

The Cumbria Climate Change Commitment

Overwhelming scientific evidence makes it clear that average global temperatures are rising largely due to the ever increasing volume of greenhouse gases emitted by human activity. As a result, extreme weather events are causing widespread environmental damage, taking lives and disrupting social and economic activity around the world.

Without effective and immediate action to significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions climate change will be more difficult and more expensive to deal with than previously thought and will result in unacceptable human, environmental and economic costs.

This Commitment to act on climate change has been developed by the Cumbria Strategic Partnership. It recognises that Cumbria must contribute a proportionate and fair share of the national target to reduce greenhouse gases by a minimum of 80% by 2050.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and planning to adapt to the impacts of climate change signifies a commitment by all the organisations who make up the Cumbria Strategic Partnership and one that will ensure the long term resilience of our communities and outstanding natural environment by moving towards a low carbon society that is sustained by a low carbon economy.

This Commitment recognises the varying capacity of partners to deliver this range of challenging actions and targets particularly at this time of economic recession (March 2009) nonetheless it marks the beginning of Cumbria's ambition to lead international thinking on climate change mitigation and adaptation, to generate and use sustainable energy locally, and encourage low carbon lifestyles in sustainable communities.

We, the undersigned, commit our organisation to implementing the actions set out in the Cumbria Climate Change Action Plan assigned to our organisation. Specifically **we commit to:**

1. **Taking immediate action** to draw up a carbon reduction programme, calculate baseline emissions, identify and deliver projects to reduce greenhouse gases arising from energy use in buildings, employee commuting, business travel, fleet transport, waste, procurement and other organisational activity, including outsourced functions, by 25% by 2014 at the latest.
2. **Publicly reporting annual progress** on greenhouse gas reduction from organisational activity and on actions needed to adapt operations to climate change.
3. **Investing in low carbon sources of energy including renewables** and microgeneration technologies to stimulate the local economy and encourage the installation of low carbon technologies in homes, businesses and public buildings throughout Cumbria.
4. **Championing action on climate change** in the Northwest region that demonstrates the use of best practice to the wider public and the business community and helps people and companies to adjust and adapt through a programme of communication and information.
5. **Taking action to build and embed adaptive capacity** and contingency planning within our organisations to better understand the risks, consequences and likely costs of climate variability and the impact of extreme weather events on organisational aims, operations, future policy, and investment programmes.
6. **Producing a risk based adaptation strategy** and action plan to reduce vulnerability to climate change and provide a flexible approach to managing priority risks and exploiting any opportunities presented by changing climatic conditions by 2011.

Signed by:..... Date.....

Position:.....

Organisation:.....