given specifically on climate change impacts in the New Forest National Park (plus many others which referred to the impacts), involvement with a New Forest youth conference, involvement with the New Forest Transition Group
	Establish a website where the public have access to information on local impacts of climate change and can contribute their pledges to what they are going to do / ideas / discussion forum		Content planned	Not yet implemented due to capacity issues. This will be completed in the next few months
	Establish projects to work with business and individuals to prepare for climate change		Achieved but more to do	A number of workshops for businesses have been held in partnership with New Forest District Council and others. More workshops and other events are planned

	The Authority should develop a comprehensive range of advice for Development Control that can be used by applicants to help new development be more resilient. They should generally be based on principles of reversibility, living well within ecological limits and capacity so that there are ample tolerances to cope with unexpected change		Partially achieved	In progress
Monitoring success and change	Develop a series of indicators to measure change	By end 2007	Not achieved	Will be developed as part of the Park Plan and associated documents
Link to Management Plan, and daughter documents and developing policies	Draw the above into an action plan with regular revisions and events to maintain the momentum Ensure that climate change issues are addressed in each of these documents	By end 2008	Achieved subject to approval of the Park Plan	Adaptation and mitigation are fully integrated and embedded within the draft document. There is an opportunity to further influence policies through work on renewable energy and clarify development control policies
Coast	Work with the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan process to ensure a long term vision for the coast to adapt to anticipated changes	By end 2008	Achieved so far - but the process is ongoing to 2010	Process being led by New Forest District Council

**NFNPA 285/09
Annex 2**

Additional tasks, initiatives and projects undertaken but not identified in previous Authority paper

<p>1. Supported further Sustainable Development Fund projects relating to adaptation and mitigation of climate change. The Authority approved a change in the scheme during 2008 to give priority climate change related projects</p>	<p>Ashurst and Colbury Bags for the Future: This project aimed to significantly reduce the use of plastic bags within the parish of Ashurst and Colbury and to provide a catalyst for similar changes to take place elsewhere in the New Forest National Park.</p> <p>Lyndhurst Community Centre: Design of biomass heating system - Lyndhurst Community Centre is in the advanced stages of planning an extension to its current facility (planning permission has already been obtained) and has undergone an independent study to identify its heat demand and explore the possible options for use of sustainable energy for heating. Having identified biomass as the most viable option, a detailed technical design of the heating system including fuel store has been commissioned, in order to progress the installation of a wood-fuelled heating system in the centre.</p> <p>New Forest Sustainable Schools Outreach: This project builds on a trial project previously funded by the SDF. The project will work with all schools in the New Forest to help them take practical action to become more sustainable.</p> <p>District Heating System for Foxlease: This application commissioned a detailed feasibility study for the installation of a biomass district heating system at Foxlease Girlguiding Centre, focusing on the supply of fuel, location of the system on site and any planning issues which may arise. If the system is technically feasible then the centre will install the system to celebrate its centenary.</p> <p>Learning Centre Development Project: This is the first stage in developing a sustainable build Learning Centre at Avon Tyrrell activity centre to enhance facilities for young people using the centre. The application is for the design stage and will include a full site assessment, design and drawings, investigation of sustainable energy options and requirements and the clarification of full structural and engineering requirements.</p> <p>Cottage Lodge Eco bedrooms: This project creates two eco-bedrooms at an existing bed and breakfast. They will be a showcase of sustainability and demonstrate to others that it is possible to build in an 'eco' way and retain a high standard of guest experience.</p> <p>Tile Barn Wood Fuel Boiler: This project is to part-fund the installation of a large wood fuel boiler system at Tile Barn Outdoor Centre. The installation of the system will save over 16 tonnes of CO₂ emissions a year.</p>
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	<p>Ferry Crofts Sustainability Improvements: This project will install a ground source heat pump and rainwater harvesting system at Ferry Crofts Scout Centre. The building will also be more effectively insulated and energy efficient lighting will be fitted.</p> <p>Roots Youth Theatre Festival: This project is a youth theatre festival in Blackwater Arboretum. Taking place over several days in the summer of 2009, the festival will celebrate the cultural past and environmental future of the New Forest. The festival will include hard-hitting performances on climate change and litter.</p> <p>Priestlands Sustainable School Project: This application will implement many aspects of the Priestlands School Eco Action Plan. It includes a comprehensive range of measures that will make Priestlands an exemplar sustainable school and includes sharing this practice with other local and national schools. For example, the development of an eco-classroom in the walled garden, installation of smart metering throughout the school, increase in production of school's own food, massive reduction of paper consumption, introduction of free-cycling, implementation of energy saving measures and changes in procurement methods.</p> <p>Provision of compost toilet at All Saints Church, Minstead - This is to install an environmentally-friendly waterless compost toilet at All Saints Church, Minstead rather than a traditional facility.</p>
<p>2. Joined the English National Parks Authorities Association working group on climate change - a joint national park approach to climate change issues (this Group is also working with Defra on how to calculate the carbon balance for a national park). Also contributed to a conference on climate change and National Parks in April 2007 and a Defra Ministerial Seminar on climate change in May 2008</p>	
<p>3. Involvement with the New Forest Transition movement</p>	<p>This voluntary and independent community initiative is exploring and encouraging practical action relating to how the New Forest</p>

	can make the transition from an oil-based economy and society to one based on sustainable and renewable forms of energy. Recently, the Authority has supported a local conference attended by around 100 local people. An officer is also working with the organising group of the initiative
4. Establishing working relationship with New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Councils – LSP and LAA working groups	Recently undertook an analysis of the impacts of climate change in the New Forest since 2000 (jointly with New Forest District Council)
5. Completed climate change advice workshops for local business	

6. Wood fuel initiatives – wood fuel conference held and secured wood fuel as a key element within the new Leader project. A number of wood fuel based projects have been supported by the Sustainable Development Fund	
7. Undertook work on a study project with the UK Climate Impacts Programme on the incidence of wildfires in the New Forest . This however was not successful due to problems with a scientific model. Work was also planned to analyse how the new climate scenarios from the Meteorological Office would impact on the New Forest. However the release of the new scenarios has been delayed until later in 2009	
8. Established the New Forest Wildfire Working Group in association with the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and a range of other partners including the Forestry Commission and National Trust. Part-funded and supported the production of an audit and wildfire plans for the New Forest National park. The New Forest will be hosting a national conference on wildfires in 2009	
8. Developed the Authority's internal corporate sustainability action plan and started implementation	

Summary of forthcoming activities in 2009

1	Join Local Area Agreement Working Groups (already a member of one of them)	January 2009
2	Complete an interim adaptation action plan for the National Park	February 2009
3	Appoint temporary climate change officer to assist with delivery of actions	March 2009
4	Arrange for assessment of the Authority's progress towards NI188	March 2009
5	Review and clarify the Authority's view of small scale renewable energy projects in respect of planning policies	May 2009
6	Complete website update	May 2009
7	Finalise the Park Plan indicators	May 2009
8	Work with Local Strategic Partnership Group and New Forest District Council on local initiatives	June 2009
9	Undertake a review of the potential for renewable energy in the National Park	June 2009
10	Continue to concentrate Sustainable Development Fund activity on climate change related projects	Review in summer 2009
11	Further communications activity including holding a sustainable living fair	September 2009
12	Continue discussions with Hampshire County Council about a joint adaptation project in the New Forest	September 2009
13	Review options for carbon off-setting in the New Forest (subject to funding)	September 2009
14	Continue to support New Forest Transition initiatives	December 2009
15	Work with the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan process to ensure a long term vision for the coast to adapt to anticipated changes	March 2010
16	Continue to develop and implement initiatives to support local businesses in reducing their carbon footprint (in partnership with NFDC and NFBP)	November 2009

The Nottingham Declaration

The Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change

We acknowledge that

- Evidence shows that climate change is occurring.
- Climate change will continue to have far reaching effects on the UK's people and places, economy, society and environment.

We welcome the

- Social, economic and environmental benefits which come from combating climate change.
- Emissions targets agreed by central government and the programme for delivering change, as set out in the UK Climate Change Programme.
- Opportunity for local government to lead the response at a local level, encouraging and helping local residents, local businesses and other organisations - to reduce their energy costs, to reduce congestion, to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to improve the local environment and to deal with fuel poverty in our communities.
- Endorsement of this declaration by central government.

We commit our Council from this date _____ to

- Work with central government to contribute, at a local level, to the delivery of the UK Climate Change Programme, the Kyoto Protocol and the target for carbon dioxide reduction by 2010.
- Participate in local and regional networks for support.
- Within the next two years develop plans with our partners and local communities to progressively address the causes and the impacts of climate change, according to our local priorities, securing maximum benefit for our communities.
- Publicly declare, within appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from our own authority's operations, especially energy sourcing and use, travel and transport, waste production and disposal and the purchasing of goods and services.
- Assess the risk associated with climate change and the implications for our services and our communities of climate change impacts and adapt accordingly.
- Encourage all sectors in our local community to take the opportunity to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action.
- Monitor the progress of our plans against the actions needed and publish the result.

_____ Council
acknowledges the increasing impact that climate change will have on our community during the 21st century and commits to tackling the causes and effects of a changing climate on our city/county/borough/district.

			
Leader of the Council	Chief Executive	Ian Pearson, Minister of State for Climate Change and the Environment, DEFRA	Baroness Andrews OBE - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, DCLG