

Funding boost for environmental work

By **Emily** - May 7, 2016



Durham County Council's energy efficiency expertise has resulted in a £310,000 grant award to work with partners across Europe.

As part of the Interreg Europe programme, the funding will see the council work with other authorities across the continent on two energy projects, which will involve sharing experience and best practice. They will also look into how even more energy efficiency projects could be brought forward in County Durham.

The REBUS project aims to increase the number of community buildings fitted with renewable and more efficient energy measures. This comes after the council's successful programme which has seen solar panels fitted to public buildings across the county generating, in 2015-16 alone, over 700,000kWh of power and saving 337 tonnes of carbon from being released into the atmosphere.

The LOCARBO project will see the partners raise awareness of energy innovation with local businesses to ensure they make the most of the cost-savings on offer by switching to more efficient sources. By reducing energy costs the scheme aims to make County Durham businesses more competitive giving them an even better chance of success in the future.

The work will complement the council's ongoing carbon reduction strategy and awareness raising of more environmentally friendly and cost-saving energy measures.

Cllr Neil Foster, Cabinet member for economic regeneration and culture, said: "This award recognises the council as a leader in the field of renewable energy thanks to the work we've carried out across the county. This funding will allow us to learn from our partners across Europe as well as help them benefit from our experience. It will also help us spread the message of the financial and environmental benefits to businesses and residents in County Durham of moving towards the use of more greener energy."

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