

North Tyneside officially a Fairtrade borough

The Fairtrade Foundation speaks of its “absolute pleasure to learn of all that’s been going on in North Tyneside”!

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North Tyneside is officially a 'Fairtrade borough' - recognising its understanding of Fairtrade and support for Fairtrade products.

The announcement comes at the start of the second week of Fairtrade fortnight, and was made by Elected Mayor John Harrison at a special Fairtrade business breakfast held at North Tyneside's Quadrant headquarters - where members of the local business community met with two visiting Ghanaian farmers whose communities have been helped hugely by the Fairtrade movement.

Fairtrade is an international movement that helps producers and workers in developing countries receive a fair price for their products and millions of farming communities around the world benefit directly and indirectly from Fairtrade practices.

Cllr Norma Redfearn, who has been instrumental in leading the borough towards the achievement of Fairtrade status, said: "This borough is now a place where we have raised awareness of Fairtrade and where residents can have access to a range of Fairtrade products. We are absolutely delighted by this announcement, particularly as it comes during Fairtrade Fortnight. It justifiably recognises the hard work that businesses, members of the community, schools and others have put in to achieve this."

"I hope this announcement will kick-start even more good work with Fairtrade in the future."

In July last year, North Tyneside Council made a commitment to make North Tyneside a Fairtrade borough. The commitment was pledge number three of the councils 5, 50, 500 environmental campaign - which promised to fulfil 5 environmental pledges and 50 environmental promises in 500 days.

To become a Fairtrade borough, it needed to achieve five goals laid down by the Fairtrade Foundation. These were:

- The council must pass a resolution to support Fairtrade and agree to serve Fairtrade tea and coffee at its meetings and in its offices and canteens.
- A range of at least two Fairtrade products should be readily available in shops, local cafes and other catering establishments.
- Fairtrade products should be used by a number of local workplaces and community organisations, including churches and schools.
- There needs to be popular support for the campaign.
- A local Fairtrade steering group should be set up to ensure continued commitment to the Fairtrade status of the borough.

Hannah Reed from the Fairtrade Foundation said: "It has been an absolute pleasure to learn of all that's been going on in North Tyneside and the panel were very impressed by the amount that has been achieved. A great deal of work and dedication has obviously been put in over the past year which we hope will further enhance and create a focus for the long-standing activity, outreach and educational work by fair trade pioneers in the North East."