



County Durham Environment Partnership Board Minutes

Tuesday 15th July 2014
Hardwick Park, Sedgefield

Apologies

Julian Carrington - Environment Agency
 Adrian Vass - Natural England
 Steve Hunter - Climate Change Group
 Stuart Timmiss - Durham County Council

Attendees:

Chair: Terry Collins - Durham County Council

Julie Form - Groundwork North East
 Mark Usher - Natural England
 Jim Cokill - Durham Wildlife Trust
 Tara Duncan - Durham University
 Oliver Sherratt - Durham County Council
 Steve Bhowmick - Durham County Council
 Gordon Elliott - Durham County Council
 Jayne Watson - Durham County Council
 Vicki Burrell - Durham County Council
 Stella Hindson - Durham County Council
 Beverley Clark (Minutes) - Durham County Council

Item No.	Subject	Action By
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted. Tara Duncan (Sustainability Manager, Durham University) was introduced and welcomed to the Board.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>Consideration was given to the minutes of 15th May 2014. Vicki Burrell stated that the Low Carbon and Sustainable Growth document had been electronically sent to all but if members hadn't received it to inform her and she would resend it.</p> <p>University board member had been invited and is present at the meeting.</p> <p>Action point regarding the Partnership Newsletter to be discussed under item 4.</p>	

3. **Updates from Group Chairs & Questions**

Coastal, Heritage & Landscape Group

Oliver Sherratt gave an update and reported that the group last met on 12th June. The group is coordinating various landscape groups in existence as well as looking at specific projects such as Wildflower Meadows, Hedgerow Maintenance and Heritage Skills.

Annual heritage open days are planned for 11th to 14th September.

The group is also working with Groundwork regarding community work placements. Steve Bhowmick is working towards raising the profile and engagement of the group. It was stated that the Limestone Landscapes Project is coming to an end, the impact being there would be a loss of momentum as the project has supported many community groups. Steve Bhowmick reported he is currently pursuing funding/resources to ensure the project is extended.

A discussion was held in relation to the Community Placement Programme. Julie Form gave background information on the Community Placement Programme – placements are for 30 hours a week, for carrying out genuine community work. There is huge potential there and as well as health benefits local organisations see the values of the programme.

Jayne Watson suggested a link between this programme of work and a Village Champion Scheme.

Environment in Your Communities

Julie Form reported that the group met on 20th June. She said that Sarah Robinson from Durham Community Action gave a presentation in relation to the Voluntary Sector across County Durham. It is anticipated through the work of the Environment in Your Communities Group that volunteering will be promoted further.

The focus point of the group is Nourishing Neighbourhoods which is progressing.

The group is looking at a project called Rethink Parks and focusing on how the group can become more involved with local parks and community space.

Jim Cokill pointed out that there are many woodland cooperative schemes. A discussion followed regarding woodlands as they're an untapped resource.

Tara Duncan stated that Durham University has a volunteer scheme whereby around 3000 employees are allowed 5 days each to carry out volunteering work; it can range from team building to cleaning riverbanks. Tara stated that the university would be willing to participate in further volunteering work for the Partnership. The Student Environment Network would also be willing to provide additional support.

	<p><u>Climate Change</u> No update given as Steve Hunter not present. Terry Collins and Steve Bhowmick to discuss contacting Steve Hunter.</p> <p><u>Local Nature Partnership</u> Jim Cokill reported that Claire Thompson (The 3 Rivers LNP Officer) will be working closely with DCC colleagues to help coordinate efforts to develop coherent regional proposals for green infrastructure. It was reported that the work of the LEP is currently very positive. Meetings have been held regarding European funding. There will be a committee under the LEP board which will be part of the scrutiny assessing bids coming in. LNP's have organised workshops to review information that will be used to target Natural England's New Land Management Scheme (NELMS). The Northern Upland Chain LNP is moving forward with work programmes.</p>	Terry Collins/Steve Bhowmick
4.	<p>Environment Partnership Communications Stella Hindson is to provide each Chair with copies of certificates. Stella presented an example of the proposed newsletter format which the group all agreed was fine. Vicki Burrell added that she will help to coordinate and collate information for articles. A discussion took place and it was agreed that Stella will contact the group chairs initially and that the newsletter will be a quarterly publication. The newsletter will be ready for the next meeting on 23rd September. Oliver Sherratt and Steve Bhowmick to circulate the Coastal, Heritage and Landscape Group newsletter.</p>	Stella Hindson Stella Hindson Oliver Sherratt/Steve Bhowmick
5.	<p>Britain in Bloom Update Oliver Sherratt said that Britain in Bloom looks at the wider picture of residential areas, environmental responsibility and community participation as well as flower displays. It's not a Council initiative and includes voluntary organisations, Durham University, Durham Railway Station and the police. The judges are coming to look around on 7th August. Funding (£42,000) has been received from various sources such as AAP's parish councils, members and businesses. DCC also sponsors Sedgfield Town Council in another category of Britain in Bloom. Oliver to circulate portfolio of Britain Bloom. Jim Cokill pointed out that there was interesting article in the New York Times regarding Durham City which he will forward to everyone.</p>	Oliver Sherratt Jim Cokill

<p>6.</p>	<p>Environment Awards Update</p> <p>Steve Bhowmick stated that the launch of the Environment Awards held on 5th June was fantastic. He then provided an update on the Environment Awards reporting that the cut off day for applications is 25th July. To date there has been 27 entries.</p> <p>The open spaces category has proved really popular; in the under 18's, climate change and waste categories there have been no real applicants. Press releases have gone out and targeted letters are to be sent out shortly. There are nine external sponsors and two internal ones with over £12,500 committed.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Vicki Burrell reported that there will be a County Durham Partnership event on 17th October. Gordon Elliott added that it will be a celebration event at which the Sustainable Community Strategy will be launched. In the process of looking for a venue and speakers.</p> <p>Oliver Sherratt stated that there are two reports going to Cabinet – The Tree Management Report; and The Dog Control Order (which is looking at a seasonal dog ban from stretches of Seaham beach).</p>	