



PRESS RELEASE – Thursday 24th June 2010

NORTH WEST DROUGHT RISK ILLUSTRATES CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION CHALLENGE

Leading planning and sustainable development charity, the Town and Country Planning Association^[1] (TCPA), has added its concerns to the water shortages in the North-West of England.^[2]

Diane Smith, GRaBS (Green and Blue Space Adaptation in Urban Areas and Eco-towns)^[3] Project Manager said:

“Adapting our towns and cities to the impacts of climate change is one of the greatest challenges society faces today. The floods in Cockermouth illustrated the social and economic impacts of this urgent threat, particularly on the most vulnerable in our society. The water shortages now being experienced demonstrate the extreme variation in the impacts of climate change.”

“The adaptation agenda has profound implications for urban development. Innovative spatial planning will be critical in introducing the measures required to help make our urban areas less vulnerable to a changing climate – measures such as green open space, green roofs, and sustainable urban drainage systems. Planning can, and must, address these issues if we are to achieve a fair and just outcome for all as well as resilient places.”

The TCPA is Lead Partner in a European funded “Green and Blue Space Adaptation for Urban Areas and Eco Towns” (GRaBS) project – which sees 14 partners across 8 European Union member states exchanging experience, knowledge and assistance on

delivering adaptation through the use of green and blue infrastructure. The project kicked off in September 2008, recognising that adaptation was an integral part of the sustainable development agenda, and its outputs have been central to the TCPA's understanding of the issues. See www.grabs-eu.org for further information about the project, which has been co-financed by the European Union Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and made possible by the INTERREG IVC Programme^[4].

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Notes to Editors

1. The **Town and Country Planning Association** (TCPA) is an independent campaigning charity calling for more integrated planning based on the principles of accessibility, sustainability, diversity, and community cohesion. The TCPA puts social justice and the environment at the heart of the debate about planning policy, housing and energy supply. We inspire government, industry and campaigners to take a fresh perspective on major issues including climate change and regeneration. www.tcpa.org.uk.
2. This press release is in response to the story featured in the **Guardian Online** 24th June 2010, '**Drought risk hits Cumbria just months after floods**' for the full story please click here: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jun/24/drought-north-west-england>
3. **History of the GRaBS project proposal** - Working with the two initial partners in the early part of 2007, the TCPA developed an outline GRaBS project proposal, which was presented to UK local and regional government in order to gauge interest in and relevance of both the project idea and the proposed European wide exchange of experience and knowledge. The TCPA decided to offer to take on the Lead Partner role for the new project and together with the **University of Manchester**, the **City District Geuzenveld Sloterveer** (Amsterdam), the **London Borough of Sutton** and **Southampton City Council** began the process of extended European partner search. The aim was to find partners with a range of

interests, cultures, experiences and needs, located in a range of climate zones. Towards the end of 2007 the **Province of Genova, Etnambiente**, the **University of Catania** (Italy), the **City of Malmo** (Sweden), the **Municipality of Kalamaria** (Greece), the **Regional Environment Centre for Eastern Europe** (Slovakia), the **Northwest Regional Development Agency** (NWDA), the **Region of Styria** (Austria) and **CORPI** (Lithuania) joined the project as partners.

4. **INTERREG IVC Programme** – the INTERREG IVC Programme is financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), part of the European Territorial Cooperation Objective of the Structural Fund policies for the period 2007-2013. It aims, by means of interregional cooperation, to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and contribute to economic modernisation and increased competitiveness of Europe.