Green Skills for Green Jobs

Councillor Matt Wilson

North Tyneside Council

Introduction

Council Plan and Policy Framework:

- This policy relates directly to the delivery of our “Building A Better North Tyneside” vision and is focused on the **Thriving** and **Green** elements of the Plan.

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Policy Aim

To position North Tyneside at the front of the green economy transition by ensuring a skilled workforce are available to drive economic growth in the borough by delivering the climate mitigation measures required to achieve net zero.

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The Climate Crisis

To minimise the risk of dangerous climate change, the UK Govt signed the “Paris Agreement” (2015) which aims to halt global warming at below 2°C, while pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C, increasing measures to adapt to climate change.

- NTC has declared a Climate Emergency and is now stepping up its transition ambition – aiming to bring forward net zero to 2030 rather than 2050.
- It is expected that national targets will be further strengthened at this year’s COP26 conference being held in Glasgow this November.
- Commentators are hopeful that new initiatives and increased funding will follow COP26.

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Meet John…

- For the last 10 years he's worked in homes all over North Tyneside fitting and fixing gas boilers.
- He isn't really bothered about climate change, but he is bothered about earning enough money to provide a decent life for his family.
- John has always been busy and doesn't see that 10 years from now the demand for his skills will be a fraction of what it is now.
- He can continue to work in "heating" but will need to totally update his skills.

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Climate Transition = Economic Opportunity

- The low carbon economy is predicted to grow 4x faster than the rest of the economy over this decade. The transition to this “green economy” provides a big opportunity for driving the economic recovery from the Covid-19 crisis.
  (ref NTCA Strategic Skills Plan 2021)
- Nationally, the Government has initiated a Green Jobs Taskforce, pledging 2 million green jobs by 2030.
- The markets for low-carbon technologies are growing, e.g.
  - carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) has the potential to add £3.6 billion GVA by 2030
  - The offshore wind target of 40GW could support 60,000 jobs by 2030
  - Energy Efficiency (buildings) could support 150,000 jobs by 2030
  - Zero emission vehicles could support 40,000 jobs by 2030

  (refs: UK Govt Energy White Paper; Energy Efficiency Infrastructure Group)

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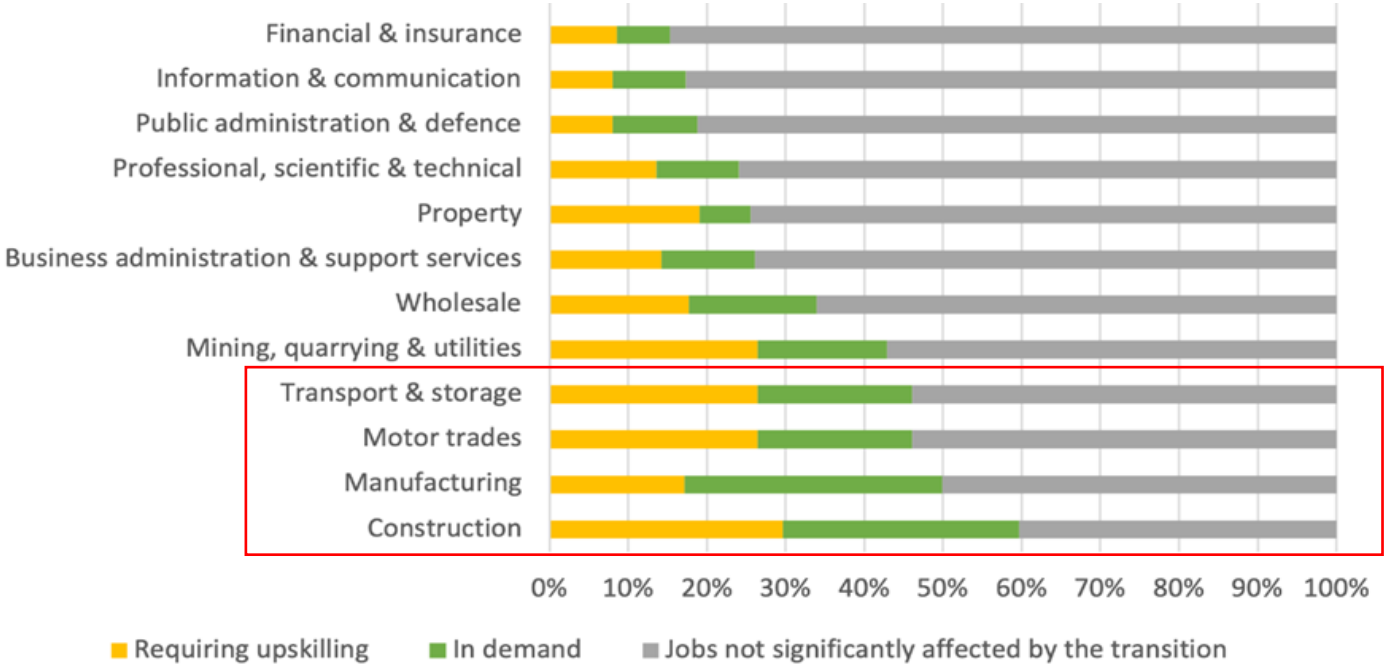
Opportunities and also Risks

One of the most significant risks posed is that of Skills Gaps. Jobs in carbon intensive industries (such as gas) are likely to disappear, whilst jobs in low-carbon industries will scale up.

- Research indicates that one in five workers, and 6.3 million jobs in total, will be affected by the transition to net-zero.



(ref: Just Jobs Tracker, Place-Based Climate Action Network)

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Jobs requiring upskilling

Here in North Tyneside it is predicted that **over 8000 jobs** will require upskilling, with a similar number shifting from low to high demand.

Local authority (district/unitary)	Jobs requiring upskilling	Jobs in demand
Darlington	4795	4568
County Durham	18140	20089
Hartlepool	2874	3033
Middlesbrough	5265	4921
Northumberland	10652	11018
Redcar and Cleveland	4245	4358
Stockton-on-Tees	9925	10478
Gateshead	10435	10726
Newcastle upon Tyne	15188	14095
North Tyneside	8153	8201
South Tyneside	4298	4362
Sunderland	13057	14370

Our ambition in North Tyneside should be to lead our region in readying the skills pipeline we need for the green jobs of the future.

(ref: Just Jobs Tracker, Place-Based Climate Action Network)

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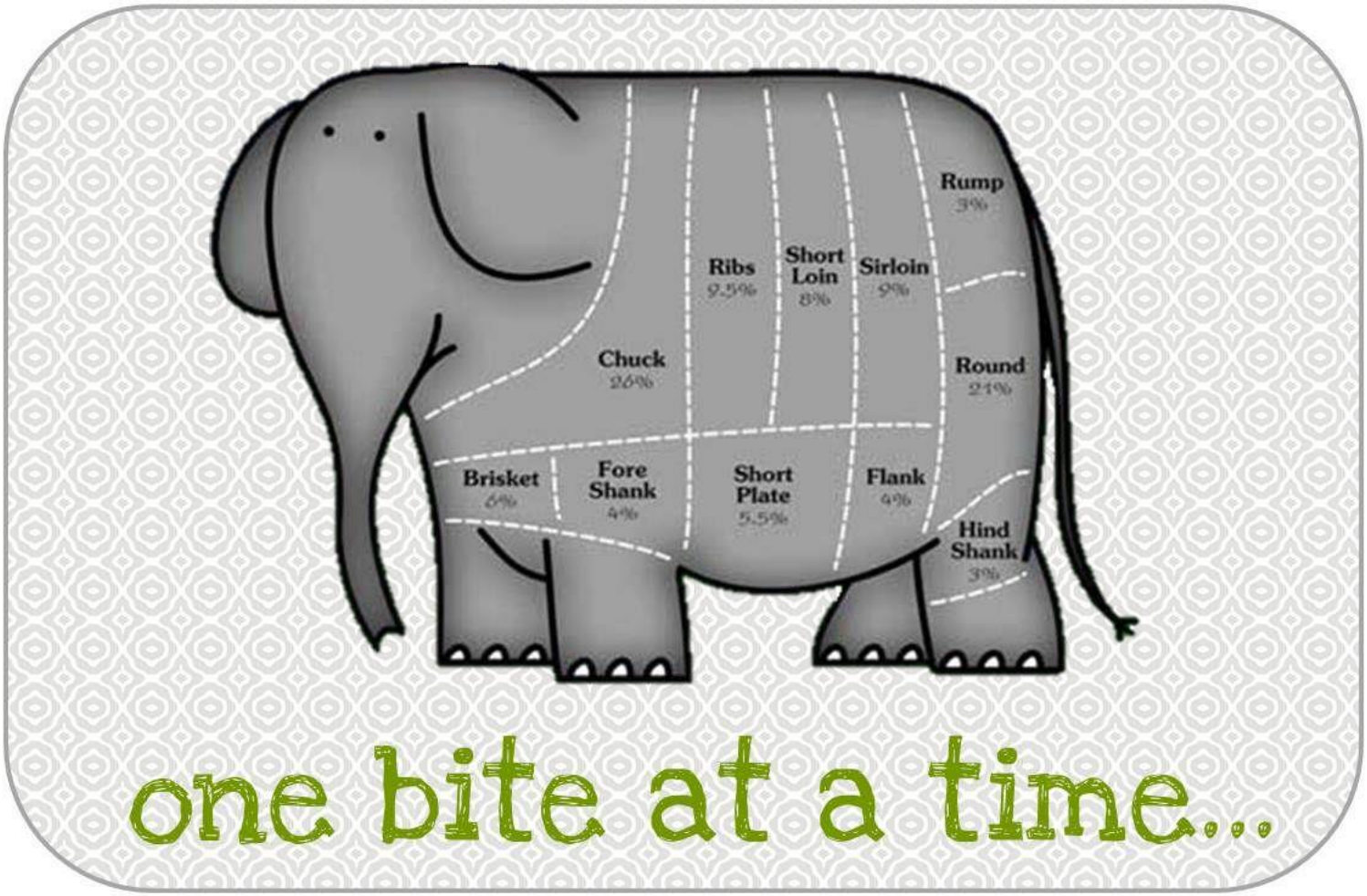
Eating the Net Zero elephant



Energy Efficient Buildings

The bit of the elephant this policy focuses on is the energy efficiency of buildings: the steps required to ensure buildings in the borough have the lowest possible carbon emissions.

- The technologies and materials required to make existing buildings more energy efficient already exist.
- The process of adapting existing buildings to benefit from these new technologies and materials is known as "**retrofitting**".
- There are two main technical tasks involved:
  1) **Upgrading the building's insulation and ventilation**
  2) **Switching energy source from gas to green electricity**
- Attempting step 2 before completing step 1 will likely do more harm than good. The two steps belong to a joined up process.
- An energy-efficient building uses less energy, more smartly, with less energy wasted.
- This makes both practical and economic sense.

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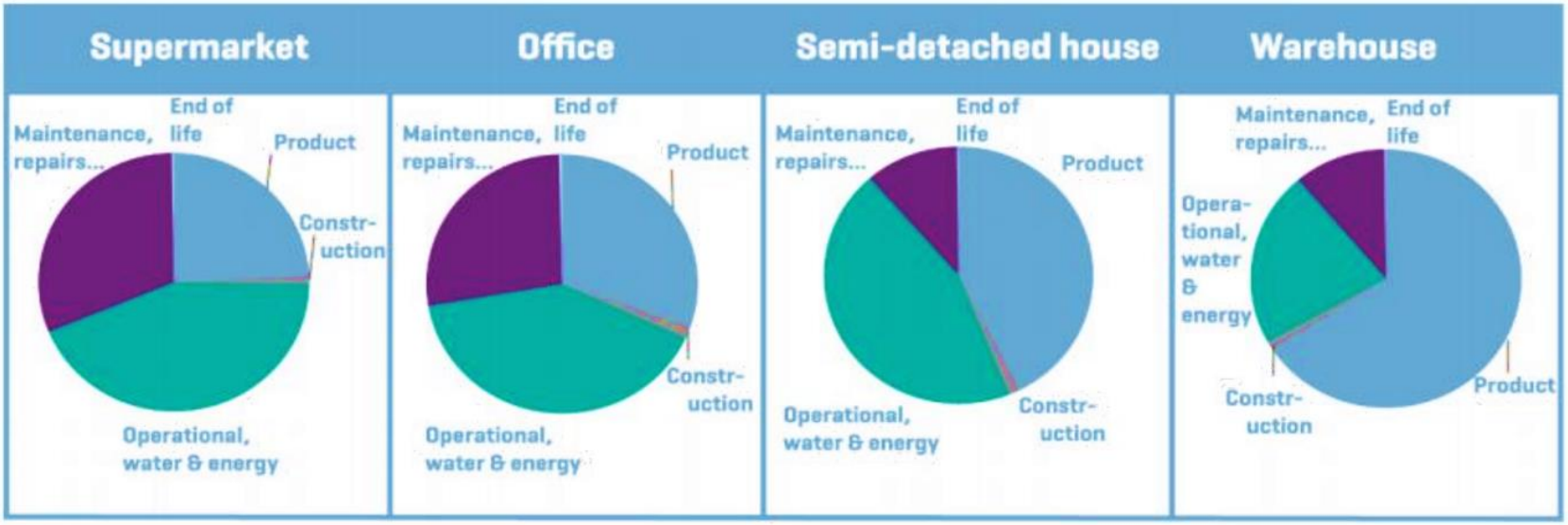
Embodied carbon

"Why don't we just knock down all these draughty old buildings and replace them with energy-efficient alternatives?"

- Depending on building type, by the time a building is occupied somewhere between 30% and 70% of its lifetime carbon may already have been accounted for.
  (ref Crown Estates, Reducing Embodied Carbon in Buildings, 2015)



Getting ready to retrofit homes

BEIS has acknowledged that “the built environment will need to be almost completely decarbonised by 2050… through a mix of energy efficiency and a transition to low carbon heat.”

- The North of Tyne Housing & Land Board recently published a framework for a “retrofit programme at scale” with **an initial focus is the domestic market**
- Its emphasis is on reducing fuel poverty stating that, across the North of Tyne geography, over 40% of domestic properties do not meet the EPC C standard of energy efficiency.
- **Summary:** Large-scale retrofitting of the domestic and non-domestic building stock in North Tyneside is required, but:
  a) The skilled workforce does not exist in the numbers required
  b) Longer-term market development is needed
- We must prioritise retrofitting as a strategic task, and prepare for the market shifting (post COP 2021).

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Non-domestic retrofitting

The NoT HLB framework also acknowledges there is a huge challenge in retrofitting non-domestic public and private sector property, including but not limited to:

- Administration buildings
- Libraries
- Leisure centres (wet and dry)
- Depots and industrial estates
- Commercial office spaces
- Customer service centres
- Cultural buildings
- Retail and hospitality spaces

Many of these buildings are intensive consumers of fossil fuels, equivalent to whole streets of housing.

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A North Tyneside ‘Retrofit Academy’

We must ensure a pipeline of local labour, rather than importing skills into the borough from further afield.

- We have to stimulate the local training market so that the required skills, qualifications and accreditations can be taught to our residents by North Tyneside-based providers.
  - In this way the borough will maximise local economic benefit.
- **We can label this a North Tyneside ‘Retrofit Academy’**
- It may not be a physical place (although it could be)
- It would be expected to create skills pathways for:
  - young people at post-16 before entering the jobs market
  - adults requiring reskilling from a career with diminishing prospects
  - adults upskilling within their existing field of expertise to progress to higher level opportunities

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Funding possibilities

North Tyneside Council has multiple opportunities to access funding in pursuit of this policy:

1.	Green Homes Grant:	£3.2m - secured
2.	Sustainable Warmth Grant	£4.2m - applied
3.	UK Community Renewal Fund	£TBC - in process
4.	UK Shared Prosperity Fund	£1.5bn - total pot
5.	NoT Green New Deal Fund	£9m - total pot
6.	NoT Adult Education Budget	£23m - total pot
7.	NoT Skills for Growth Programme	£2m - total pot

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Summary

- We should view the Net Zero agenda in terms of adding value to our economy, rather than in terms of cost to our bottom line.
- We have to respond to the economic opportunities and risks posed by the Green Transition
- We have an opportunity to get ahead of the coming market shift to decarbonize buildings
- We should begin working up firmer proposals for what form our Retrofit Academy will take, setting targets for the number of people to be trained and set to work

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Thank you ☺

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