

Tackling Climate Change through the Worcestershire Local Strategic Partnership

The Worcestershire Partnership works to tackle climate change in two key ways:

- Development and delivery of a climate change strategy and associated initiatives through an LSP sub-group.
- Integration of climate change into LSP work areas (Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement etc).

How does it work in Worcestershire?

Set-up

The Climate Change Group is part of the LSP's Environment Group but works across the partnership.

Partners

Partners in the Climate Change Group include county and district councils, the local Chamber of Commerce, Energy Advice Centre, University, Fire Service and Wildlife Trust amongst others. The Group has an independent Chair; delivery is led by the County Council's Sustainability Officer.

Reporting

The Climate Change Group reports to the Environment group quarterly. An annual progress report is taken to the Partnership Board, which has endorsed the Climate Change Group's work.

Communications

A website, monthly newsletter and occasional conferences are all used to communicate the work. Questions on climate change are included in the Citizens' Panel Survey, which goes to 2,000 Worcestershire households.



Key points include:

Strong partnership working in place.

Providing a means for partners to make a public commitment to carrying out specific actions via the Worcestershire Climate Change Pledge.

Endorsement by the LSP Board.

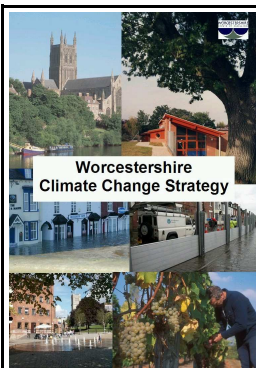
Reporting mechanisms in place.

Co-ordination of work by a dedicated lead officer.

Addressing economic, social and environmental aspects of mitigation and climate change impacts.

The likelihood of more frequent flooding in an already flood prone area is one key driver!

Key areas of work include:



Climate Change Strategy

Overall objectives:

Raise awareness about climate change issues.

Reduce emissions of climate change gases in the county.

Assist in adaptation to the impacts of climate change.



Climate Change Pledge

How it works:

An organisation, community group or business chooses pledge actions to sign up to.

Action topics include energy, transport, waste, impact assessment, procurement and awareness.

Each action is assigned 1, 2 or 3 stars depending on it's complexity.

Signatories report on their progress each year.

Worcestershire Climate Change Impacts Study

Detailed report looking at:

How Worcestershire's climate has already changed and is expected to change in the future.



Likely impacts for different sectors including the built and natural environment, industry & commerce and the public services.

Worcestershire's Local Area Agreement (2006-09)

The LAA includes an outcome to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change with targets to:

Reduce energy use in Worcestershire households.

Increase those benefiting from Warmfront grants.

Increase partner organisations with a Carbon Management Programme.



Key steps along the way



Worcestershire County Council signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. This included a commitment to work with the local community to address climate change issues.



The first Worcestershire Community Strategy was launched. It included a vision of 'A better environment- for today and for our children' and an action to 'Develop a Climate Change Plan for the County that contributes towards national and international actions tackling the causes and effects of climate change.'

Conference held: 'Towards a Climate Change Strategy for Worcestershire.' Representatives from a variety of organisations took part, including the health and emergency services, private businesses, environmental organisations and local councils. They identified actions to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change in Worcestershire for inclusion in the strategy.



Task Group formed to develop the Worcestershire Climate Change Strategy & Pledge.

The group included representatives from a range of organisations and reported to the Worcestershire Partnership Environment Group (a sub group of the LSP). The aim of the strategy was to provide an overarching framework for both climate change mitigation and adaptation work in the county. The pledge aimed to enable organisations to sign up to specific actions to tackle climate change.

Worcestershire Climate Change Impacts Study carried out.

Launch of the Worcestershire Climate Change Strategy and Pledge at the Worcestershire Assembly, the main annual event for all LSP partners.



Strategy and Pledge endorsed by the Worcestershire Partnership Board.

All Board member organisations were strongly encouraged to sign up to the pledge.

Conference held: Getting to Grips With Climate Change- How Can my Organisation Tackle the Challenge of Climate Change? Presentations and workshops based on the strategy & pledge.



Worcestershire's first Local Area Agreement includes outcomes on addressing climate change.



Worcestershire Partnership Annual Assembly climate change/sustainable development is made the main theme of the 2007 conference. Around 200 delegates participated in workshops/ presentations on climate change.

Worcestershire Local Climate Impacts Profile produced to help increase the understanding of vulnerability of services to extreme weather events.

Next steps...



Climate Change Task Group reconvened to review the strategy.

Worcestershire Sustainable Community Strategy undergoing review, climate change is expected to be included as a key cross cutting theme.

Negotiations on the next LAA underway – it is expected that indicators on climate change adaptation and mitigation will be included.

For further information, see www.worcestershire.gov.uk/climatechange or contact Worcestershire County Council's Sustainability Officer, Liz Alston on 01905 766745 or email ealston@worcestershire.gov.uk