



Worcestershire County Council's Sustainability Policy

Worcestershire County Council is committed to the principles of sustainability set out in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005:

- **Living within environmental limits**
- **Ensuring a strong, healthy & just society**
- **Achieving a sustainable economy**
- **Promoting good governance**
- **Using sound science responsibly**

These principles underpin the County Council's Corporate Plan 2009-13, particularly the 'Green Futures' section of the Plan, and we aim to integrate them across all of our work to improve quality of life for all the County's diverse communities. We will strive to ensure that the decisions we make are for the long-term benefit of Worcestershire's communities and take into account the impacts on the local and global environment.

We will demonstrate this commitment by:

- **Continuously improving** our environmental, social and economic performance to maximise our positive and minimise our adverse effects on the environment and society, whilst complying with all relevant legislation and regulations.
- **Actively encouraging and monitoring** responsible environmental, social and economical performance by our suppliers and contractors as well as **raising awareness** of and encouraging action for sustainability amongst staff, councillors, partners and the general public.
- **Fulfilling our role as a partner to deliver:**
 - The **UK Climate Change Programme**, reducing CO₂ emissions and planning for climate change adaptation. Ultimately achieving targets set within the Worcestershire Partnership Climate Change Strategy and the Council's Carbon Management Plan 2011 – 2016.
 - The **England Biodiversity Strategy** by actively seeking to halt the loss of biodiversity within the County.

In particular we will;

1) **Promote sustainable development at a strategic level within Worcestershire County Council**

- Develop ways to ensure strategies, policies and services for which we are responsible take account of their impact on local and global environmental, economic and social well-being.
- Raise awareness of councillors and managers at all levels of sustainability and their role in promoting and monitoring performance on sustainability.
- Facilitate cross directorate working on sustainability issues with support from the Council's network of Sustainability Stewards and Sustainability Champions.
- Integrate equality of opportunity and respect for diversity into all aspects of the Council's activity.
- Encourage citizens' participation and involvement on issues that affect them.

***Sustainability in Worcestershire - See the Bigger Picture
April 2011***

2) Lead by example in addressing the Council's operational impacts on the community and environment;

- Continuously improve the Council's performance and strive to achieve best practice principles in the following areas:
 - Resource efficiency – energy, water, materials, supplies, assets
 - Reduction of CO₂ emissions
 - Reduce reliance on fossil fuels
 - Reduce staff travel by private car
 - Waste prevention, reduction, reuse and recycling
 - Sustainable construction and refurbishment of council property
 - Protection and enhancement of biodiversity
 - Prevention of pollution
 - Ensure services and assets are resilient to the impacts of climate change
- Action the Council's Procurement Code and Sustainable Procurement commitments to promote sustainability by:
 - including consideration of environmental and social alongside economic issues in procurement and investment decisions;
 - seeking appropriate opportunities for local sourcing to support the local economy and reduce transport impacts;
 - using recycled or renewable materials and supplies where possible;
 - offering and raising awareness of Fairtrade food and drink products, in line with the Council's Fairtrade Policy;
 - raising staff awareness of environmental, social and ethical issues at work and at home.

3) Promote sustainable development throughout the County;

- Work with schools, colleges and other organisations to develop awareness of & action on sustainability by Worcestershire's citizens.
- Help Worcestershire's citizens to adopt more sustainable lifestyles.
- Influence the Worcestershire Partnership to ensure that policies and decisions reflect the Partnership's core values.
- Help to improve the environmental and social performance of Worcestershire's businesses.
- Encourage the development of a sustainable low carbon local economy including the promotion of social enterprises and enterprises based on environmentally sustainable technologies through the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- Help to ensure the County is resilient to the impacts of climate change and the County's reliance on fossil fuels is reduced.

Worcestershire County Council will regularly report on progress and review this policy.