

# Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



24<sup>th</sup> January 2017

## Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan Update

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### Joint Report of Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development and Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

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#### Purpose of the Report

1. To Provide the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the County Durham Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan.

#### Background

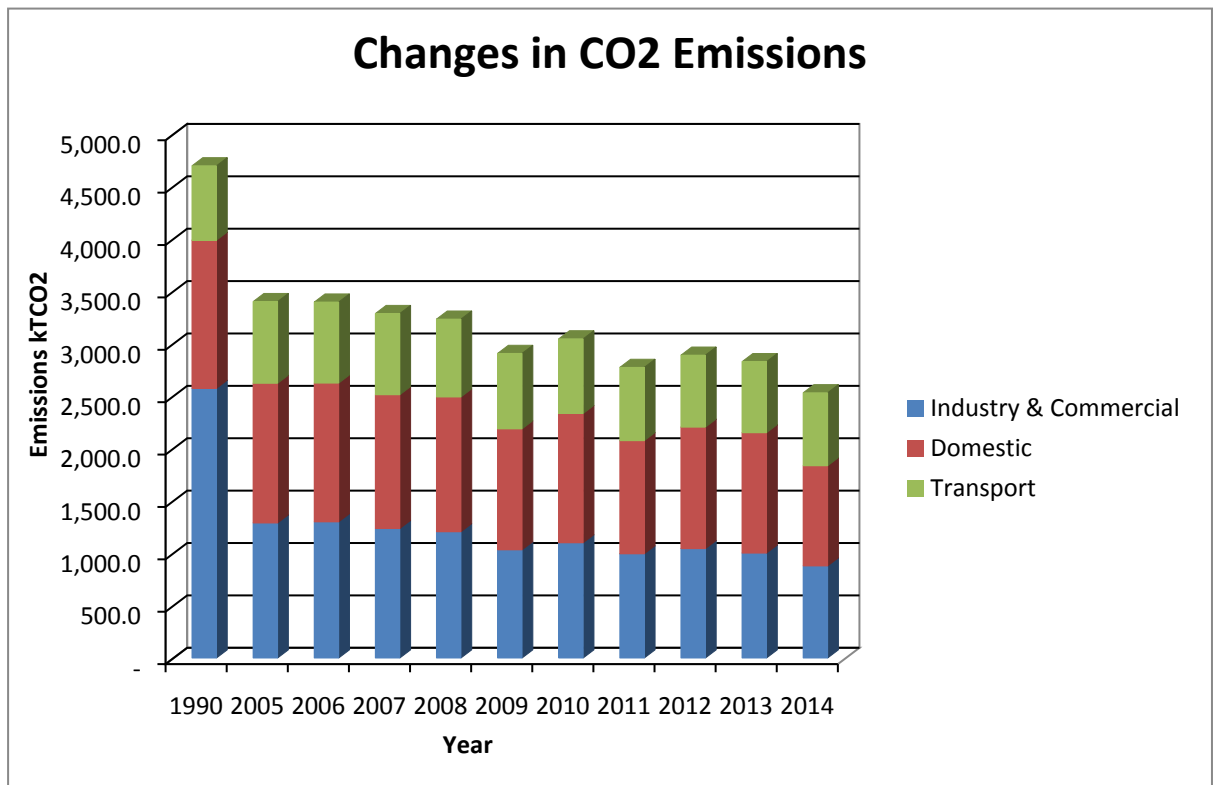
2. The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee have received regular updates on the Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan since 2012 via overview presentations.
3. The Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan were approved by Cabinet on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The report specifically highlighted the role that the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee had played and recommended:
  - i. 'That Cabinet continues to support the Environment and Sustainable
  - ii. Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee's role in monitoring progress.'
4. At its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015 the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an update on the progress of the Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan. Members of the Committee agreed to receive further updates including the progress made in obtaining EU funding.

#### Current Position

5. In order to comply with Government guidance, the Climate Change Strategy has now been made an essential requirement for consideration by any project that bids for European Regional Development low carbon funding (ERDF) money in County Durham, which is very helpful.

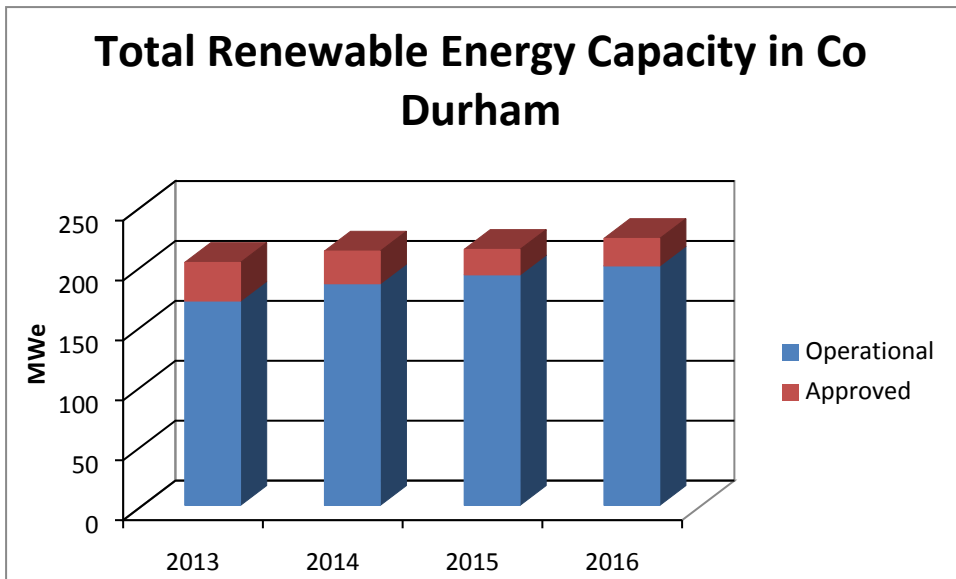
6. In 2014 County Durham emitted 2,531 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, a 300t decrease from the previous year and an overall 41% reduction since 1990. The reduction in emissions (from 2013 to 2014) comes mainly from industrial, commercial and domestic emissions. The likely causes include increased energy efficiency (including national decarbonisation of the electricity grid), business closures, and higher annual temperatures (2014 was the hottest year on record for the North East Region).

Graph 1:-

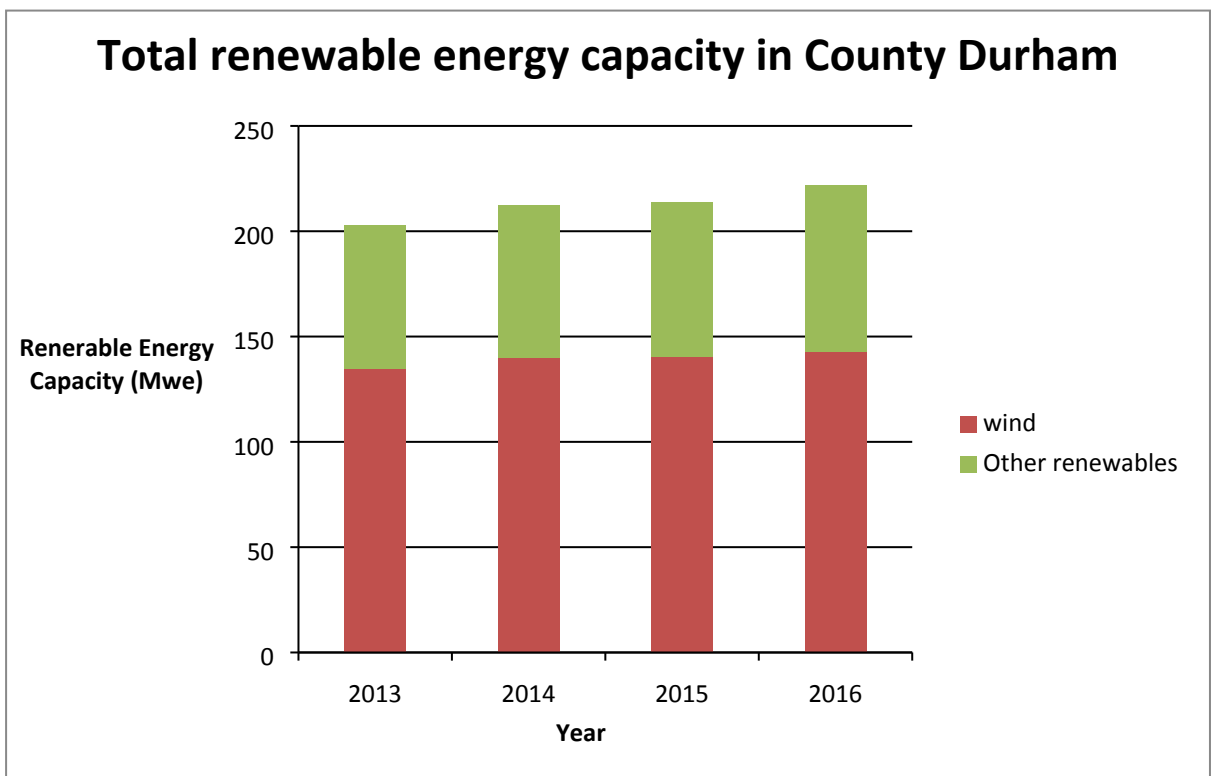


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7. The following graphs show that across County Durham renewable electricity generation has increased by about 5% in the past 3 years, with the total amount of operational renewable energy capacity at 199MW (graph 2). Adding in approved capacity takes it to 221MW.

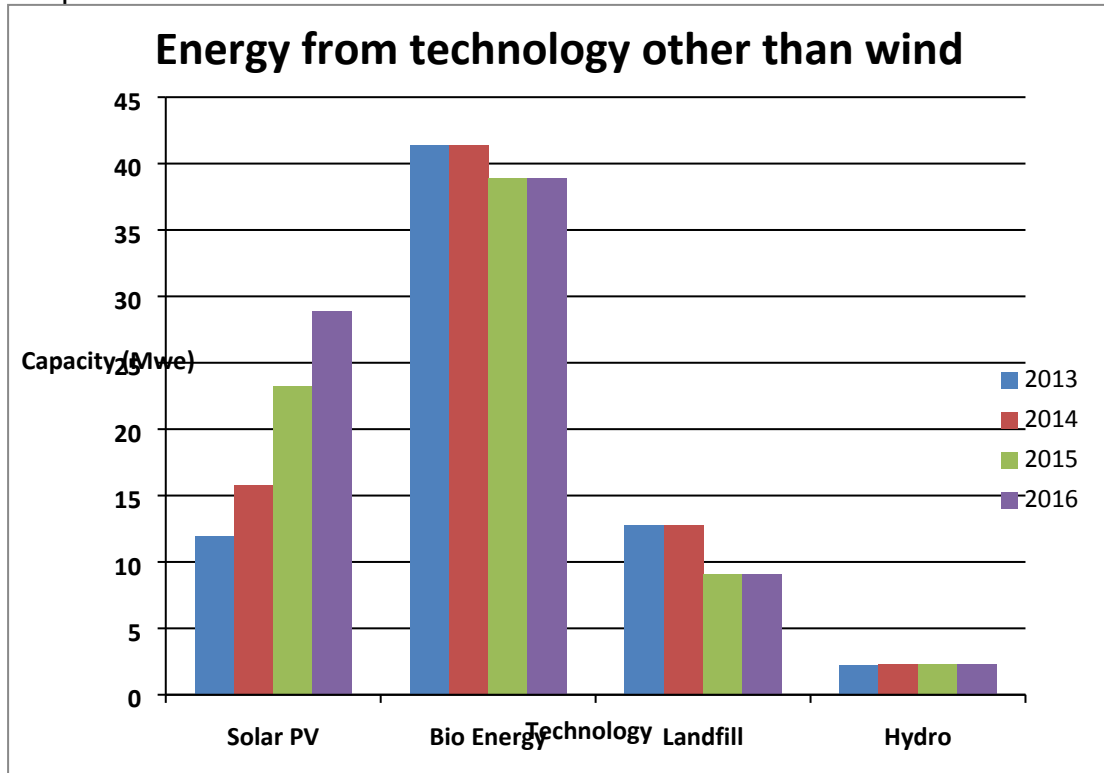


8. Wind continues to provide the majority of renewable energy capacity as can be seen by graph 3 below:



9. Solar PV has seen the largest growth out of all sectors since 2013, with 28MW now installed on homes, community centres and businesses in the County.

Graph 4:



10. There have been no significant changes in the other technologies in this time. A 1 MWe increase represents about 4,000 solar panels so this means that there have been over 20,000 solar panels installed in the past year.
11. There continues to be uncertainty in the sector with fewer installations of solar panels in recent months, as well as large decreases in wind turbine applications following the 'Written Ministerial Statement' in June 2015<sup>1</sup>. These have created an unstable position regarding renewable energy; however we continue to seek opportunities and to support local organisations leading the way in the field.
12. The Delivery Plan is a live document designed to monitor delivery of the Climate Change Strategy and to prioritise key actions. The County Durham Climate Change Partnership, chaired by Tara Duncan from Durham University, has taken a lead role in driving forward Delivery Plan progress by means of a 'Priority Actions 2015-17' document.
13. The Priority Actions document is attached as Appendix 2 and shows the breadth of progress to date. Some of the latest developments are highlighted in the following paragraphs.
14. **Schools:** 90% of County Durham schools are now supported by the Schools Carbon Reduction Programme which engages pupils, teachers and support

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-vote-office/June%202015/18%20June/1-DCLG-Planning.pdf>

staff in reducing energy costs and carbon emissions through lesson plans, behavioural change and energy monitoring. Different options are being considered to enable schools to undertake energy efficiency retrofits on their buildings.

15. **Peatscapes:** The North Pennines AONB contains over 90,000 hectares of peat which, if properly managed, can store vast amounts of carbon, as well as storing water and assisting with climate adaptation. The AONB is working to restore damaged peatlands and has become a national leader in this work.
16. **Transport:** In April 2016, NECA launched the Go Smarter Business network which is helping employers to promote sustainable travel in the workplace. Businesses across Durham City are joining in to the Go Smarter to Work initiative, which is linked to the Durham City Sustainable Transport Strategy. An audit of the cycle route network has just been undertaken for the twelve main towns to enable improvements and cycle parking improvements are ongoing. Large employers in the City are undertaking site travel plans and promoting sustainable travel options, with awards and training included. All of this aims to make it easier for people to access jobs and education opportunities and to promote more sustainable travel behaviours.
17. **Communities:** In June 2016 a Community Energy event in County Hall attracted nearly 90 people, offering advice for local communities on how to save money on their energy bills. In parallel to this, a partnership of local groups is bidding for significant European funding to support energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives for communities.
18. **EU Funding:** Funding of £300,000 has been received from Interreg Europe for two transnational projects to be led by the Council: LOCARBO will support energy efficiency initiatives for local businesses while REBUS will provide energy efficiency support to community buildings that have been through the asset transfer process. Further European funding has been received from ERDF low carbon funding to provide free energy advice and energy technology grants to 240 SMEs across the County through the BEEP project.
19. **Climate Adaptation:** The Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) is leading on a wide range of initiatives to tackle flooding and adaptation to climate change, including school visits and advice to caravan sites situated in flood risk areas. A flood awareness video is also being created and an arts project entitled Rainworks is being delivered in partnership with young people.
20. **District heating:** On-going feasibility studies are being conducted into district heating opportunities for the Durham City area and these are due to conclude in May 2017. If viable, they could be included in any major development proposals at Aykley Heads or near the River Wear or at the University.

### **Recommendations**

21. Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the content of the report and provide comment accordingly and to receive a further update at a future meeting of the committee.

### **Background Papers**

The Cabinet report and Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan are available from the Cabinet meeting pages:

<http://democracy.durham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=154&MId=8225&Ver=4>

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## **APPENDIX 1 - Implications**

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**Finance** – None directly, but the Delivery Plan aims to deliver projects that would help to reduce energy costs for County Durham communities. European bids may require match funding but would bring in considerable money to the authority.

**Staffing** - None

**Risk** – The Strategy highlights the risks of a changing climate to County Durham

**Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty** - None

**Accommodation** - None

**Crime and Disorder** - None

**Human Rights** - None

**Consultation** – A consultation process has taken place as part of the development of the strategy and the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were taken on board.

**Procurement** - None

**Disability Issues** – None

**Legal Implications** - None

## Actions in years 2015-17

In 2015 and 2016 the Climate Change Steering Group and Durham County Council will be aiming to make significant progress on the following actions from the plan:

Action	Project	Main themes affected	Detailed action	Project Owner	Progress to date	Next steps
Demonstrate political commitment		Public Sector Performance	Obtain widespread commitment from partners and key organisations	Climate Change Strategy Group	<p>The Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan have been adopted by DCC corporately and have been incorporated into Durham University's Environmental Sustainability Policy.</p> <p>The Climate Change Group has been reformed and commitment from this group and the Council has been received. The actions from this group are continually reviewed and updates on projects are provided to the Environment Partnership Board along with the Environment &amp; Scrutiny Committee on an ongoing basis</p>	To continue to provide updates and seek support from all partners involved in the Climate Change Group as well as from the Environment Partnership Board and the Environment & Scrutiny Committee.



Action	Project	Main themes affected	Detailed action	Project Owner	Progress to date	Next steps
Identify and implement means of finance to Actively support climate change action	European Rural Development Fund (ERDF)/ (European Social Fund (ESF)	all	Work in partnership to develop bids for European funding for climate change projects	Climate Change Group	<p>Funding bids have been successful. (Summaries will be included below including dates, amount, source and outputs).</p> <p><b>REBUS</b> is an ERDF Interreg Europe funded project with 8 EU partners including Durham. The project aims to encourage exemplary energy efficiency in public buildings. Durham County Council will focus on community buildings that have been through the asset transfer process</p> <p><b>LOCARBO</b> is an ERDF Interreg Europe funded project designed to promote energy innovation in businesses. Best practice in business energy management will be shared with partners across Europe, to support cost savings and SME competitiveness and resilience.</p> <p>The two projects will have a combined value of approximately</p>	A further bid has been submitted for a 100% funded Horizon 2020 project called ENTICE. The project would address sustainable energy issues in disadvantaged communities.

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					<p>£300,000 (depending on exchange rates) for County Durham.</p> <p><b>CCU:</b> Funding received for 16/17 for Community Resilience, focus is on: caravan parks, businesses and continuing our work in schools.</p>	
Reduce the carbon emissions from County Durham	Develop and deliver carbon management plans	Public sector performance, Built Environment, Transport and Infrastructure		Low Carbon Economy Team	<p>Based on 1990 levels the County has reduced its carbon emissions by 46%. This has surpassed the target of a 40% reduction by 2020.</p> <p>There will be multiple reasons / explanations for these reductions.</p>	To continue to carry our projects and initiatives in line with further carbon emission reductions.
	Deliver climate change work in schools	Various	Continue the Eco-Schools and Schools Carbon Reduction Officers programmes.	Rich Hurst	Over 90% of schools continue to engage with the Energy SLA and the School Carbon Reduction Programme. Flexible support is continuing to be provided to all schools to meet their needs. Their energy usage continues to be regularly analysed via Systemslink.	The same framework contract as for DCC buildings is being explored, to deliver Energy Performance Contracting for

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			Ensure schools have the information they need to manage their emissions		<p>In many cases this work is supporting the schools with their Eco-Schools accreditation. In addition RH supports schools through an Eco-Schools network and specific in-school advice and guidance.</p> <p><b>CCU:</b> 18 school visits in 2015. 22 primary school visits planned for 2016. Additional work being</p>	<p>schools but there are still issues to be addressed around financial risk, especially regarding academisation.</p> <p>The programme will be continued for an additional year for 2017-18 while researching a regional roll out.</p> <p><b>CCU:</b> 22 schools booked in through Junior ED for September-December 2016. New lesson plan prepared.</p>

Action	Project	Main themes affected	Detailed action	Project Owner	Progress to date	Next steps
					planned for several secondary schools.	
	Establish baseline data with local and national data.	Public sector performance,		Low Carbon Economy Team	DCC has accurate data publically available on its website	Seek baseline data from relevant public sector organisations including NHS, University, etc.
Promote a low carbon economy	Support new Technological innovation in fields related to climate change mitigation and adaptation	Low Carbon Economy	Prepare ERDF bids	DCC Low Carbon Economy Team	The availability of £17 million ERDF funding for Low carbon Economy has driven the development of a range of new and innovative projects which are all at different stages of seeking funding. They include: Community Energy; Deep Geothermal for Bishop Auckland; Minewater heat project; Water Science Hub; Solid Wall Insulation for Craghead and Southmoor; Durham Low carbon Campus; Business Energy Efficiency Project and others still at outline stage. Brexit is likely to have a disastrous effect on this project pipeline.	Clarify the likely impacts of Brexit and seek alternative funding sources. Continue to support the project bids listed and encourage new project ideas to come forward.

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Support local businesses to become more energy efficient and install renewable energy	Develop an ERDF project to promote business energy efficiency	Low Carbon Economy		DCC Low Carbon Economy Team	EU funding has now been agreed for an £889,811 Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP) for County Durham, to start 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2016 and run until 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2019.	Project Manager, Project Support Officer and three Energy Assessors to be appointed. Engagement work is ongoing with SME groupings across the County.
Promote a sustainable and resilient food supply chain	Implement the Sustainable Local Food Strategy for County Durham	Low Carbon Economy		Liz Charles	The County Durham <a href="#">Sustainable Local Food Strategy</a> (SLFS) and Food Partnership were officially launched at Durham City Town Hall on 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2014. They are the culmination of a 2 ½ year project hosted by Durham Community Action, which has involved numerous contributions from interested individuals and organisations large and small. A mini-conference was held on the 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2016 to promote healthy, sustainable and local food.  Durham is one of only two cities in	

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					the UK to been awarded five stars by ' <a href="#">Sustainable Fish Cities</a> '.	
Promote Sustainable Businesses	Deliver the County Durham Environment awards	All		Steve Bhowmick	The County Durham Environment Awards launched for its 27 <sup>th</sup> year on Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2016. The launch this year included a soft press launch and information being sent out to various organisations across the region, town and parish councils, DCC members, DCC departments and any other interested parties. So far entries have been coming in steadily with some interesting schemes already received which means this year is set to be as successful as ever.	Judging commences September 2016 with the awards event in November.  To continue the awards in 2017.
Use the planning system to promote energy efficiency low carbon community which is	Embed relevant policies within the County Durham Plan	Built Environment		DCC Planning via Low Carbon Economy Team	County Durham Plan will be going to Issues and Options in November. This will include policies on climate change and sustainable development. Spatial Policy are developing the policy currently, it will then be Sustainability Appraised by the Low	Respond to Consultation on Preferred Options – November 2016

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resilient to the impacts of climate change					<p>carbon economy team.</p> <p>Flood Prevention Update and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy report was approved by Council Cabinet on 11 May 2016</p> <p><a href="http://democracy.durham.gov.uk/ie/ListDocuments.aspx?CId=154&amp;MId=7932&amp;Ver=4">http://democracy.durham.gov.uk/ie/ListDocuments.aspx?CId=154&amp;MId=7932&amp;Ver=4</a></p>	
Conserve and improve natural areas with a high embodied carbon	Support the Peatlands Project	Natural Environment		TD to liaise with Coastal, Heritage and Landscape Group and Local Nature Partnership	The North Pennines AONB Partnership is a national leader in upland peatland restoration and has continued its work on grip blocking and bare peat restoration this year. In collaboration with partners in Yorkshire and Lancashire, the AONB team is leading a 12million Euro EU LIFE bid to expand this restoration work (submission Sept '16). Through the Northern Upland Chain LNP, the AONB team has led on the creation of a natural capital valuation for peatland and its restoration in the Pennine uplands; they are working	Continue restoration, raising funds and developing new financing mechanisms.

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					<p>with leading environmental economists on new finance mechanisms to support work that will lock up carbon in peatlands and sequester more as time goes by.</p> <p>Contact: Paul Leadbitter/Chris Woodley-Stewart, North Pennines AONB Partnership and Northern Upland Chain LNP</p>	
<p>Promote biodiversity, greenspaces and green infrastructure that helps the area adapt to climate change</p>	<p>Work with the Coastal, Heritage and Landscape Partnership to protect the natural environment from climate change</p>	<p>Natural Environment</p>		<p>TD to liaise with Coastal, Heritage and Landscape Group and Local Nature Partnership</p>	<p>The Land of oak and Iron Landscape Partnership is enhancing habitats and ecological connectivity along the corridor of the River Derwent and wider catchment.</p> <p>The Bright Water landscape partnership is now in development and is seeking to deliver significant habitat restoration and enhanced ecological connectivity along the corridor of the River Skerne and wider catchment.</p>	<p>Continue these projects.</p>



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	Promote the use of SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) and other measures of flood resilience	Built Environment, Natural Environment		John Reed	Guidance on SUDS has been published in the past year and an innovative funding mechanism has been developed all of which is detailed on the website  <a href="http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/7363/Sustainable-drainage-systems">http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/7363/Sustainable-drainage-systems</a>	
Work towards a low carbon transport system	Promote the use of low carbon vehicles and transport	Transport and Infrastructure		Ian Jopling	NECA Go Smarter Business Network launched in April 2016 to support employers in bringing about sustainable travel behaviour change in their organisation. The network enables businesses to work together to address local transport issues through a range of business and staff benefits for members. Promoted to large employers within Durham City as part of Go Smarter to Work and engagement through the Durham	

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					City Sustainable Transport Strategy.	
	Develop the necessary infrastructure to enable low carbon transport	Transport and Infrastructure, Built Environment		Ian Jopling	An audit and review of the usability of the existing cycle route network is underway and will be completed for 12 main towns by December 2016. This work has informed the wider cycle network planning process and identified improvements to be delivered through the Local Transport Plan. Funding for the construction of improvements in Durham City included as part of a package of sustainable transport improvements in a NECA bid to the Local Growth Fund in July 2016. LTP funding allocated to 'ParkThatBike' to install up to 400 cycle parking stands across the county in 2016/17. A total of 117 stands have already been installed, including business locations in Durham City to enable staff and customers to cycle.	
Raise	Deliver various	Transport and		Ian Jopling	External funding secured from the	NECA bid for the

Action	Project	Main themes affected	Detailed action	Project Owner	Progress to date	Next steps
awareness and knowledge of sustainable transport	campaigns targeting different sectors- commuting, school, business etc.	Infrastructure			DfT to promote smarter travel choices in Durham City as part of the NECA 'Go Smarter' project in 2016/17. This project supports the local economy, boosts economic growth and cuts carbon emissions by making it easier for people to access jobs and education opportunities and promoting more sustainable travel behaviour. Go Smarter to Work provides direct support for large employers within the city including site/staff travel surveys, promotion of walking and cycling, public transport and car sharing as well as accreditation awards, travel plan support and travel champion training. Large employers already signed up including Durham County Council and Durham University. Engagement with others ongoing.	DfT's Access Fund submitted September 2016 to continue this work for the period 2017-2020.
Work with local, regional and national interest groups to	Develop an ERDF project for community energy	Community Engagement, Low Carbon Business		DCC Low Carbon Economy Team with Groundwork	On 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2016, nearly 90 people attended the Partnership's Community Energy event as part of World Environment Day. The event was sponsored by Northern	A Low Carbon Economy ERDF bid has been submitted to DCLG by



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	Climate Change Education	Various		Education Development Service and OASES	<p>have been organised along with in-school sessions and projects</p> <p>Durham University raises awareness of climate change via 'Greenspace' – the University's Environment Team. A full annual schedule of campaigns is produced every year and specific events / contests etc are promoted to all staff and students at the University.</p>	<p>are running in Autumn 2016. A Climate challenge with Thorn Lighting and an arts project called Climart with the CCU.</p>

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						Durham University will continue to engage staff and students in environmental awareness campaigns and activities.
Improve the resilience of our communities to future climate impacts	Develop and deliver resilience seminars for areas at risk	Community Engagement, Built Environment		Su Jordan	<p><b>CCU:</b> 6 complete community emergency plans.</p> <p>Drop-in information sessions were held at Environment Agency rapid response areas for community members to find out more information about past and future flooding in their area.</p> <p>12 caravan site visits (those identified as being in a flood risk area) have been completed in August/September 2016. Information was given on importance of resilience especially with increasing extreme weather</p>	<p>A further 13 caravan sites (those identified as being in a flood risk area) to be contacted and information given either through a visit or by email.</p> <p>A further 22 school visits are booked in for September-December 2016.</p>

Action	Project	Main themes affected	Detailed action	Project Owner	Progress to date	Next steps
					<p>events.</p> <p>18 school visits were completed during 2015.</p> <p>122 young people successfully completed the Community Safety Award and 59 of those took part in Exercise Levantine July 2016.</p> <p>EA are undertaking natural flood management and a bid for Government funding for Upper Weardale is to be submitted; GW is to include information in the next steps column.</p>	<p>Flood awareness video to be made by external company with Northumbria and Cleveland EPU's.</p> <p>Rainworks</p>

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	Support community groups wishing to increase their resilience	Community Engagement		Su Jordan	<p>6 complete community emergency plans.</p> <p>12 caravan site visits (those identified as being in a flood risk area) complete in August /September 2016. Information was given on the importance of resilience especially with increasing extreme weather events.</p> <p>Drop-in information sessions were held at Environment Agency rapid response areas for community members to find out more information about past and future flooding in their area.</p> <p>18 school visits were completed during 2015.</p> <p>122 young people successfully completed the Community Safety Award and 59 of those took part in Exercise Levante July 2016.</p>	<p>A further 13 caravan sites (those identified as being in a flood risk area) to be contacted and information given either through a visit or by email.</p> <p>A further 22 school visits are booked in for September-December 2016.</p> <p>Flood awareness video</p> <p>Rainworks</p>



<b>Action</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Main themes affected</b>	<b>Detailed action</b>	<b>Project Owner</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
Work across Europe to develop international programmes that share best practice	Ensure the findings from the Renergy project are shared and developed across Durham	Impacts Beyond our Boundaries, Community Engagement,		DCC Low Carbon Economy Team with Durham Energy Institute	<p>The learning from the RENERGY project have been used to inform two future EU funding bids that have both been successful (see Action 2 above)</p> <p>The project has also helped to raise awareness of and engagement in community energy as an issue. This in turn led to the Climate Change Group's community energy events (see community energy action above).</p>	Continue to develop the REBUS project and the community energy programme. Prepare to support the Groundwork regional community energy project if it is successful.