



2008-2009  
Tackling Climate Change

## Internal Awareness on Sustainability & Climate Change at Worcestershire County Council

### Strategic Framework

Worcestershire County Council's Sustainability Policy and Action Plan includes a commitment to:

- Raise awareness of councillors and managers of sustainability and their role in promoting and monitoring performance on sustainability.
- Raise staff awareness of environmental, social and ethical issues at work and at home.

The council's corporate sustainability performance indicators include targets on councillor engagement (% attending briefing sessions on sustainability) and staff training (% attending staff sustainability course).

See [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sustainability](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sustainability) for the full sustainability policy and action plan.

### Sustainability Stewards

The corporate Sustainability Stewards group consists of at least one senior officer from each directorate and a Member Champion from each political party represented on the Council. Their role is to ensure that sustainability is mainstreamed into the Council's work, such as through the ongoing development and delivery of the Sustainability Policy and Action Plan and by providing information and guidance on sustainability issues within their service areas.

### Sustainability Training

All eligible staff are encouraged to attend the 'Wicked Issues- Introduction to Sustainability' course. The one-day course is held at Bishops Wood Centre (right) and aims to help delegates find ways to integrate sustainability into the way they carry out their jobs and live their lives. The day includes a variety of activities including:

- A sustainability quiz and an eco-foot printing exercise.
- A community planning exercise.
- A walkabout to explore environmental features at the Centre, such as solar water heating, use of recycled building materials and a turf roof.
- Producing a personal sustainability action plan for work and home.



More than 600 staff have attended the course since it began.

Briefing sessions have also been held for elected Members, to raise awareness about current work on sustainability & climate change and how they can get more involved.

### Directorate Schemes

Directorates are integrating sustainability into their own business plans and developing schemes to take the work forward. Information on the schemes is shared between directorates through the Sustainability Stewards.



A Green Champions scheme has been set up in the Adult & Community Services directorate. A member of staff from each of the directorate's offices and establishments (e.g. Day Care Centres and Homes for Older People) has been identified to act as a Green Champion. Their role is to help the directorate's sustainability steward in promoting sustainability. Training workshops have been held to assist them, covering topics such as IT, waste & energy at work & service user involvement.

The Environmental Services directorate is running a series of workshops covering the issues of Peak Oil and climate change mitigation and adaptation. A selection of staff suggestions for action are to be taken forward through the directorate's own action plans.

### Eco-audits

An eco-audit was developed for use throughout county council premises. The audit covers a range of topics, including waste reduction, reuse and recycling, energy and water use, purchasing, transport and biodiversity. Carrying out the audit helps to raise awareness about what is already happening and what more could be done, as well as enabling teams to produce their own locality action plans.

## Themed Campaigns

Worcestershire County Council has run a variety of campaigns to raise staff awareness about sustainability and climate change issues- at work and at home- including the examples below.

### Home Energy Efficiency

A number of energy efficiency events have been held at various council premises, in conjunction with the local Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, through their Energy Efficiency Scheme for Employers & Employees (EESEE). Staff are invited to complete a Home Energy Check and receive a free personalised energy report and energy saving gift in return. This also provides an opportunity for them to seek advice on home insulation, energy efficient boilers and other measures. These events have proved to be very popular with staff.



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### Mini Farmers Markets

A mini Farmers Market was held at the council's HQ County Hall in October 2004, as part of a campaign to raise awareness about the environmental, economic and health benefits of purchasing local food. It proved so popular- amongst staff and the producers- that it became a regular monthly event. Four or five producers from the local farmers market group have a stall at the events, which take place during the staff lunch break. In addition, monthly markets are now also held in another council office building. The Worcestershire Farmers Market Group are also piloting mini markets at other sites.



### Switch It Off campaign

Each year, Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Coventry councils run a joint Switch It Off campaign. Workplaces, schools and households are encouraged to save energy and money by switching off unnecessary lights and appliances. Examples of activities include:

**Workplaces (including council offices)** : website and newsletter stories, use of posters, leaflets & stickers, promotion at events, email messages and pledge activities.

**Schools:** completing 2 energy checks: one top secret in a normal week and the second during the SIO week.

**Households:** Council staff were loaned a portable energy monitor and asked to keep a record of their findings.



Electricity use during the campaign is monitored by Central Networks. In 2007, for example, there was a 74MW drop in electricity use in the region on the Friday evening- the focal point of the campaign- compared to the previous day, equivalent to 15,416 typical three-bed detached houses turning off all their power for one year. The campaign also received a lot of positive media coverage, with some local newspapers running their own Switch It Off promotions and competitions. See: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/switchitoff](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/switchitoff)

### Waste minimisation

**Publicising initiatives to reduce office waste e.g.:**

Not in the Bin facility for reuse of office stationery etc.

Office recycling and removal of individual bins.

On-site food waste composting.

Measures to cut paper use (a performance indicator).

**Promoting work to reduce domestic waste to staff:**

Cut price compost bins promoted on payslip envelopes.

Win a Wormery competition promoted by leaving a jelly worm sweet on desks along with further information.

Displays on initiatives such as recycling collections, jilt the junk mail & reusable nappies, with relevant officers on hand during lunch breaks to help with any queries.

### Sustainable Transport

Campaigns and ongoing promotion, e.g. by offering:

- Individual travel planning for staff.
- Free or cut price bus tickets.
- Designated parking spaces for car sharers.
- Opportunities to try out electric bikes.
- Free breakfasts and prize draws for staff who cycle during bike to work week.
- Free bicycle servicing.
- Lockers, showers and parking for cyclists.
- Free pedometers for staff who walk to work.
- Participation in a local car club.
- More flexible working & home working options.

### Other activities have included:

- A biodiversity quiz for staff.
- Water hippo giveaways.
- Guided lunchtime tours (e.g. of local managed woodlands, council buildings with renewable energy features).
- Participation in Fairtrade Fort-night & World Environment Day

### Communications used include:

- Staff intranet & newsletters
- Inductions
- Displays
- Competitions & quizzes
- Surveys
- Email networks
- DVD showings & talks
- Interactive events

### For further information:

Visit the website  
[www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sustainability](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sustainability)  
or contact Liz Alston,  
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