

## 2009 Annual Report from Aberdeenshire Council under Scotland's Climate Change Declaration

### Scotland's Climate Change Declaration Revised Reporting Template

Each of Scotland's 32 local authorities signed Scotland's Climate Change Declaration (SCCD) in early 2007. The Declaration is a public statement wherein local authorities acknowledge the reality and implications of climate change and their responsibility to respond effectively. The Declaration also welcomes the actions of the UK and Scottish governments and the opportunities for local authorities to work in partnership with others in responding to climate change.

As signatories to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, each Scottish local authority is committed to taking action across a range of key areas. These can be summarised as:

1. Providing effective **leadership, governance and management** on climate change.
2. Reducing the local authority's **own direct greenhouse gas emissions** from their estate and services.
3. Taking action to reduce **emissions from the local authority area**
4. Assessing the risks of climate change impacts and working with others to **adapt to the impacts of climate change**.
5. Developing effective **partnership working and climate change communications**, including producing an annual statement of plans, activities and achievements.

This Reporting Template focuses on these five key areas.

The principles of effective Declaration reporting include:

- Providing clear, consistent and comparable information.
- Linking climate change reporting with existing reporting requirements and the council's own performance improvement agenda.
- Showing clearly how climate change is being integrated into council and Community Planning agendas, especially through Single Outcome Agreements.
- Highlighting key achievements and initiatives
- Communicating with the community, making the report easy to understand and available to the public.

#### Section 1

#### Governance, Leadership and Management

*Please describe and illustrate the leadership, governance and management of climate change by your local authority.*

**Governance:** As reported in Aberdeenshire Council's first annual report on SCCD, climate change is addressed as part of the sustainability agenda. The Sustainability Sub-Committee of the Council's Policy and Resources Committee is the principal members' group monitoring progress. However, reports may be considered directly at the full P&R committee, Infrastructure Services Committee, Scrutiny and Audit Committee, or the full Council, depending on the content of the report and the remit of the appropriate committee. The Sustainability Sub-Committee meets quarterly.

**Management:** The Council's response to climate change is led by the Director of Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I), with support from the Director of Planning & Environmental Services (P&ES). Line management is through Heads of Service throughout the Council. Day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating climate change response lies with the two Sustainability Officers (within P&ES). However, key actions are co-ordinated by officers in all Services, for example, in property, waste, education, housing and transportation.

A cross-service Sustainability Officers' Group includes representatives from all Services. It is chaired jointly by the Head of Economic Development (T&I) and the Head of Planning Policy & Environment (P&ES).

**Leadership:** Aberdeenshire Council signed the SCCD in January 2007, with a re-signing in August 2008.

During the past year the Council has continued its work on a number of related topics. Examples include the promotion of biomass as an appropriate local renewable energy source; signing up to, and promoting the WWF initiative 'Earth Hour'; becoming a signatory to the European 'Covenant of Mayors'; and approving new planning guidance, which sets higher energy efficiency standards than are required nationally.

The Covenant of Mayors is designed to provide local authorities with the platform to share good practice and ensure that they can be in a position to lead by example with regards to reducing CO2 emissions beyond the EU targets. Examples of actions which local authorities are encouraged to take include enhanced energy efficiency, cleaner energy production and use, as well as increasing their uptake of energy from renewable sources.

The Council is now implementing its new Supplementary Planning Guidance on 'Carbon Neutrality in New Developments', which is progressively moving towards having new developments carbon neutral by 2016.

Strategies & plans: Climate change is specifically addressed in the Single Outcome Agreement, the Council Strategic Priorities, some Service Plans such as the Local Transport Strategy, the Structure Plan (with Aberdeen City Council), the Regional Transport Strategy and the draft Local Development Plan. These are available on the Council's web site:

[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

### **Section 1 Priorities for the year ahead**

Embedding climate change mitigation and adaptation further into the Council policies and operation. Enhancing the progress by improving the awareness and co-ordination of the cross-service nature of the work. Continuing to show leadership with projects.

## **Section 2**

### **Reducing the local authority's own direct greenhouse gas emissions from their estate and services.**

*What are your local authority's baseline emissions, actual emissions and emission reduction targets for its direct 'corporate' greenhouse gas emissions? Please make it clear what emission sources are included, and where data has been sourced.*

*What is your local authority doing to achieve its reduction targets?*

As explained in the 2008 SCCD annual report, Aberdeenshire Council has been guided by the Carbon Trust, Local Authority Carbon Management Programme, approving its Strategy & Implementation Programme (SIP) in March 2007. The Council's Scrutiny & Audit Committee completed its investigation into climate change with its report, 'The Bigger Issue' in February 2007. The main elements of these projects and documents, along with the commitments from the SCCD have been incorporated into the Council's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2008. (These documents are available on the Green Living pages of the Council website [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/green](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/green)). Progress reports on the CCAP actions are considered at each meeting of the Sustainability Sub-Committee, with an annual review covering annual emissions data now being completed and to be put to the Sub-Committee and Policy & Resources Committee. The actions will be revised for 2009/10.

## Emissions data:

The baseline data was calculated for the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme (LACMP) using 2005/06 figures. The 'waste to landfill' category is municipal waste and does not include waste from the Council's properties; 'business mileage' is car travel claimed by council staff, converted using an average factor from the Carbon Trust.

Table 1 shows the baseline data and the percentage targets approved for the LACMP Strategy & Implementation Plan (SIP) in 2007. Table 2 shows the annual data for the following 3 years.

Following the completion of 'The Bigger Issue' report, the Council agreed that it should approve the recommended strategic decision to committing to become a carbon neutral organisation in the short to medium term. 'The Bigger Issue' suggested 2020 as a potential target date for this.

### Table 1 Emissions of CO2 in tonnes and percentage changes

(Using Local Authority Carbon Management Programme 2007 Strategy & Implementation Plan (SIP) baseline)

	2005/06 baseline tonnes CO2	SIP target % reduction to 2012
Buildings/property	53,932	-20
Waste to landfill	55,049	-20
Transport+	15,088	-10
Street lighting	6,553	-5
Business mileage	3,058	-6
<b>Total</b>	<b>133,680</b>	<b>-20</b>

+ Emissions data awaiting review

### Table 2 Emissions of CO2 in tonnes and percentage changes

(Using Local Authority Carbon Management Programme 2007 Strategy & Implementation Plan (SIP) baseline)

	2006/07 tonnes CO2	% pa	2007/08 tonnes CO2	% pa	2008/09 tonnes CO2	% pa	2008/09 % change from baseline (ie over 3 years)
Buildings/property	52,390	- 2.9	52,786	+0.8	52,319*	-1.0	-3.0
Waste to landfill	51,124	- 7	47,225	- 7.6	46,582	-1.4	-15.4
Transport+	13,232	- 12	12,074	- 8.8			
Street lighting	6,553	0	6,580	+ 0.4	6,926*	+5.2	+5.7
Business mileage	3,090	+ 1	3,226	+ 4.4	3,242	+0.5	+6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>126,389</b>	<b>- 5.5</b>	<b>121,891</b>	<b>-3.6</b>			

\* the 2008 updated carbon conversion factors have not been used for calculating the 2008/09 CO2 emissions

+ Emissions data awaiting review

The data shows that the Council is making progress in some areas but is not on target to attain the desired reduction by 2012 or achieve carbon neutrality by 2020.

### Council Carbon Reduction Action

The Climate Change Action Plan 2008 stated that the Council carbon reduction strategy would:

1. minimise the requirement for energy
2. minimise actions which result in greenhouse gas emissions
3. maximise the generation of carbon neutral energy; and
4. use 'offsetting' as a last resort to match the net carbon emissions.

The CCAP includes specific targets on energy consumption, renewable energy, waste, transport, street lighting and business travel. Despite a number of initiatives, progress is not at the desired level on several of these areas.

A temporary, seconded post has been created to have a Sustainable Development officer working specifically within the Education, Learning & Leisure Service, reflecting the role of this Service in the overall performance of the Council on sustainability and climate change. The Council now has a waste management officer for internal waste and is implementing a number of initiatives to reduce waste and increase recycling within its own properties, both offices and schools.

The Council has a number of policies, projects and practices in place designed to reduce emissions. These include use of the Scottish Government Central Energy Efficiency Fund (CEEF) with a rolling budget implementing energy efficiency projects; and other funding streams to help fund initiatives such as waste projects to increase recycling and composting, and to incorporate renewable energy in building projects where possible. Projects are restricted by the pay-back criteria set for funding streams.

Most of the Council's share of funding for the projects comes from Service budgets. There is an allocation in the Capital Budget of £500,000 for carbon reduction projects. Additional funding for specific projects is bid for from Scottish Government funding.

### **Section 2 Priorities for the year ahead**

Revising the actions in the Climate Change Action Plan to have specific emission reduction outcomes and guidance on cost effective measures. Improving the monitoring and accountability of actions. Continuing to work on reducing energy consumption, waste and business travel, and incorporating renewable energy in building projects.

Seeking additional funding to enable further carbon reduction projects to take place.

Projects under development include an extended and co-ordinated awareness communications campaign within the Council, expanding the training of staff, introducing a 'green champions' scheme, all aimed at changing behaviour.

Aberdeenshire Council is currently undertaking a WorkSmart project which looks at the way we provide our services and the way our staff work. This may have a big impact on reducing commuting and business mileage with better use of ICT and remote working.

## **Section 3**

### **Taking action to reduce the emissions from the local authority area**

*What are your local authority area-wide emissions? Please make it clear where data has been sourced.*

*What is your local authority doing to measure and reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from your local authority area/communities?*

#### **Area-wide emissions data**

1. Footprint data from the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), as endorsed by the Sustainable Scotland Network. These data are taken from the website. No further scenario work using the REAP software tool has been carried out at present so that the data are comparable with other areas. These are consumption-based figures.

Carbon footprint in tonnes per capita:

	Aberdeenshire	Scotland
Total	12.41	12.16
Of which:		
Housing	3.86	3.90
Transport	3.15	2.98
Food	1.23	1.20
Consumables	1.43	1.37

2. CO2 emission data from DEFRA  
2006 estimates (released in September 2008)  
These are territorial/production based emission data.

	Aberdeenshire	Scotland
Total	14.81	8.50
Of which:		
Industry & commerce	8.1	4.3
Domestic	2.9	2.8
Road transport	2.9	2.2

### **Council Action**

Following 'The Bigger Issue' report in 2007, Aberdeenshire Council committed to working with local partners "to achieve the aim of Aberdeenshire becoming a carbon neutral region in the medium term". The Bigger Issue suggested a potential target date of 2030 for this. This is being progressed through the Community Planning Partnership and the Single Outcome Agreement, and through the work of the North East Scotland Climate Change Partnership (NESCCP), which was initiated by and is currently chaired and administered by Aberdeenshire Council.

The NESCCP comprises 17 organisations: Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, NFU Scotland, NHS Grampian, Police and Fire Services, the Macaulay Institute, Aberdeen and Robert Gordon Universities, SNH, SEPA, Scottish Enterprise, Forestry Commission, Moray Council, Aberdeen City Council and Cairngorms National Park Authority as well as Aberdeenshire Council. The Partnership was officially launched at the All-Energy Conference in May 2008. Representatives have met 5 times and attended a special workshop on carbon baseline methodologies. A work programme has been agreed although there is no budget specifically allocated to the work of the NESCCP.

Work continues through the Community Planning Partnership and through the Rural Partnerships with climate change related projects, including advice on Climate Challenge Fund bids. Funding has been given to rural projects through the LEADER project.

The Council is working to address carbon reduction in the community and encourage renewable energy projects. One example is work being done through Economic Development to co-ordinate projects in community halls to increase energy efficiency and, where appropriate, use renewable energy for heating, to reduce operating costs.

The Council continues its work with NESTRANS. It has been closely involved in the recent campaign 'GetAbout' to promote sustainable travel choices in the North East.

Aberdeenshire Council was one of the pilot local authorities to use the local footprint tool in a project which concluded in 2007. It continues to use this when appropriate, in both Council plans and community schemes. It is currently working with a local group in Huntly to assist in calculating a community footprint as part of a Climate Challenge Fund project.

### **Section 3 Priorities for the year ahead**

The NESCCP will be progressing work on establishing baseline data on carbon emissions for the North East. Raising awareness is likely to be a key project for 2009/10.

Work will continue and expand through the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), Community Planning Partnership and Rural Partnership links.

Where appropriate, extend the use of the global and carbon footprint software tool.

## Section 4

### Assessing the risks of climate change impacts and working with others to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

*What is your local authority doing to adapt to climate change?*

The implications of climate change were part of Aberdeenshire Council's Scrutiny & Audit Committee report, The Bigger Issue. Evidence was heard from officers in planning and transportation. Flooding issues are dealt with within Transportation & Infrastructure Services and considered by the North East Scotland Flood Advisory Group (NESFLAG), administered and co-ordinated by the Council.

Adaptation to issues such as water availability are also addressed within planning, at strategic and individual development levels.

Adaptation measures are included in the Structure Plan and the new draft Local Development Plan.

Aberdeenshire Council responded to the consultation on the Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and continues to maintain links on advice and information on this topic from the Scottish Government and other sources.

In the annual review of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan, it is recognised that more work needs to take place to co-ordinate progress and actions specifically on adaptation.

The Council is now taking part in phase 2 of the Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) project, which was piloted by four local authorities in Scotland last year and is co-ordinated by the Scottish Climate Change Impact Partnership (SCCIP) and Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research (SNIFFER). The LCLIP project is being co-ordinated within the Council by a sustainability officer and data collection carried out by a student under the Business & Environment Partnership placement scheme. This project is part funded through the Scottish Government, SCCIP/SNIFFER, LCLIP project.

This will form the basis for the Council to develop an adaptation strategy.

#### Section 4 Priorities for the year ahead

Complete the LCLIP project and progress to draft a climate change adaptation strategy and action plan.

## Section 5

### Developing effective partnership working and climate change communications, including producing an annual statement of plans, activities and achievements.

*Please describe and illustrate your local authority's partnership working on climate change.*

Aberdeenshire Council has a number of partnership working relationships, which deal with various aspects of the climate change agenda. These are described in Section 3.

*Please describe what your local authority has done on climate change communications.*

Aberdeenshire Council communicates on climate change whenever appropriate to particular projects, through press statements, its web site, intranet, staff magazines and internal email system. As described above, the Green Living pages of the web site give information on reports. They also provide background information and links, internally and externally, to other sources of advice and data.

The Council's corporate induction for all new staff now includes a specific sustainability presentation, which covers climate change, mitigation and adaptation. Presentations were made to all Area Committees. Half day training sessions have taken place for a number of staff over the past year and this programme is to be expanded as part of the planned awareness raising campaign. This is likely to focus more on practical actions which can be taken both at work and at home.

*Please describe what your local authority has done to build capacity on climate change – internally, with partners and/or with the community.*

Links on the background and actions on climate change measures are being strengthened both through internal communication and externally, with partner organisations. For example, the community planning web site ([www.ouraberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.ouraberdeenshire.gov.uk)) links to the SOA and the Sustainable Environment Theme Forum, which specifically covers climate change issues in the partnership. The work of the Theme Forum is being reviewed to reflect the targets in the SOA, including reducing carbon emissions.

The GetAbout initiative involves 10 partners with NESTRANS taking the lead. Aberdeenshire Council is committed to raising awareness of sustainable transport options across the region. Within schools, results show a year on year decrease in pupils travelling to school by car. The CarShare Aberdeenshire brand website currently has 900 members, compared to 81 in 2005. The council is also keen to investigate innovative initiatives for sustainable travel and is currently progressing the creation of a Cycling Demonstration Town in Peterhead, hopefully leading to an increase in the active travel modal share, and is currently finalising a Walking and Cycling Action Plan for the whole area. The modal shift work is being pursued through improved Public Transport services across the area, in partnership with the major operators. Significant increases in patronage have been seen on the A93, A944 and A90(s) corridors through the Bus Route Development Grant initiative that the Council is continuing to deliver.

Other progress on building capacity within the community is described in Section 3.

#### **Section 5 Priorities for the year ahead**

As described in Section 2, an awareness raising programme is being developed which will include extensive training and a green champions scheme. The scale of this will be dependent on funding availability.

The community planning and other partnership links will continue to be strengthened to address climate change issues.

Continuing work on promoting sustainable travel in Aberdeenshire.

## Climate Change Progress Highlights of the Past Year

*Please use the following section to highlight the local authority's main climate change achievements in the past year. This can include processes, plans, projects, partnerships, events, investments, and actions.*

Aberdeenshire Council achievements on climate change issues have been described in the various sections above. The highlights over the past year can be summarised as:

1. Preparation and monitoring of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan, which continues the earlier work on addressing climate change issues.
2. The start of a local climate impacts study to provide a baseline for developing work on climate change adaptation.
3. Inclusion of climate change issues in corporate induction programme and the presentations to all Area committees and to other groups of staff, raising awareness of the topic and actions which can be taken.
4. Approval of the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Carbon Neutrality in New Developments.
5. Inclusion of climate change as a key issue in the Structure Plan.
6. Appointment of a waste management officer for internal waste, and of a seconded officer to co-ordinate sustainable development actions in the Education, Learning & Leisure Service.
7. Progress on a number of renewable energy projects, particularly using biomass, within the Council and community.
8. Aberdeenshire Council won the 2008 Scottish Transport Award for Best Practice in Travel to School and Work and has been short listed again in 2009.