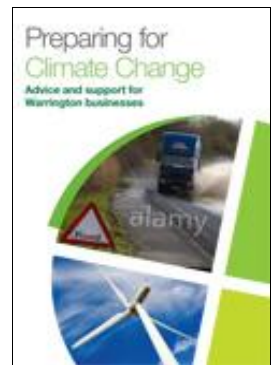


## Climate Change Business Engagement Pilot – Cheshire & Warrington Enterprise Commission in partnership with Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service and Warrington Council

### Project Aims

To pilot engaging with businesses on Climate Change issues by piggybacking on existing Fire Safety Audit visits by Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service (CFRS). This will support CFRS's carbon reduction programme and also Warrington Council's Local Area Agreement which includes National Indicators NI 186 to reduce the per capita CO2 emissions in the local authority area and NI188 on planning to adapt to future climate change.

CFRS already carries out Fire Safety Audits with several thousand businesses in Cheshire and Warrington. They are a trusted source of information and are respected by the business community. Most Fire Safety Audits are already carried out with a key business person responsible for the site such as a Site Manager or Health and Safety representative, often the same person, who would be responsible for energy, waste and water resource issues as well as site operations, so it is a good opportunity to discuss Climate Change issues too.



Another aim was also to simply provide a consistency of message – so that if businesses are receiving the same message regarding climate change from CFRS, Warrington Council, the Environment Agency, national government, Business Link etc there is more likelihood of them taking action.

### Project Activities

A questionnaire was produced and sent to businesses prior to their Fire Safety Audit appointment. This was collected at the time of the visit and if not already completed done during the visit. The questionnaire asked businesses what activities they had undertaken including adaptation issues, e.g. considering the impacts on their supply chain of extreme weather conditions, as well as mitigation issues, e.g. reducing their energy use. Businesses could also request further information on selected issues.

Businesses were also left an additional leaflet full of suggestions and links to other support organisations such as the ENWORKS resource efficiency programme, the Carbon Trust, the Environment Agency and Warrington Council.

Prior to the visits a training session was held with CFRS Fire Safety Audit Officers to give them some information about Climate Change issues – this wasn't to make them climate change experts of course but just to give them some basic tools and tips should businesses ask questions, explain why/how we were running the pilot and give them a broad understanding of climate change issues and therefore more confidence in engaging with businesses.

The pilot covered businesses in the Warrington area and there was some focus on businesses that were in a flood risk area – although other areas were also targeted.

### Costs

£400 for design and print of leaflets plus officer time. Supported by Cheshire & Warrington Enterprise Commission as part of the Cheshire & Warrington Climate Change Programme, funded by the Northwest Regional Development Agency.

## Results

During the 3 month pilot just under 150 business questionnaires were returned from a range of sizes and types of companies:

- 95 gave fairly standard responses e.g. they had looked at some basic issues such as recycling or had installed energy saving lightbulbs. Some had considered flooding but not really other Adaptation issues. They didn't want any more information;
- 15 had taken some basic steps but did want more information about what else they could do – these were contacted and sent relevant information;
- 24 nil returns - either said they had no time to complete the questionnaire or said they didn't believe climate change was real and therefore not relevant to them.
- 10 had been affected by issues that had made them question how they did business and had then made some changes e.g the snow disruption had forced them to re-consider their supply chain and distribution processes, or they'd been affected by high winds/flooding etc - these could possibly be used as case studies for similar companies.

---

## Lessons Learned

Quality of information received depended on how well the forms were filled in by businesses, some were completed fully whilst others said they weren't interested or didn't have time to fill in the forms.

Overall, the information gained was useful in understanding business priorities and also activities they were and weren't carrying out e.g. many had considered flooding but not other extreme weather conditions such as very hot weather. Or they had considered the impacts on their supply chain but not necessarily on their staff or customers. 10% of businesses also requested further information and so will directly benefit from the business support provided.

---

## Future Steps

The pilot has been broadly successful and is being rolled out to the whole of Cheshire and Warrington. The questionnaire will be tweaked slightly to include a question on size/type of business. This analysis means that, where relevant, businesses can be referred to Groundwork Cheshire to receive a free resource efficiency audit through the ENWORKS programme.

---

## Contacts for more information

Kate Radford – Climate Change Programme Manager – Cheshire & Warrington Enterprise Commission  
Email: [kate.radford@cwec.org.uk](mailto:kate.radford@cwec.org.uk) Tel: 01606 734191.

Selina Greenow - Environmental & Corporate Social Responsibility Officer – Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service  
Email: [Selina.greenow@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:Selina.greenow@cheshirefire.gov.uk) Tel: 01606 868669

Laura Stanley – Climate Change Officer – Warrington Borough Council  
Email: [lstanley@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:lstanley@warrington.gov.uk) Tel: 01925 442615.

---

## Project Partners

