

Cool Steps: Wirral Climate Change Strategy Progress Report at July 2015

Background

Cool, Wirral's climate change strategy - 2014-2019 seeks to encourage and co-ordinate climate change-related action and investment by people and organisations with an interest in Wirral. *Cool Steps* is the first of a planned series of annual reports to detail progress.

This report outlines some recent steps taken towards meeting the main aims of the strategy. It focuses on the activities of participants in the Wirral Climate Change Group, the partnership that helped develop the strategy. It is anticipated that future reports will capture a fuller picture.

Readers are asked to reflect about their own potential role and actions in relation each aim in recognition that the success of the strategy will rest on more widespread action.

Aim: Reducing demand for energy and making Wirral more energy efficient

Recent steps...

- A 12 month programme of energy efficiency awareness raising activity and support for fuel poor households in Birkenhead & Tranmere ward is underway delivered by Energy Projects Plus
- Magenta Living's solid wall insulation programme is continuing utilising ERDF funding.
- Public Health funding is in place to support installation of solid wall insulation for 50 low income private households in areas which are part of the selective licencing of private rented homes.
- An 'energy Champions' training programme for staff of front-line organisations including Wirral Council and Magenta Living has been delivered by Energy Projects Plus.
- 79 Cosy Home Heating Grants were provided by Wirral Council and several Cosy Loans were issued for replacement boilers in 2014/15. Both schemes are continuing in 2015/16.
- The overall trend in domestic CO₂ emissions in Wirral continues to be downwards with a 13.3% decrease from 2005 to 2012. Average standard electricity consumption by the domestic sector in Wirral has decreased by 8.8% between 2008 and 2013 and average gas consumption in Wirral has decreased by 23.0% over the same period.
- There has been £5.6M capital investment in Combined Heat and Power, energy efficient lighting and insulation at Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Trust hospital campuses. These measures will reduce carbon emissions by around six thousand tonnes per annum.

- A street lighting strategy has been adopted by Wirral Council advocating more efficient lamps and controls.

Aim: Meeting more of our energy needs from renewable sources

Recent steps...

- A public meeting has been held to identify support for renewable energy co-operative. A group of interested parties has been identified. A partner organisation willing to host community funded solar PV has identified two possible buildings to discuss with the emerging community energy group.
- 1,062 kWp of solar PV was installed (registered for FiT) in 2014/15, bringing the total installed under FiT to 5,476 kWp. Wirral Council has installed 391 kWp of solar PV on 18 council buildings.
- An investigation to identify local schools where solar PV panels could be feasible is underway.
- An investigation into existing wind installations in Wirral has been completed to establish the context for any future small scale wind turbine trial

Aim: Making use of more sustainable means for transport

Recent steps...

- Cycle pathways implemented on Bayswater Road, Levers Causeway, Seacombe Ferry/Birkenhead Rd, A41 Eastham/M53 Eastham, A41 Torr Rd to Woodyear Rd, Ivy Street and The Fender.
- A cycle network map has been produced.
- 19 'Dr Bike' cycle maintenance sessions held at local businesses.
- 21 workplace travel plans developed.
- New electric vehicle charging points have been introduced at Seacombe Ferry, Cleveland Street Depot, and Treasury Building, Birkenhead.

Aim: Reducing indirect climate pollution

Recent steps...

- The WARP-IT portal for sharing surplus materials has been introduced by the Cheshire and Wirral NHS Partnership. Wirral Council is currently investigating adopting the system to enable surplus items to be shared within the council local schools and with community and voluntary sector organisations.
- Work to establish a network and develop a 'Better Food Wirral' brand is underway.

Aim: Adapting to unavoidable changes in Wirral's climate

Recent steps

- Wirral's local climate impact profile has been updated.
- The Wirral Resilient Parks project has been completed. This investigation involved five parks and countryside sites that already experience weather

related issues. The aim has been to generate thinking about how parks management can adapt in the face of climate change.

- An update to Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Climate and Health paper is in progress.

Aim: Building capacity for action

Recent steps

- A launch party for Wirral Climate Change Strategy was held in December 2014.
- Web pages for Cool Wirral and Wirral Climate Change Strategy have been created.
- A 'Cool Wirral' project has been established on www.projectdirt.com.
- There have been regular updates for @CoolWirral twitter feed.
- A school 'Climate Challenge' event for Wirral was held in March 2015
- A 'Cool Wirral' team was entered by Community Action Wirral in the 'Big Energy Race' energy saving competition. The team finished third in the national league table.

Next steps

The Wirral Climate Change Group is currently co-ordinating efforts across various organisations through a rolling plan of action in support of the strategy. Success will ultimately depend on wider support and action. To get involved and find out how you can help put Cool into practice, at home in your community and in your workplace:

- Read the strategy available at: www.wirral.gov.uk/climatestrategy
- Join the free mailing list to keep in touch via www.wirral.gov.uk/coolwirral
- Follow @CoolWirral on twitter.
- Connect with others via our Cool Wirral group at www.projectdirt.com