

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR ROUND 8 INVEST TO SAVE BUDGET

Title of Project	Cheshire – The Carbon Neutral County Value: £556,000 over three years
Brief description of the aims and desired outcomes of the project	Securing high level commitment from public sector, commerce and industry to reduce domestic carbon emissions and innovatively brand the rural County of Cheshire “carbon neutral”:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a partnership committed to organisational carbon reduction programmes • To support organisations in achieving carbon emission reductions through specialist advisor, volunteer programmes and carbon reduction targets • Promote sustainable communities and energy use • Change behaviour, promote energy efficiency and climate change alleviation to all staff within organisations
Clear description of what the ISB funding will be used to buy	Team to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Third sector led partnership • Achieve Cheshire wide commitment to Carbon Emissions Reduction Charter • Develop Cheshire Carbon brand • Campaigns targeted at changing behaviour • Training sessions and events/seminars • Work with partners to establish or further develop prime “demo” sites promoting carbon neutral technologies
List of Project Partners	Key partners include:-
<p>Sustainability North West – Fiona Nicholls, Climate Change & Renewables Manager, Giants Basin, Potato Wharf, Castlefield, Manchester, M3 4NB, 0161 834 8834, f.nicholls@snw.org.uk www.snw.org.uk</p> <p>Cheshire Wildlife Trust – Chris Mahon, Director, Grebe House, Reaseheath, Nantwich, CW5 6DG, 01270 610180, cmahon@cheshirewt.cix.co.uk</p> <p>Cheshire Renewable Energy Initiative – Jane O’Brien, Energy Projects Plus, CHEEAC 5 Grange Lane, Winsford, CW7 2BP, jane@epplus.org.uk, 01270 760974</p> <p>Envirolink Northwest – Ian Sibbick, Envirolink North West, Wigan Investment Centre, Waterside Drive, Wigan, WN3 5BA, Potato Wharf, Manchester, i.sibbick@envirolinknorthwest.co.uk, 01942 491294</p>	
<p>Further Partners have been or are being approached and are interested subject to management / board agreement:</p> <p>Sustainable Cheshire Forum – Michele Burrow, papers gone to facilitator Cheshire Partnership – Alison Armstrong, papers gone to facilitator Environment Agency – Jackie Bowley, papers to senior management</p>	

<p>Cheshire & Warrington Economic Alliance Renewables North West – Julian Carter Action for Sustainability – Susan Dean Cheshire & Merseyside Strategic Health Authority Cheshire Primary Care Trusts – Estates Managers Cheshire Hospitals – Estates Managers Cheshire Education Establishments – Estates Managers Cheshire Community Council Cheshire County, Borough and City Councils</p>	
Innovation and Benefits claimed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be the first Countywide scheme, led by third sector, which seeks to work within all sectors, with all organisations, resulting in better understanding of carbon management. • Reduced carbon emissions & increased energy efficiency will lead to economic benefits for the whole County. • Creating specific roles for this project will better focus local efforts on creating a carbon neutral county and ensuring a multifaceted response from the wider community.

Part 2: Narrative bid

Objective	Method of Measurement e.g.
Creation of a Cheshire Carbon Emissions Reduction Charter and marketing brand	Board level commitments, senior management follow up to Declaration, events and / or training sessions, organisations licensed to use the brand, brand recognition, no. joining Carbon Club
Formation of Cheshire Carbon club	No. Members
A commitment to reducing carbon emissions in the County	No. organisations undergoing ISO 14000 or EMAS or similar, setting carbon reduction targets, policies addressing climate change in the workplace and engaging with employees
	No. organisations filtered to Carbon Trust's Action Energy Programme
	No. using Charter's Point Plan system to reduce energy use
	No. staff awareness training sessions, Energy Champions created
Increased energy efficiency record in the County	Records of energy usage before and after, No. carbon neutral technology installations undertaken
Sustainable development / construction	No. organisations adopting sustainable purchasing

Objective	Method of Measurement e.g.
Creation of volunteer programme to advise on carbon reduction actions	No. organisations supporting volunteer programme

This pioneering project is designed to achieve a step change in attitudes to climate change through a partnership that embraces organisations from all sectors and all sizes by:

- establishing a Cheshire Carbon Emissions Reduction Charter
- developing a “brand” with associated marketing and promotional activities
- developing a Carbon Club
- inviting organisations to set their own carbon reduction targets.

Specific activities will be promoted through the formation of focus groups.

Companies that sign up to the Declaration will be licensed to use the brand. The project will be marketed to organisations at Board level, targeting senior management to develop in-house and community programmes to promote carbon reduction to wider audiences.

Organisations will be supported in their commitment by:

- Presentations to Board and Senior Management
- Talks / presentations to all levels of staff with training and awareness raising
- Support offered in identifying energy savings through development of a simple management system for reducing energy usage
- Carbon reduction surveys undertaken by specialist advisors
- Development of a volunteer programme from within the partnership
- Provision of information service

Reduced carbon emissions will support the national drive, spearheaded by DEFRA, to tackle climate change. Reduced energy usage will result in improved profitability, a more stable local, regional and national demand for energy and allow a better management of energy needs.

The project will focus attention on the potential for energy efficient and carbon neutral technologies. It will support efforts to develop a biomass sector – benefiting farmers and energy users alike. Cheshire has a burgeoning solar sector which needs support to promote the benefits of solar hot water. CHP and wind energy technology could benefit a wide range of organisations in both urban and rural settings. It will support regional initiatives in sustainability and renewable energy and the Regional Economic Strategy by encouraging new enterprise activity¹.

¹ http://nwda-cms.amaze.co.uk/DocumentUploads/RES_draft.pdf - Page 7

By reducing energy usage and demand, monies are released to shorten the pay back period of carbon neutral technologies making them more financially appealing. As more are installed the prices will be lowered, supporting a steady reduction of costs and making such technologies more appealing to the domestic sector.

The image that will result from a “Cheshire – the Carbon Neutral County” brand will not only raise the profile of climate change but also of Cheshire. It will support the heritage and tourism sectors which in turn will lead to increased economic growth from inward investment.

Sustainability will come from members seeing the benefits of the programme and membership of the Carbon Club and by organisations being encouraged to make a “donation” from energy savings to promote events and further information materials.

This project allows a third sector organisation to lead the way, encouraging better partnership working both within and between organisations in Cheshire. It is a Pilot Project which can be adapted for other areas of both rural and urban nature. Four out of the six districts affected by this proposal have agreed Statements of Intent for a Compact, to be followed by full Codes of Practice.

The benefits are wide-ranging tackling climate change issues and supporting energy efficiency activities, reaching those sectors not already supported through existing programmes. The project will offer cost-effective support to organisations struggling to understand the complex issues around carbon management, particularly those that don't have the staffing resource. On top of the simple point plan system, the programme will offer a profile of other environmental improvements through promotion of the ISO 14000 or EMAS accreditation systems, which will result in a solid commitment to holistic resource management.