



lancashireenvironment forum

essence

essence news from lancashire environment forum
protecting and enhancing the environment of Lancashire

www.environmentforum.lancspartners.org

Summer 2008

Lancashire's Local Area Agreement (LAA)

On 1st July the Rt. Hon. Hazel Blears wrote to confirm her approval of Lancashire's Local Area Agreement

She Wrote: *"The LAA is the agreement between all those who have an interest in improving the quality of life for local people. Negotiations have progressed well over the last few months resulting in an excellent LAA tackling some of the most difficult and cross-cutting challenges in your area"*.

The development of the LAA has been based on the principles and priorities set out in *Ambition Lancashire*, and negotiations have involved many people from numerous organisations across the county. The size of Lancashire and the complexity of the issues we face have made the agreement of indicators and targets a challenging process, so it is a great achievement that the final agreed collection of measures includes 6 environment targets.

Now the agreement is signed off, it's down to the real hard work of making it work and making a difference to the lives of people in Lancashire.

The organisations that will lead on each of the measures in the LAA are working with the relevant county-wide theme groups to develop a series of action plans.

The Lancashire Environment Forum will play a key role in monitoring performance of the environmental indicators, providing the key link between the delivery groups and the Lancashire Partnership Board.

The LAA document is available to view and download from the Lancashire Partnership website where there is also more detailed information about the targets and development process.

<http://www.lancashirepartnership.co.uk/content/laa/new/index.asp>

Welcome... to the Summer edition of 'essence', the newsletter for the Lancashire Environment Forum.

In this issue of Essence, in addition to the usual national, regional and local news updates, we take a look at the steps taken by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to reduce their carbon emissions, and also look at the importance of Corporate Social responsibility in business.

I would like to thank everyone who has offered to contribute articles to Essence, and would like to ask people to continue to let us know of any up and coming events or success stories from your organisation

Anne Selby, Chair of the Lancashire Environment Forum

Contents

- Page 1. Welcome and Update
- Page 2. Environmental News – National, Regional and Lancashire Updates
- Page 3. Focus – Blackburn with Darwen's Carbon Management Programme
- Page 4. Backbeats – Corporate Social Responsibility in Business



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National Updates

Pitt Flood Report: initial funding announced

At the end of June, Defra announced the areas that initial funding will be allocated to, in light of Sir Michael Pitt's final report into last years summer floods.

The funding that will be allocated following the announcement is;

- At least £5million for the development of Surface Water Management Plans in the highest priority areas
- At least £1million to take forward mapping work to improve reservoir safety
- An initial £250,000 to plan a major national floods exercise to test the new structures and roles put in place to ensure the country is better prepared to deal with future flooding events.

www.defra.gov.uk/news/latest/2008/flood-0625.htm

Making Progress on Municipal Waste

Moves to cut waste, increase recycling, and reduce landfill are continuing to deliver results according to the latest figures. Provisional municipal waste figures published this August have been welcomed by Environment Minister Joan Ruddock as evidence that the efforts of local authorities and householders are paying off.

The latest findings, which cover the period from October to December last year, include:

- Household waste has gone down – from 25.8m to 25.6m tonnes
- Less waste has gone to landfill – down from 16.9 to 15.8m tonnes
- Recycled household waste is up – now at 33.9%
- Municipal waste is down overall – from 29.1m to 28.8m tonnes

www.defra.gov.uk/news/latest/2008/waste-0807.htm

Regional News

North West tops the League with highest number of Top Quality Parks

The best parks and green spaces in the country were announced this July, and in a record breaking year, the North West topped the bill with 195 Green Flag Award winners. Winners were judged against stringent assessment criteria, and need to be welcoming and well maintained with the support and involvement of the local community.



Corporation Park in Blackburn was one of winners

For more information on the winning green spaces, visit:

www.greenflagaward.org.uk/winners/case-studies

Unilever Dragonfly Awards 2008

The Unilever Dragonfly Awards 2008 are looking for the Northwest's best green volunteers – groups and individuals who've shown exceptional commitment, worked with their community, and delivered an innovative or exciting project in their area. The judges have got £6000 worth of prize money to help volunteers fund new and exciting projects that support the aims of the Mersey Basin Campaign: improved water quality, waterside regeneration and community engagement.

For more information see: www.merseybasin.org.uk

Lancashire Updates

Environment Agency's 'Operation Blade'

The Environment Agency has taken part in their largest operation to date 'Operation Blade', to reduce environmental crime and stop those profiting from such activities.

This significant multi agency operation, was jointly conducted with officers from Lancashire Constabulary, and focussed on the North of the County.

Over 50 police officers worked with the Environment Agency during the operation. They conducted dawn raids simultaneously at two sites at Ridge Farm, North Lancaster and a disused sub station at Long Lane, Quernmore.

During the operation, 8 people were arrested and numerous offences were identified.



Lightbulbs Discount for Lancashire Residents

Lancashire County Council has teamed up with the internet company Lightbulbs Direct to offer Lancashire residents a 21% discount on energy saving lightbulbs purchased online at: www.lightbulbs-direct.com

It is hoped that this discount, together with a number of awareness raising events across Lancashire will increase knowledge amongst the Lancashire public of the range of energy saving bulbs available (this includes spotlights, candles and dimmable bulbs).

To claim the 21% discount, use the discount code LANCS21 when purchasing any energy saving bulbs from Lightbulbs Direct.

In this article, Francesca Brooks-Moizer, Climate Change Assistant at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council describes the measures being taken by the council to reduce carbon emissions

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing the global community today and as a response, governments worldwide have set targets to reduce their carbon emissions. The UK government is no exception and they have identified that local authorities are key to delivering these reduction targets.

As the first step towards our response to climate change, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council has taken part in the ‘Carbon Trust’s Carbon Management Programme’ producing a detailed ‘Carbon Management Plan’ (CMP) in an effort to control our energy consumption and reduce carbon emissions.

In 2006/07 Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council’s carbon emissions amounted to 26,233 tonnes of CO₂. Emissions were calculated for the Council’s buildings, street lights, fleet vehicles and business travel. As part of the CMP, we have made a commitment to reduce these emissions by 25% (6,500 tonnes of CO₂) by 2013, against the 2006/07 baseline.

Funding from the council’s Capital Programme has been secured, every year for the duration of the CMP, in order to make physical improvements that will help reduce emissions. Actions for this year include Boiler and Thermostatic Radiator Valve (TRV) replacements in the Town Hall and voltage optimisation in various council owned buildings.

Raising Staff Awareness

Another way of achieving the emissions reduction targets will be through raising staff awareness of energy issues at work and encouraging behaviour change. An energy Roadshow was held in June to introduce staff to the Carbon Management Plan and other environmental issues that the Council is tackling. The event turned out to be very successful with a large number of staff attending and several of them bringing their own energy saving suggestions.



Lancashire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre at the Roadshow

Willing staff members are also being recruited into a network of energy champions that will ultimately permeate the entire Council. These champions will be responsible for establishing areas for improved energy efficiency, encouraging other staff members to save energy and helping to raise awareness of energy efficiency and sustainability issues. At the moment a pilot scheme is underway, on two floors of the Town Hall with nine people involved.



The Energy Champions

One way that the champions (and other volunteers) have been encouraging energy saving is through a reward scheme. A person in each office is responsible for making sure that all the computers and monitors have been turned off at the end of the day. They check the machines regularly and give a chocolate coin to all the people that turn theirs off every night for a week.

The scheme has been in place for 3 weeks, and staff have responded really enthusiastically. There are still people that forget to turn their computers off, but when they don’t get their chocolate coin, it encourages them to do it in the future!



The pilot has been running for just over a month and it appears to be going well. Weekly meter readings are being taken to see if there has been any change in energy consumption. These readings have shown that overnight, the average daily use of electricity has declined. The readings need to be taken over a longer period of time to ensure they represent a true decline, but at the moment it looks like we’re heading in the right direction, and as more champions are recruited from other floors and buildings, we should see a further reduction in energy consumption.

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In this article, John Wells Health and Safety Co-ordinator at InBev talks about Corporate Social Responsibility in Business

There is no doubt that with each passing year many more organisations are embracing Corporate Social Responsibility as an essential business ethic. Stakeholders and shareholders alike are demanding that companies manage environmental risks and opportunities as part of the sustainability of the business.

There is nothing new about the need for accepting our collective responsibility for the impact our activities have had and continue to have on the planet.

Theodore Roosevelt once said *"The work must be done; we cannot escape our responsibility..... We shall be glad of the chance to show ourselves equal to one of the great tasks set by modern civilization"*.

More recently, Al Gore said in his Nobel Prize speech *"This is a chance to elevate global consciousness about the challenges we face now this is just the beginning"*.



Some say that the world is at the tipping point and that it ultimately threatens our very existence. Climate Change isn't some vague future problem, it is impacting the planet at an alarming rate.

Why should businesses take on Corporate Social Responsibility, surely this is the responsibility of Governments? Not true, it is **our** responsibility, you, me, and everyone, there is no hiding place. Quite rightly large multinationals are now accepting their corporate responsibilities, and taking on major social and environmental challenges. 'Done badly it is often just a fig leaf and can be positively harmful. Done well, though, it is not some separate activity that companies do on the side, a corner of corporate life reserved for virtue: *it is just good business*'.

My own Company takes its Corporate Social Responsibilities very seriously. It is something we feel we must do as a global organisation if we aspire to become the best beer company in a better world. The Chief Executive Officer, Carlos Brito said *"It is not about being nice, becoming tree huggers or 'saving the world'. Our vision for a better world is still about being pragmatic, staying in tune with the world around us, and thereby safeguarding and growing our business. It means that we are committed to doing the right things both internally and externally to enable us to achieve sustainable growth and profitability"*.

By embracing our Corporate Social Responsibilities we accept our small part in protecting the planet, by minimising our impact. Our raw materials come from the earth and therefore we are motivated to do some good for the environment.

There are many things that all organisations can do. You don't have to be big; you just need the will to do it. Just consider the simple things, don't make it complicated:-

- Set more eco friendly targets
- Reduce the production of waste, and reuse and recycle
- Use less or use sustainable raw materials
- Reduce your emissions to land, water and air
- Engage your employees
- Celebrate your success

As the saying goes 'every little helps', now its time to do your little bit!

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Essence is distributed electronically to conserve resources.

If you have any project news or forthcoming events you would like to publicise in *essence* then please contact us by telephone on: 01772 531257 or by email on: environmentalpolicy@lancashire.gov.uk