



Derry City & Strabane District Council Climate & Environment Action Briefing Paper

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Derry City & Strabane
District Council

Comhairle
Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSratha Báin

Derry Cittie & Stràbane
Destrìck Cooncil

CLIMATE 

Local Initiatives – Derry City and Strabane District Council

This document outlines the current initiatives being implemented by Derry City & Strabane District Council and partners to address climate and environmental issues.

Local Development Plan 2032

The General Development Principles state that all development should demonstrate how they can mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and ensure resilience.

Climate Adaptation Plan 2020

Derry City & Strabane District Council is the first local authority in Northern Ireland to develop a climate adaptation plan, which was approved by the Council in July 2020. The vision of the plan is to make the region prepared for and resilient to the effects of climate change, creating a safe and sustainable environment for all.

Green Infrastructure Plan

The Council has introduced a Green Infrastructure Plan that establishes a new approach within the North West region. The vision of the plan is to ensure that by 2032, the environmental, economic, and social benefits of Green Infrastructure are valued and maximized by all. This plan provides a framework for nature-based solutions to address climate change.

Infrastructure & Regeneration – Climate Smart Development

Derry City & Strabane District Council is the first local authority in Northern Ireland to develop a Climate Change Risk & Opportunities Assessment for infrastructure projects. This assessment will inform a template for climate-proofing capital projects within the City Deal and other developments. The Council is currently working on developing a checklist and guidelines for Climate Smart development across the region.

Innovate UK – Net Zero - Derry & Strabane - From Ambition to Action

Derry City & Strabane District Council have successfully secured £300,000 of funding from Innovate UK to deliver the Net Zero Derry & Strabane project.

The project will be delivered from July 2023-July 2025

Objectives

- Enable effective collaboration through appropriate governance structures & policy frameworks
- Provide FAIR place based system insights ensuring knowledge based climate action
- Increase stakeholder climate change awareness and capacity for action
- Provide effective delivery frameworks through development of a SMART climate action plan and project pipeline
- Identify the economic & finance models necessary to deliver a climate resilient and net zero city & district

- Innovatively address non technical barriers within the Derry & Strabane City Deal programme to inlock potential adoption at scale solutions for heat, power and green infrastructure

As one of the main objectives of the programme, the Derry and Strabane Sustainability & Climate Commission (SCC) was established in January 2024. Key stakeholders such as: DAERA, Department for Communities, WHSCT, Ulster University and North West Regional College will work together as Commission members to help support the reduction of carbon emissions across the city and district. The SCC will formally launch in autumn 2024.

Peoples Climate Story

Council secured funding through the Northern Ireland Museum's Council Climate Action fund to deliver the People's Climate Story. This included engagement across the city and district and collection of local stories and perspectives on climate change which will be showcased in an exhibition in The Tower Museum during 2022. Carbon Literacy training was also provided to the Museums, Heritage and Arts sector in the city and district.

Active & Sustainable Travel

Council has developed with partners 100km of traffic free routes across the city and district. An additional 45km are under development with a further 120km of routes identified.

Sustainable Food System

Council is working across a portfolio of projects to deliver a sustainable food system for the city and district. These include:

- Acorn Farm I Can Grow Project
- Sustainable Food Place
- Growing Food, Growing Communities
- Acorn Farm Hub

Council has been awarded £5.6m from the UK Government Levelling Up Fund to develop the Acorn Farm Sustainable Food Hub (£6.2m) which will see the development of Geodesic Domes, growing spaces and learning centres within St Columb's Park.

Community Resilience: Prepare, Adapt, Strengthen

Derry City and Strabane District Council is currently completing a pilot on Community Resilience supported by the Regional Local Government Civil Contingencies team and aligned with a similar pilot being delivered by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. The pilot, entitled "Community Resilience: Prepare, Adapt, Strengthen", aims to strengthen existing Community Resilience Groups (CRGs), embed community resilience into relevant Local Government workstreams and broaden the remit of the Regional Community Resilience Group (RCRG).

GAA Green Clubs

Council supported a number of local GAA clubs which were selected across the North West to pilot the national Green Clubs initiative. This saw the creation of dedicated climate action working groups in clubs, tree planting, energy studies, waste reduction and climate awareness programmes.

Research Projects

DCSD is also involved in an EPA Transboundary Climate Risk research project led by the University of Maynooth and the TaLX project lead by Climate Ireland, Climate NI and Adaptation Scotland – this includes the development of an adaptation and resilience capability model and assessment for place-based climate adaptation projects.

City Deal Environment & Climate Working Group

Established in 2022 the working group is comprised of the city deal partners. Chaired by the Climate Programme Manager, the group will oversee various work programs, including the development of screening checklists, design guides, and policy development.

Decarbonisation Cluster

Working with Smart Grid Ireland DCSDC are leading on the development of a decarbonisation cluster in Ebrington. This includes multi agencies and local businesses and will be delivered throughout 2023/24.

Industrial Decarbonisation Project

DCSDC in partnership with INVEST NI is one of 12 projects across the UK to be awarded funding from The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero Local Industrial Decarbonisation Plans competition. Derry and Strabane District Council hosted one of the first of the 11 Industrial Decarbonisation workshops for Northern Ireland.

The Industrial Decarbonisation for Northern Ireland (IDNI) project has been developed to demystify and assist businesses manage increasing competitive pressures and DCSDC want to ensure our region is at the forefront of these activities.

The Industrial Decarbonisation for Northern Ireland (IDNI) project will identify 4 industrial clusters from across NI, that are most suitable for a research and modelling project that could deliver:

- Cheaper and more predictable energy costs
- Better Supply Chain relationships
- Enhanced Green Investment Potential
- Increased UK funding visibility
- Being exemplars for NI industry
- Shared infrastructure cost models

Led by Invest NI, the project is a consortium of stakeholders including Manufacturing NI, Mineral Products Association, Ulster University, Queens and all 11 councils. These partners will be building on a GB best practice decarbonisation project known as "Repowering the Black Country" Virtual Zero Carbon Hub - Virtual Zero Carbon Hub (zerocarbonhubs.co.uk)

The project builds on the activity and resources developed as part of this UKRI initiative.

Green Infrastructure Investments

- Completion of new £3.5m DfI/DEARA/DfC/DCSDC funded Strathfoyle Greenway, Derry

- Commencement of the £2.5million Culmore Greenway, funded by INTERREG VA
- Completion of new £230k DfC/TEO/DCSDC funded car park and pedestrian access from Ebrington to St Columb's Park, Derry
- Ongoing delivery of North West Greenway Project
- £6.2m investment into Acorn Farm (Urban Sustainable Food Hub)
- Acorn Farm I can Grow programme ongoing partnership support and delivery (£1.7m Lottery Programme)
- Ongoing management and maintenance of Parks & Open Spaces

Shared Island Initiative – Exemplar Decarbonised Public Buildings and Transportation Project

Shared Island Funding was awarded to DCC to fund a feasibility study focused on the Decarbonisation of Public Buildings within 4 Decarbonisation Zones; 2 in Donegal; Carndonagh and Gort an Choire (Gortahork)/ Falcarragh and 2 in the DCSDC region namely Castlederg and St Columb's Park / Ebrington.

EUCF – European Cities Facility

Donegal County Council along with Derry City and Strabane District Council successfully applied for and received €60,000 of financial support to develop investment concepts related to the implementation of actions identified in the North West Regional Strategy. The ultimate objective of the financial support is to build a pipeline of sustainable energy investment projects across local authorities in Europe.

Intelligent Cities Challenge

The Intelligent Cities Challenge (ICC) is a European Commission initiative supporting European cities towards the green and digital transition of their local economies, through Local Green Deals. ICC helps cities harness the power of cutting-edge technologies, while improving their economic competitiveness, social resilience and the European citizens' quality of life.