**West Sussex County Council entry to President’s Award**

**Category 3: Improving the environment, promoting health**

**Summary**

Landmark West Sussex plan and newly established Health in All Policies approach, provides a firm foundation for joint working to improve air quality

**Project Outline**

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) has brought together officers and Members from the County Council and the West Sussex District and Borough Councils to produce the West Sussex Air Quality Plan ‘*Breathing Better: a partnership approach to improving air quality in West Sussex’.* This joint approach brings together the local authorities to work efficiently and effectively to deliver actions to improve air quality and people’s health. This innovative working plan covers:

* information about local air quality
* local authority responsibilities
* air quality issues and pollutants of concern
* health and environmental impacts
* current and future activity to improve air quality

A Member-led governance group with representatives from each local authority oversees the plan progress, with support from officers and Sussex-air, the pan-Sussex air quality partnership of which we and all local authorities across Sussex are members. Some example projects include:

* A Sussex-air grant from Defra Air Quality Fund to help 25 schools and 25 businesses in and around Air Quality Management Areas. Our delivery partners Sustrans and Living Streets have been working with schools aiming to reduce emissions by reducing idling during school drop-off and pick-up times and increasing walking and cycling rates to and from school. Our delivery partner Phlorum is working with businesses to help them reduce local emissions from fixed and mobile plant; increase walking and cycling rates to and from work, and delivering eco-driver training.
* A second Sussex-air grant (recently awarded) aims to reduce PM emissions from domestic wood and coal burning appliances and change public attitudes to burning, through an educational campaign, surveys, and referral of eligible households to energy improvement programmes.
* WSCC Sustainability and Public Health teams are working together on a public messaging campaign to encourage behaviour change on issues including transport, burning, indoor air pollution, Breathe Easy Week, and airAlert. This uses the county newsletter that reaches 385,000 households, local radio to reach a wider audience, and sharing public health messages with Sussex-air partners to facilitate localised media messaging. The campaign is initially focused on Breathe Easy Week and Clean Air Day, with a long-term approach including a web presence enabling residents/communities access to messages and templates to develop their own campaign materials, as part of the wider work on climate change.

Links between Sustainability and Public Health are further strengthened by the appointment of a new Health in All Polices Project Manager. This post will enable WSCC to build skills and capacity throughout the organisation and support the commitment to creating healthier places to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of West Sussex.