

**Foreword from Councillor Bruce Marshall,
Spokesperson for Environment
Carbon Management Programme Member Sponsor
Chair of Bute and Cowal Area Committee**



In April 2009, Argyll and Bute Council embarked on an ambitious journey to reduce carbon emissions by 20% in 5 years. It is absolutely clear that this journey, the Carbon Management Programme, will present significant challenge both within the five years and beyond. Some aspects of the Programme implementation will see the continuation of accepted best practice activity, whilst others will break new ground and test the Council's mettle/resolve/enthusiasm.

It could be argued that at the outset of the Carbon Management Programme, the concept of a carbon footprint and carbon reduction was largely limited to the more environmentally aware. However, in a very short space of time these expressions have become household terms epitomising the importance of environmental and sustainable choices in the general public's personal values and choices. Similarly, carbon reduction is now less a voluntary issue and is more the subject of national legislation, targets etc. It is essential that the tax paying Argyll and Bute public look to the Council to champion these values and lead by example.

It is the role of the Member Sponsor to assist in the link-up between Members, Senior Management and the cross Council team of Officers (Project Team) who have responsibility for Carbon Management Plan implementation. Akin to our valued partners the Carbon Trust, I see it as my role to promote the embedding of the carbon reduction doctrine and generally support the programme whilst providing a critical friend to challenge convention as well as our own progress and endeavours.

With each change of Spokesperson for Environment, and therefore Member Sponsor, the Programme hopefully benefits from a fresh injection of enthusiasm, new ideas and differing outlook. I have personally been extremely interested in the opportunities that the government's renewables incentive programmes (Feed in Tariffs, Renewable Heat Incentive) offer and would advocate that the Council makes every effort to maximise the benefits available from these initiatives. Current work with the Carbon Trust on a Renewables Sourcing Strategy is designed to identify the best technologies, sites etc and offer a strategic, targeted approach to renewables implementation. With external funding opportunities forever in flux, it is essential that, within the asset management process of business case development, the Council explore and develop mechanisms to take best advantage of often limited windows of opportunity.

I am delighted to be involved with the Carbon Management Programme and, as with my predecessors, I can clearly see the benefits of the programme. It is one of the very few programmes which deliver both tangible benefits and a return on investment at the same time. In times of austerity, this Programme presents rare opportunity.