

Environment Strategy 2009 - 2020

1. Our vision

Leicestershire County Council will be one of the best performing Councils in England on environmental issues by the end of 2012. This will be because the authority has:

- Developed an aware and proactive culture on environmental issues amongst staff
- A complete understanding of its environmental risks and impacts
- Integrated environmental risk management into its service planning process
- Identified a simple, yet comprehensive performance management framework for its environmental management
- Engaged constructively with its supply chain to improve its resource efficiency and environmental performance
- Evidence of the positive outcomes that have been achieved for the environment

2. Background

Leicestershire County Council has an existing commitment to the environment through the authority's Environment Strategy 2004 -10. This revision of the strategy is designed to reflect the outcomes of a recent Scrutiny Panel review of the Council's Environmental Policies and Programmes, the changing agenda in environmental management for local government and has also included a review of the authority's environmental risks. This has provided the authority with a systematic understanding of its impacts and risks to the environment and has identified priorities for action. This strategy therefore focuses on the environmental impacts of Leicestershire County Council in delivering services and is not a strategy for Leicestershire.

3. Why do we need a new environment strategy?

We need a new environment strategy to:

- Provide community leadership and to show that we have "our own house in order"
- Support the outcomes of the Leicestershire Sustainable Community Strategy
- Improve our resource efficiency and be a prudent organisation
- Reflect the wishes of our staff - only 58.9% agreed with the statement "I believe that the Council is doing enough to reduce its impact on the environment"
- Fulfil our commitment as signatories to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change
- Respond to the Government's agenda for local authorities to improve their environmental performance and comply with environmental legislation.

3. The current picture

A high level environmental review of the County Council's operations has identified the authority's main impacts on the environment. Appendix 1 shows the detailed risk assessment used to identify the priorities.

The following activities have been identified as significant because of their impact on the environment and the frequency with which they occur across the Council's operations. These are considered to be the corporate impacts of the authority as they are relevant to most of the operations delivered in all Departments. There may be other site or service specific environmental risks and impacts which need to be considered for a complete understanding of each service's environmental risks and impacts. The table below identifies each of the activities and outlines the associated environmental impacts.

Activity	Impacts (positive/negative)
Energy use in buildings (and street lighting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon emissions increasing the rate of climate change • Depletion of natural resources
Use of water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depletion of natural resources • Carbon emissions increasing the rate of climate change (from energy use in water treatment)
Transport including: Business mileage Fleet transport Contracted services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon emissions increasing the rate of climate change • Emissions from vehicles e.g. NOx, particulates reducing air quality • Congestion and impact on communities e.g. noise, health and general quality of life • Depletion of natural resources
Waste as a by-product of County Council functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methane and carbon emissions increasing the rate of climate change • Potential for pollution from landfill • Emissions from vehicles used for collection and disposal • Depletion of natural resources • Contaminating land • Providing materials for recyclables markets
Land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the geodiversity/ biodiversity value of sites • Potential for pollution from chemicals • Depletion of natural resources e.g. peat use, watering • Waste production • Increasing the landscape and historic environmental value of sites • Increasing the value of the public realm
Use of resources e.g. office consumables, natural materials, paints etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste production • Depletion of natural resources • Potential for pollution from manufacture and disposal

4. Leicestershire County Council's Environment Policy 2009

Leicestershire County Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the environment of Leicestershire and to improving the quality of life for Leicestershire people both now and in the future. By minimising the impacts of our activities, Leicestershire County Council will contribute to the improvement of the global environment through local action and will deliver sustainable development by recognising the links between the environment, people and our economy. Leicestershire County Council aims to:

- Support efficient use of all natural resources, including energy and water
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate the rate of climate change
- Take action to adapt to climate change
- Reduce the amount of waste produced and minimise its environmental impact by following the waste hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle and treat.
- Conserve and enhance the County's biodiversity and habitats
- Conserve and enhance the character, diversity and local distinctiveness of Leicestershire landscapes and towns, and provide opportunities for public access and enjoyment of green spaces.
- Support action to create a healthy environment, with reduced pollution and contamination
- Lead the community by demonstrating and promoting environmental good practice.

A key part of delivering a better quality of life for Leicestershire residents and ensuring sustainable development is to reduce the County Council's own environmental impact. In order to demonstrate our commitment to do this Leicestershire County Council is committed to:

- Critical examination of the impact which our policies and programmes have on the environment and timely actions to minimise these impacts
- Integration of environmental best practice in corporate and specific policies where appropriate
- Continual improvement in our environmental performance
- Measurement against comparable authorities and other benchmarks
- Compliance with the requirements of all environmental legislation as a minimum
- Raising awareness and encouraging participation among members and employees in environmental matters
- Spreading and sharing knowledge across the Council through environment champions in all Departments
- Ensuring purchasing decisions are mindful of sustainability and environmental impacts
- Working with partners, businesses and other organisations who demonstrate commitment to reduce their own environmental impact
- Increasing understanding of environmental issues, ensuring everyone has access to accurate information, which encourages sustainable lifestyle changes and encourages focussed voluntary action

Outcomes

- A The Council's carbon dioxide emissions are reduced
- B The authority increases its resilience to the predicted changes in climate
- C The amount of waste produced from Leicestershire County Council establishments is minimised and the percentage of waste recycled is increased
- D The Council's procurement of goods, works and services is environmentally sustainable
- E The Council demonstrates efficient use of water
- F All County Council sites maximise their value for biodiversity
- G The Council has reduced the polluting emissions from its operations
- H The diversity, local distinctiveness and accessibility of the Leicestershire landscape and towns is conserved and enhanced
- I The Council has a systematic understanding of its environmental impacts and how to reduce them
- J Staff, Councillors, partners and members of the community understand the Council's improved environmental performance and know how they can contribute to the achievement of the targets

5. Our targets

Policy objective	Performance Indicator	Baseline	2010 target	2015 target	2020 target
A The Council's carbon dioxide emissions are reduced	CO ₂ emissions from local authority operations (NI 185)	88 500 tonnes equivalent CO ₂ in 2007	- 4% (on 2008/09 NI185 baseline)	- 30% (on 2007 baseline)	-30% (on 2007 baseline)
a) Energy efficiency	Energy consumption per m ²	To be established in consultation with Resources	Tbc	Tbc	Tbc
b) Energy from renewables	% renewable energy consumed compared to total electricity consumption	To be established in consultation with Resources	10%	15%	20%
c) Business travel	Total business miles claimed	11,824,953 miles in 2007	-5%	-10%	-15%
B The authority increases its resilience to the predicted changes in climate	Planning to adapt to climate change (NI 188)	Level 1 by end 2008/9	Level 2	Level 4	Level 4
C The amount of waste produced from Leicestershire County Council establishments is minimised and the percentage of waste recycled is increased	Tonnes of waste produced from LCC sites	To be established in 2009/10	Baseline	Reduce by 5%	Reduce by 10%
	% waste recycled from LCC sites	To be established in 2009/10	Baseline	50%	60%

D	The Council's procurement of goods, works and services is environmentally sustainable	% of paper consumed which meets the paper specification	67% in 2006/07	80%	90%	99%
		% of high to medium risk contracts where environmental considerations were included in the contract award (weighting of >15%)	To be established in consultation with CPU	"	"	"
E	The Council's demonstrates efficient use of water	m ³ of potable water consumed per FTE	37.7m ³ per FTE in 2006/07	-5%	-15%	-25%
F	All County Council sites maximise their value for geodiversity/biodiversity	SSSIs in our ownership in target condition	To be established	95%	100%	100%
		Local Wildlife Sites and RIGs (Regionally Important Geological sites) in LCC ownership to have a management plan for their long-term survival	To be established	95%	100%	100% (review implementation of all plans)
		Green space in our ownership or management to have a statement of aims of how geodiversity/biodiversity can be enhanced and carbon captured	To be established	50%	90%	100%(review implementation of all plans)

G	The Council has reduced the polluting emissions from its operations	Air quality - % reduction in NOx and primary PM ₁₀ emissions through local authority's estate and operations (NI 194)	To be baselined on 2008/09 data in 2009	Tbc	Tbc	tbc
H	The diversity, local distinctiveness and accessibility of the Leicestershire landscape and towns is conserved and enhanced	Creation of a Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan for the County	Currently being established	Plan completed		
		Creation of an agreed approach to public realm works in towns	To be established	Approach agreed		
I	The Council has a systematic understanding of its environmental impacts and how to reduce them	Proportion of high risk sites with a legal compliance audit	0 in 2008/09	Identify sites	100%	100% (renew audits)
J	Councillors, staff, partners and members of the community understand the Council's improved environmental performance and know how they can contribute to the achievement of the targets	Proportion of staff supporting the statement "I believe the Council is doing enough to reduce its impact on the environment"	58.9% in 2008	65%	70%	75%
		Proportion of staff agreeing with the statement "I understand how I can contribute to green issues at work"	77.1% in 2008	85%	90%	95%

6. How we will deliver the change

Every member of staff in every Department will be required to make small differences to the way they work in order for the authority's ambition to be fulfilled. Every service will have something to contribute to the achievement of the authority's targets and these should be identified in their Service Plan. The table below focuses on internal County Council responsibilities. In some cases these are delivered in partnership and at the same time as external services. The responsible person/body identified will be focusing on the internal element of that service or action. The structure of the Environmental Change programme is shown in Appendix A.

A The Council's carbon dioxide emissions are reduced

Action	Who	By When
Implement the Carbon Management Plan	Carbon Management Board	2009 - 2014
Outline the Departments' contributions to reducing carbon emissions	All Departments' service plans	June 2009

B The authority increases its resilience to the predicted changes in climate

Action	Who	By When
Undertake risk assessment of significant local vulnerabilities and opportunities and communicate within LCC and with partners	Climate Change Manager	June 2009
Undertake comprehensive risk-based assessment of current and future local vulnerabilities and identify priority risks	Climate Change Manager	March 2010
Identify effective adaptation responses to priority risks and begin implementation	Climate Change Manager	March 2010
Embed climate impacts and risks across council decision making	Climate Change Manager	March 2010
Engage partners in a risk-based approach to managing major weather and climate risks	Climate Change Manager	March 2011
Develop a countywide Adaptation Strategy	Climate Change Manager	March 2011

C The amount of waste produced from Leicestershire County Council sites is minimised and the percentage of waste recycled is increased

Action	Who	By When
Collect baseline information on the amount of waste produced and % recycled	Facilities Management	March 2010
Implement improved recycling facilities at all sites wherever practical	Facilities Management	March 2010
Implement the County Hall Waste Action Plan	Facilities Management/Waste Management Team	Ongoing
All Departments to identify their contribution to meeting the waste targets	All Departments' service plans	2010/11

D The Council's procurement of goods, works and services is environmentally sustainable

Action	Who	By When
Develop a delivery plan to ensure all procurement complies with the Environmental Procurement Policy and Guidance	CPU/Environmental Action Team	March 2010

E The Council demonstrates efficient use of water

Action	Who	By When
All Departments to identify their contribution to meeting the water targets	All Departments' service plans	June 2009
Promote awareness and good housekeeping for water efficiency	Energy Services Team	Ongoing
Provide advice and guidance to Departments on water efficiency	Energy Services Team	Ongoing

F All County Council sites maximise their value for geodiversity and biodiversity

Action	Who	By When
All Departments to identify their contribution to the geodiversity/biodiversity target	All Departments' service plans	June 2009

Develop land management plans covering biodiversity and landscape enhancement works for LCC sites	Site Managers/Property Services	March 2015
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G The Council has reduced the polluting emissions from its operations

Action	Who	By When
Delivered through: a) implementation of the Carbon Management Programme; and	Carbon Management Board	2009-14
b) Departmental environmental risk assessment	Departments	2009-15

H The diversity, local distinctiveness and accessibility of the Leicestershire landscape and towns is conserved and enhanced

Action	Who	By When
Creation of a Design Guide for all County Council developments	Planning/Natural Environment Group	Summer 2009
Creation of a Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan for the County	Environmental Action Team	Summer 2010
Creation of an agreed approach to public realm works in towns	Better Places Team	Summer 2010
Review how successfully the County Councils Design Guide has been implemented	Planning/Natural Environment Group	Summer 2010

I The Council has a systematic understanding of its environmental impacts and how to reduce them

Action	Who	By When
Complete an environmental review of Council operations and services to significant environmental impacts and risk	All Departments	March 2010
All high risk sites to be identified	All Departments	March 2010
Develop a plan for all high risk sites to be audited for compliance with environmental legislation by March 2015	All Departments	March 2012
Develop action plans for high risk sites	All Departments	March 2015

sites		
Audit of policy documents and service plans for environmental objectives	Environmental Action Team	March 2010

J Staff, Councillors, partners and members of the community understand the Council's improved environmental performance and know how they can contribute to the achievement of the targets

Action	Who	By When
Develop a handbook for staff on green work practices	Environmental Action Team	September 2009
Include the Environment Policy in induction training and recruitment packs	Environmental Action Team/HR	March 2010
Establish a Green Champions programme for LCC	Environmental Action Team	March 2010
Develop an information hub on CIS for environmental issues	Environmental Action Team	March 2010
Produce a minimum of three issues of County Green newsletter per year	Environmental Action Team	Quarterly - Ongoing
Lead two campaign days on environmental issues per year	Environmental Action Team and other related Departments, Teams and Green Champions	Annually - Ongoing

APPENDIX A

