



Chartered  
Institute of  
Environmental  
Health

# Protecting and improving our Economy, Health and Environments

Priorities for the next Northern  
Ireland Assembly 2016 – 2021



April 2016

## Environmental Health in Northern Ireland

Working in all sectors and across a range of services, environmental health professionals engage with the public and businesses to foster safe and sustainable communities. They are on the frontline of resilience against national or local threats, such as climate change, natural disasters and human or animal disease. In addition, they contribute to protecting our borders through the port health service from contaminated foodstuffs, disease and emerging threats. Their interventions cover whole lives, from infancy to old age.

Although the vast majority of their work is often unseen and therefore often unrecognised, it is key not only to health and wellbeing but also key to the economy, including the reputation of our food and drink and tourism industries.

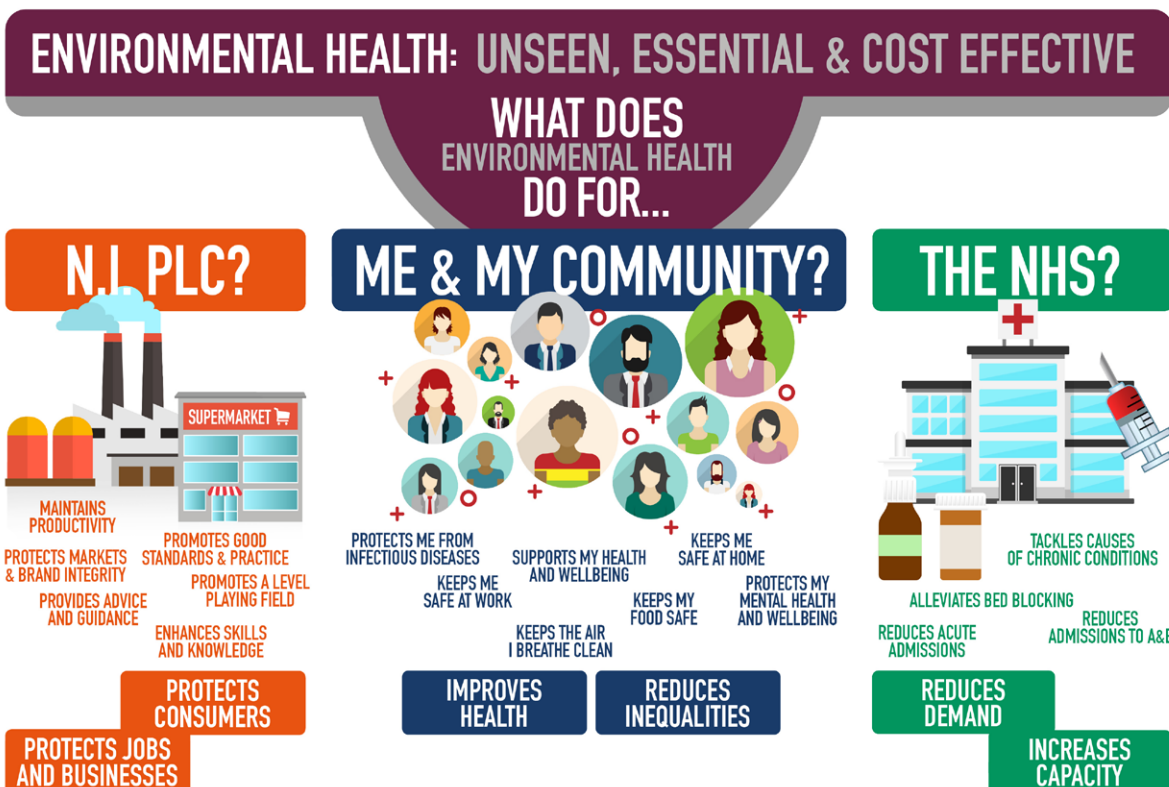
Environmental health professionals work to ensure that people have safe and nutritious food to eat and contribute significantly to the global reputation of NI food and drink both abroad through exports, as well as the growing

reputation of the domestic retail and catering sectors – particularly pertinent this year given that 2016 is the NI Year of Food and Drink.

They also work to ensure people have safe, warm and decent homes to live in, often for the most vulnerable in our society, and that the public are protected from infectious diseases and factors in the environment detrimental to their health and wellbeing. Health and Safety is another important area of their work, ensuring that people are not at risk of injury or illness at their places of work as well as keeping places of public entertainment and major sporting events safe.

All of these functions which seek to prevent ill health also pay dividends by reducing the burden on increasingly stretched health services.

The infographic shown below illustrates the significant contribution that environmental health makes to our economy, our communities and health and wellbeing.



# Key Environmental Health Priorities for the NI Assembly 2016 – 2021

## RESOURCES

- Ensure that local government is not subjected to the same kind of budgetary cuts that have compromised public protection in the rest of the UK so that the environmental health service continues to protect the lives and improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities and support the NI economy.

## LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME

- Ensure the inclusion of a Public Health Bill within the legislative programme of the next Assembly that incorporates the recommendations made in the DHSSPS report issued March 2016. This should ensure a comprehensive legislative framework to ensure an all hazards approach. Report available [here](#)
- A Climate Bill, setting clear targets for climate change mitigation and also adaptation to the unavoidable impacts of climate change, introducing 'climate-proofing' across public policy.
- Introduce a modern, appropriate, risk based housing fitness standard along with mandatory licensing for all tenancies and in so doing ensure adequate protection for some of the most vulnerable in our society.

## POLICY ISSUES

- Comprehensive adoption of the precautionary principle in relation to all unconventional oil and gas planning applications.
- A full and proper debate regarding governance arrangements for environmental protection.
- Embed an appropriate sustainability standard into all public institutional catering as a requirement in the interests of dietary health, our local economy, animal welfare and good environmental stewardship.
- Support student placements across the public and private sectors to ensure a sustainable workforce with appropriate skills.

## What is the CIEH and what do we do

The CIEH is a Royal Chartered professional body dedicated to safeguarding and improving health and wellbeing, in the UK and internationally. As well as setting and upholding standards of professional conduct, The CIEH is active in education and vocational training and in supporting professional development and competency, maintaining standards and conducting campaigns and research.

### Our Unique proposition

We are a charity, with a Royal Charter dedicated to advancing the cause of improved environmental health for public benefit through our stakeholders' activities and those of our members. Profits generated by our activity are used to support our continuance and sustainability. We are a true professional social enterprise.

### Our Core values

The CIEH is committed to:

- Openness, fairness, honesty, trust, integrity, equality, equity and accessibility in all its dealings.
- The pursuit of knowledge competence and excellence.
- The pursuit of sustainable development.
- Working with and through others.



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