



**County Durham Environment Partnership Board  
Minutes**

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016  
Burlison Room, Town Hall, Durham**

**Apologies**

Andrew Turner - Environment Agency

**Attendees:**

**Chair:** Terry Collins - Durham County Council

Jim Cokill - Natural England  
 Tara Duncan - Durham University  
 Oliver Sherratt - Durham County Council  
 Ian Hoult - Durham County Council  
 Steve Bhowmick - Durham County Council  
 Bryan Harris - Durham County Council  
 Gordon Elliott - Durham County Council  
 Tim Wright - Durham County Council  
 Jayne Watson - Durham County Council  
 Victoria Burrell - Durham County Council  
 Stella Hindson - Durham County Council  
 Beverley Clark (Minutes) - Durham County Council

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Action By</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted. Introductions were given.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b> Jo Laverick has contacted Tara Duncan and has nominated Liz Charles (County Durham Community Action). Tara has made contact with her and needs to formally invite her to the next meeting of the Climate Change Group. Oliver Sherratt has circulated information on the promotion of a wider Britain in Bloom. Victoria Burrell informed the Group that a revised Environment Partnership Action Plan would align to the revised 2017 Sustainable Communities Strategy. The revised Durham Tourism Plan has been published - Steve Bhowmick to provide a link to the document. Information on Activating Community Engagement has been circulated.	Tara Duncan  Steve Bhowmick  Stella Hindson



	Partnership will ensure added value is provided. Gordon to bring back findings to next meeting. It was suggested that representatives from other partnerships be invited to attend Environment Partnership meetings.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Future Workshop Proposal</b> Item not discussed.	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Environment Awards &amp; Survey</b></p> <p>Bryan Harris gave a presentation on the participant feedback survey. Some of the main points being:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The survey was carried out between 3rd and 17th February 2016.</li> <li>• The purpose was to obtain feedback on the 2015 Environment Awards to identify any areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Winners, sponsors, judges, elected members award presenters and other invited guests were asked to give feedback.</li> <li>• The survey was issued to 70 people. Some participants shared with fellow guests.</li> <li>• 31 responses in total were received.</li> </ul> <p>The aim of the survey was to ensure that the process from the application stage, judging and the awards ceremony itself is appropriate to all involved as well as being an enjoyable and rewarding experience.</p> <p>Questions in the survey covered such topics as the application process, the ceremony, categories, ceremony, venue, facilities, etc.</p> <p>Steve Bhowmick outlined the proposals contained in the presentation. A discussion followed which focussed on the resounding success of the event and potential opportunities for improvement including sponsorship opportunities. This included the possible streamlining of the ceremony with a view to reducing the length of the evening as well as refining the judging procedure and reviewing the use of the “Award” and Commendation” winning levels to “Overall category winner” and “Highly commended”. The 2016 Environment Award application process will be launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 and closely aligns with World Environment Day.</p> <p>Bryan Harris to circulate sponsorship information.</p> <p>Stella Hindson to produce a press release to highlight the Environment Awards and speak to her contact at The Northern Echo.</p> <p>Tara Duncan &amp; Terry Collins to inform the vice-chair of Durham University of the Environment Awards.</p>	<p>Bryan Harris Stella Hindson</p> <p>Tara Duncan/Terry Collins</p>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Environment Partnership Communications</b> Stella Hindson circulated copies of the latest Environment Partnership newsletter. She gave a brief overview of the contents of the newsletter. Stella to include an expression of interest for the Vice-Chair position in the newsletter.	Stella Hindson

	<p>Any enquiries regarding this position to be sent to Victoria Burrell.</p> <p>Stella has drafted two press releases for Caring for your Environment Awards – one for The Heathland Heartlands Project, the other for The Castle Eden Dene National Nature Reserve Volunteers. It was stated that it would be best to publicise each award individually.</p> <p>John Turner, Community Executive Chef at Durham University was also presented with a Caring for your Environment Award for his work with local suppliers. Tara will speak to him to ascertain whether a press article is to be produced and will inform Neighbourhood Services Comms Team of the outcome.</p>	Tara Duncan
7.	<p><b>Updates from Group Chairs &amp; Questions</b></p> <p><u>Coastal, Heritage &amp; Landscape Group</u></p> <p>Oliver Sherratt gave an update of the group's work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Limestone Landscape - a book has been produced to celebrate and promote the regions landscape following the end of this project.</li> <li>• Heart of Teesdale project is coming to an end.</li> <li>• Brightwater project is starting.</li> <li>• Work has commenced on the Land of Oak and Iron project- focusing on the Derwent valley through North-West Durham and Gateshead. The project is led by Groundwork, the aim is to preserve natural and industrial heritage, help people gain new skills and promote the area. The project will run till 2020.</li> <li>• Work continues on Wildflower Meadows, War Memorials and Durham City Riverbanks.</li> </ul> <p><u>Environment in Your Communities</u></p> <p>Ian Hoult provided an update with some of the main points being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Big Spring Clean - Every day from 29 February to 17 April there will be litterpicks happening throughout County Durham and Darlington. Ian Hoult to circulate information on The Big Spring Clean.</li> <li>• Dog microchipping - From 6 April 2016, in England and Wales, it will be law that all dogs aged 8 weeks old or over must be fitted with a microchip. DCC is providing free microchipping events.</li> <li>• Work with the Community Action Team (CAT) involves residents and a range of organisations to tackle environmental issues throughout the county. They are currently working in Blackhall Colliery where there is a big focus and campaign on dog fouling both in public areas and private properties. Later in the year, they will move on to Ferryhill South and Station and will then revisit Horden Central.</li> </ul>	Ian Hoult

- Work continuing on the Growing Durham project - the group is co-ordinating promotional activities and is in the process of producing a calendar of events.
- The most recent meeting included presentations from Durham Foodbank and The Hagrid Project.
- Britain in Bloom Champion of Champions - Durham City is bidding for gardening glory in the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Britain in Bloom and Northumbria in Bloom Champion of Champions competition.

#### Climate Change Group

Tara Duncan gave an update of the group's work:

- Building Community Resilience for Severe Weather – working with Su Jordan (Civil Contingency Unit) and the work is going really well.
- Work ongoing regarding modal shifts – held a recent meeting looking at transport barriers. A meeting is to be held with the students and assessment of data next week in relation to this project.
- Energy Management in Community Buildings – an event is to be held on 9<sup>th</sup> June at County Hall with exhibitors from local businesses which will provide an opportunity for networking. 6 undergraduates have been recruited to carry out energy audits. Tara Duncan to email Terry Collins with the date of the above event.
- Climate Change Strategy and Business Plan – 8 promotional events to be held throughout the year.

Tara has made initial Partnership connections to Liz Charles from County Durham Community Action. It is hoped she becomes a future member of the Climate Change Group.

Oliver Sherratt pointed out that Durham County Council is looking at a review of the Eco Champions network which will include speaking to relevant partners including Durham University.

Gordon Elliott asked if there are any ideas for projects from AAP's how do we get them brought to the Board/Sub-groups attention? Project ideas to be sent to Victoria Burrell who can co-ordinate and disseminate information.

#### Local Nature Partnership

Jim Cokill gave an update on behalf of the LNP:

- The Local Nature Partnerships have merged and now is named the North East Local Nature Partnership.
- Looking at developing a strategic Natural Infrastructure Plan for the North East and needs resources to do this. The Partnership has received some funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- The North East Local Nature Partnership is

Tara Duncan

Gordon Elliott/Victoria Burrell

	changing to a business constitution.	
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Earth Hour is taking place on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2016. Durham County Council is carrying out the event on 18<sup>th</sup> March at 3.00pm, schools at 2.00pm. Durham University is holding their event on 19<sup>th</sup> March with exterior illuminating lights being turned off at Durham Castle. A joint press release between DCC and Durham University is to be produced.</p> <p>World Environment Day is Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June. Steve Bhowmick to arrange an ideas session and will inform the Board Members of the outcome.</p> <p>It was asked whether there is a role for the Environment Partnership to circulate details of environmental grants. Does the group need to promote this more widely?</p> <p>Gordon Elliott to speak to Oliver Sherratt regarding grants. Members of the Council receive a list of grants called Funding Insight.</p>	<p>Stella Hindson/Tara Duncan</p> <p>Steve Bhowmick</p> <p>Gordon Elliott</p>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2016, 10am to 12 noon. Conference Room 4b, County Hall, Durham.</p>	