

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Innovation award for Cheshire's Low-Carbon Visionaries?

10<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Cheshire's 'Ginger Group' has been shortlisted for The Institute for Engineering and Technology (IET) 2009 Innovative Team Award [[IET](#)] for its work to develop "Vision 2050 – A Sustainable Future for Cheshire West and Chester" [[V2050](#)] document that sets out how local councils, businesses and communities can work together to reduce the County's carbon footprint.

The team and their document are seen as innovative because they demonstrate the immense value in encouraging collaboration between engineers, scientists, communities workers, civil servants and geographers. Their work shows how these links are critical in all areas of life (e.g. food, transport, energy and community) and the importance of local Councils, business and communities working together. In addition, whilst the Cheshire West and Chester Council provided logistical and promotional support, the team members developed the report pro-bono so that it is open for anyone to use.

As they wait to hear the final judgement at the IET Awards dinner on the 25<sup>th</sup> November, members of the Ginger Group continue to engage with key projects that are setting an example for how the Vision 2050 should work.

**Prof. Roy Alexander** is actively involved in Cheshire village [Ashton Hayes' Going Carbon Neutral Project](#). As the village works to become carbon neutral through behavioural change, energy efficiency, green transport and renewable energy, it recognises the importance of the community working together with the Council and local business.

**Ged Edwards** is MD of Sustainable Blacon Limited [[BCT](#)]. This is a social enterprise based in Blacon, Chester, working on community energy, energy efficiency and education projects that should save energy and create jobs in a new green economy. Other communities are following their example.

**Dr Mary Gillie** has supported both projects professionally and is actively involved in Chester Cycle Campaign (CCC) [[CCC](#)]. The CCC is working with the Council to successfully implement the Chester Cycle Demonstration Town status [[CDT](#)]. This aims to double cycling in Chester through awareness raising, training and infrastructure projects.

**Dr Tom Barker** is supporting Liverpool as it explores options to achieve its ambition of being the first go carbon neutral.

**Peter Bulmer and Dr Andrea Mageean** are working within the Council to embed Vision 2050 into the new plans and strategies specifically the new Sustainable Community Strategy for West Cheshire.

**John Tweed** has been promoting green architecture through his practice and is a director of Sustainable Blacon Limited.

The team formed in 2007 after the annual Chester Public Debate focussed on Climate Change and how it would affect the community. The Council invited a group of local experts in different fields to lead the debate. After the event, the group independently decided to stay in touch and develop practical responses to the ideas and issues raised. They christened themselves 'The Climate Change Ginger Group' and developed "Vision 2050" which was adopted by the Council as strategy in March 2009.

Many other local authorities and environmental organisations have used the document. Cheshire East are adapting it for their new authority. Friends of the Earth and Transition Towns and the New Economics Foundation all supported the document. Jonathon Porritt showed his support by writing the Forward. It is hoped that being short-listed for the IET Innovation Team Award will publicise the document further so more organisations can use it. Likewise the Ginger Group would like other scientists and engineers in the IET to follow the guidance of Vision 2050 and to use their skills to work with communities and local authorities to tackle climate change.

Notes to the editor

Vision 2050 available at: <http://www.chester.gov.uk/pdf/Vision2050.pdf>

IET Innovation award website <http://conferences.theiet.org/innovation-awards/index.htm>

Ashton Hayes Going Carbon Neutral project website:  
<http://www.goingcarbonneutral.co.uk/>

Chester Cycle Campaign website: <http://www.chestercyclecity.org/>

Chester Cycle Demonstration Town Website: <http://www.cyclechester.com/>

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