



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING



Social Partnership

South Tyneside Council

South Tyneside Pledge

The South Tyneside Pledge is a South Tyneside Partnership-led Community Wealth Building initiative which has brought together organisations located in South Tyneside around a commitment to think proactively about what practical steps they can take to help the local area to thrive. It's aim is to focus minds across both the public and private sector on small decisions which can have a real local impact.

Focusing on nine specific activities, the Pledge asks organisations to commit to 'Spend', 'Recruit', and 'Support' South Tyneside.

In terms of 'Spend', this includes helping to 'maximise the South Tyneside Pound' by increasing the proportion of procurement spent locally or in the wider area, support local small businesses to bid for opportunities and participate in supply chains, and encourage employees to contribute to the local economy by spending, shopping, eating and visiting local businesses.

In terms of 'Recruit', the focus is on organisations consciously hiring locally and advertising and offering career opportunities to local residents (with a particularly focus on groups such as Care Leavers and those with learning difficulties), as well as on supporting employees and promoting employee wellbeing.

In terms of 'Support', focuses specified in the Pledge include encouraging employees to volunteer locally, contributing to climate change mitigation activities and carbon reduction targets, and engaging actively with local green spaces and cultural offer.

The Pledge has been heavily promoted to local organisations. Those interested are invited to register their details online and officially sign up to the 'pledge'. Importantly, it's an ongoing pledge, with those signing up asked, twice a year, to show what they are doing to meet the Pledge's nine commitments. However, from the start South Tyneside Council and partners were keen to ensure that it was not an onerous task for organisations (particularly for SMEs). Therefore 'Pledgees' do not have to meet all the nine commitments and it is a choice on what they prioritise; this means that the Pledge is flexible and agile, allowing a large multinational (of which there are a number signed up) to focus on areas such as volunteering and local recruitment and less on local procurement which can be more difficult if part of a large global corporate organisation.

The Pledge is managed, championed and monitored by the 'South Tyneside Partnership', the local partnership forum that brings together Council, NHS, business and third sector representatives, and its sub-board, the economic-growth-focused Economic Regeneration Board. The Boards play a key role in reviewing bi-annual feedback from Pledge participants around what they are doing to meet the Pledge, and compiling and sharing best practice, advice and information to help all participants go further with their commitment.

This feedback also helps the Council and other involved partners both design and communicate relevant information and opportunities to Pledge signatories and design initiatives. These range from providing toolkits around climate change and advice how to engage with schools around skills and careers opportunities, to developing and offering dedicated South Tyneside Business Week events on how to make the most of the Pledge.



Cllr Ruth Berkley with Inspire's Charlotte Harrison, Stuart Sharpe from Colloide Engineering System and Elena Dickson from Dicksons at Boldon CA's warm space.

Established in January 2022, the Pledge has already seen over 165 organisations (big and small, public and private and across sectors) sign up; they are making a huge difference to our local economy (through driving more local spend), our residents (by offering job opportunities, work experience and careers talks), our workers (by driving better health at work), our communities (through more volunteering) and our planet (through a focus on climate change).

Pledgees range from large organisations such as the Council, NHS Foundation Trust, Tyne Coast College, Port of Tyne, and Hitachi and Equinor through to key local firms and voluntary organisations like Dicksons, Shower Pass UK, Wealth of Advice, HTG, HLA Services, and Hebburn and South Shields Football Clubs.

As Leader of the Council, Councillor Tracey Dixon, explained:

"South Tyneside is known for its sense of community and civic pride and its business community is no different. The Pledge has encouraged organisations to look at their own practices and see what more they can do to support the borough. As individual organisations we can only do so much, but collectively, with a common set of objectives, we can make a real difference.

"Be it Cell Pack engaging with local schools, Northern Rights taking on young people, Tyne Coast College working with local employers, Turttons fundraising for Hospitality & Hope, Far North banging the drum for micro businesses across the borough, Goldfinch encouraging staff and others to make use of our fabulous beaches and green spaces, Torgensens working with local suppliers or Glendale buying local trees - the list goes on and on.

"By signing the Pledge, organisations, big or small are saying that they will do all they can to spend, recruit and support our local area and bring about positive change to help us meet our 20-year vision ambitions."

The impact of the Pledge is already being felt; over 17 organisations are now doing more local volunteering with many others expressing an interest; 10 organisations signed up to the Better Health at Work Award; more than 10 organisations increasing their use of local suppliers; nearly 20 organisations giving talks in schools, providing work experience or attending careers fairs; over 50 new apprenticeships created from Pledgees; and more than 10 Pledge organisations expanding their presence in South Tyneside over the past year.

There are plans to continue to drive the community wealth building approach enshrined in the Pledge in 2023 including more networking events (a Pledge networking event in January had over 50 attendees and over 100 more online), further support for Pledgees and using the Pledge to push more of a focus upon fair work and fair payment terms.

We believe there is real scope to help boost sustainable and inclusive growth through the Pledge and help the borough achieve its ambition of 'Our South Tyneside – A place where people live healthy, happy and fulfilled lives.'

Links:

- South Tyneside Pledge overview: <https://investsouthtyneside.com/why-south-tyneside/south-tyneside-pledge/>

- Case studies: <https://investsouthtyneside.com/pledge-case-study/>
 - Ways the Council and partner are supporting Pledges: <https://investsouthtyneside.com/why-south-tyneside/south-tyneside-pledge/pledge-ways-to-get-involved/>
 - Link of Pledges: <https://investsouthtyneside.com/why-south-tyneside/south-tyneside-pledge/pledge-organisations/>
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