

Councils sign up to climate change pledge

Half of the East Midlands' 46 local authorities have now pledged to do their bit to safeguard the environment for future generations by signing up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.

The milestone was reached five months earlier than anticipated when all of Northamptonshire's councils signed the Declaration at the East Midlands Expo in Derby last month.

The Declaration is a voluntary pledge to address the issues of climate change. It was originated in Nottingham and represents a high-level statement of commitment that any council can make to its own community. The declaration was originally launched in October 2000 and, to mark its 5th anniversary, was relaunched last December at the Second National Councils Climate Conference.

Over 130 councils across England have signed up to the Declaration since its launch and, as a voluntary statement, councils are free to amend the name and content of the Declaration to suit the level of commitment they wish to make.

A regional partnership led by the Climate Change Steering Group has been set up to encourage councils to sign up.

Jane Todd, Regional Director of the Government Office for the East Midlands, said:

"The regional partnership agreed with Defra the target of getting half of the region's local authorities to sign up to the Nottingham Declaration by March next year. The East Midlands Regional Assembly, GOEM and emda are pleased to announce that the 50% target has been met.

"Efforts are now focussing on achieving the full coverage that is our ultimate aim. I am particularly pleased that all local authorities in Nottinghamshire and Northamptonshire have committed to take action on climate change through signing the Declaration and we look forward to working with the county partnerships to help them do so."

Valerie Dwyer, Board Lead for Economic Growth, Energy & Environment at East Midlands Development Agency (emda) said:

"The implications of climate change mean that we all have to change the way we live and work. Households, businesses and individuals need to understand what it means for them and what they can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to unavoidable changes in the climate. Local authorities touch on every aspect of our lives so emda welcomes the commitment of half of the region's authorities to take a lead on tackling climate change issues. Building on the work of local authorities, emda, the Regional Assembly and the Government Office are working on the development of a regional climate change action plan which will be available for consultation next summer."

Councillor David Sprason, Vice-Chair of the Policy Board at East Midlands Regional Assembly, said:

"The Regional Assembly recognises climate change as a key priority for the region and so it is excellent news that so many local authorities have already signed the Nottingham Declaration. As one of the Climate Change Ambassadors, I will be working closely with the remaining local authorities in the region to encourage 100% sign up."

Notes to editors

1. An agreed regional commitment in Defra's Partnership and Innovation Fund is to get 100% sign-up by East Midlands local authorities to the Nottingham Declaration by April 2008. Three regional politicians have been recruited as ambassadors to help achieve this aim - Alan Simpson MP (Labour), Cllr Lucy Care (LibDem) and Cllr David Sprason (Conservative).

2. East Midlands councils which have signed up are:

- * Ashfield District Council
- * Bassetlaw District Council
- * Broxtowe Borough Council
- * Charnwood Borough Council
- * Corby Borough Council

- * Daventry District Council
- * Derby City Council
- * Derbyshire County Council
- * East Northamptonshire District Council
- * Gedling Borough Council
- * High Peak Borough Council
- * Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
- * Kettering Borough Council
- * Mansfield District Council
- * Newark and Sherwood District Council
- * Northampton Borough Council
- * Northamptonshire County Council
- * Nottingham City Council
- * Nottinghamshire County Council
- * Rushcliffe Borough Council
- * South Derbyshire District Council
- * South Northamptonshire Council
- * Wellingborough Borough Council

3. The Nottingham Declaration Action Pack is a new on-line tool to support local authorities in turning their commitment to further action for their local area. It helps them prioritise, plan, implement, and review their strategies by outlining milestone activities that should be undertaken, together with a range of options. It was launched regionally at the East Midlands Expo 2006 on 12 October, at Pride Park Stadium, Derby and will be followed by a series of regional workshop training events. It can be found at <http://www.est.org.uk/housingbuildings/localauthorities/NottinghamDeclaration/>